

**A Practical Theological exploration of Pastoral Hiring processes within the Canadian  
Evangelical Church**

**by**

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand and reflect theologically upon the pastoral hiring process and the scriptural, cultural and contextual influences that impact this practice. This study is a needed reflection at this time in Canadian church history because of the increasingly pluralistic, secularized and consumer-minded society that the church find itself immersed in. More than ever, it is critical that the church and its leadership engage in a critical reflection of praxis. Rather than being called to accommodate the culture, the church is tasked with interpreting and engaging the culture with practices that are often counter-cultural - but that faithfully reflect scriptural values and principles of the gospel. Leadership, and particularly pastoral leadership, is a critical element to navigate these times and to lead the church forward. As pastoral vacancies arise, the ability of the church to identify and select these pastoral leaders is a vital practice within the church.

This study focuses on the evangelical landscape in Canada, with a representative sample of four churches from one of the larger evangelical denominations. It utilized a qualitative, multiple case study approach using Osmer's 'descriptive-empirical tasks' to explore the pastoral hiring processes. The primary data collection method was semi-structured interviews. Additional relevant materials were obtained from participant churches and the denominational leadership (job descriptions, candidate profile template and bylaws) in an effort to further triangulate the data representative of a church's hiring process. Data was then analyzed utilizing a thematic approach and Atlas.Ti qualitative software to identify the main themes to be addressed.

From this study, the contribution to practical theology is a rigorous, descriptive understanding and reflection of the church pastoral hiring practice within the Canadian evangelical church in light of current assumptions, cultural influences and the challenge of the evangelical church to critically discern and respond in its continuing process of faithful theological formation and spiritual development. It offers some reflections and a possible reorientation to the evangelical church for the pastoral hiring process and practices of the church, while engaging both the current culture and the church's declared priority of the authority of scripture.

**Key words:** pastoral hiring, leadership development, critical reflection, church practices, secularization, church administration, evangelical tradition, evangelical, church purpose, challenges, pragmatic, church growth.

# Declaration

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## **A Practical Theological Exploration of Pastoral Hiring Processes within the Canadian Evangelical Church**

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

 May 8, 2022

SignatureDate

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During a journey of this challenge and significance, there are many people that as I reflect, have played a role in my ability to commence the trek, navigate the path and finally arrive at this destination. Some have journeyed more directly with me throughout the time; some have served to inspire; while others have supported, challenged or encouraged – and some have served in multiple capacities. There are many people I would like to acknowledge and thank.

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## **Dedication**

Life does not allow us to hit the pause button, particularly when we are in the midst of the busyness of work, research and whatever other life circumstances may come our way. Since I began this journey, I have been blessed to welcome two grandchildren into our family. They are now at an age where they are full of boundless energy, curiosity, and the ability to think more creatively and profoundly than what I can recall at their age – asking innocent questions and absorbing the answers long enough to prompt more questions. I dedicate this work to you, Evan and Rachel. I pray that you never lose that inquisitive and adventurous nature that you demonstrate. Your questions often pierce through the clutter that the world subjects us to and they remind me of the simplicity of love and faith and curiosity. You have refreshed me many times through this journey by simply being you and demonstrating your sincere love for me. Never stop asking your questions and pursuing what God has for you.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Research Title.....	1
1.2 Introduction .....	1
1.3 Background to Study .....	3
1.4 Research Problem Formulation.....	5
1.5 Significance of the Research .....	10
1.6 Definition of Terms .....	11
1.6.1 Hiring .....	11
1.6.2 Pastoral Leadership.....	11
1.6.3 Pastoral Ministry .....	12
1.6.4 Secularization.....	13
1.6.5 Evangelical.....	13
1.6.6 Institutional Culture .....	14
1.6.7 Spiritual Maturity .....	14
1.7 Methodology .....	15
1.7.1 Research Assumptions .....	15
1.7.2 Theoretical Framework.....	17
1.7.3 Research Methodology .....	17
1.7.4 Practical Theology Methodology.....	19
1.8 Sample.....	21
1.9 Sampling Technique.....	23
1.10 Data Collection.....	23
1.11 Data Analysis and Interpretation.....	24
1.12 The Role of the Researcher .....	24
1.13 Ethical Issues.....	25
1.13.1 Informed Consent and Agreement .....	25
1.13.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality .....	26
1.13.3 Clarify the Nature of the Research to the Participant at the End of the Study .....	26
1.14 Chapter Outline .....	26
<b>Chapter 2: Literature Survey</b> .....	<b>28</b>

2.1	Introduction .....	28
2.2	Contextual Issues.....	29
2.2.1	Evangelical Tradition.....	29
2.2.2	Canadian Evangelicalism.....	30
2.2.3	Regulatory Factors .....	33
2.2.4	Secularization.....	34
2.2.5	Post-Secularization .....	38
2.2.6	Exodus of Clergy .....	40
2.3	Church Administration, Management and Leadership Issues.....	40
2.3.1	Church Administration and Management.....	41
2.3.2	Church Governance and Organization.....	45
2.3.3	Understanding of Organizational Goals and Purpose.....	46
2.3.4	Organizational Culture.....	47
2.3.5	Leadership Selection.....	49
2.3.6	Christian Leadership.....	51
2.3.7	Vocation and Calling .....	52
2.3.8	Scriptural Values in Church Management.....	53
2.4	Practical Issues in Pastoral Hiring.....	55
2.4.1	Employment Procedures .....	55
2.4.2	Stakeholder Expectations.....	55
2.4.3	Developing Selection Criteria.....	58
2.4.4	Recruitment of Candidates.....	58
2.4.5	Screening.....	59
2.4.6	Decision .....	60
<b>Chapter 3: Field Work .....</b>		<b>62</b>
3.1	Introduction .....	62
3.2	Research Question and Objectives.....	62
3.3	Research Process .....	63
3.4	Practical Theological Methodology .....	63
3.5	Theoretical Framework .....	64
3.6	Sampling Technique.....	65

3.7	The Sample.....	65
3.7.1	Case 1:.....	66
3.7.2	Case 2:.....	67
3.7.3	Case 3:.....	67
3.7.4	Case 4:.....	68
3.7.5	Additional Interviews: .....	69
3.8	Data Collection.....	69
3.9	Interview Questions Used .....	70
3.9.1	Church Board Participants:.....	70
3.9.2	Hiring/Selection Committee Participants: .....	71
3.9.3	Regional Leadership: .....	71
3.10	Data Analysis .....	72
3.10.1	Re-Conceptualization of the data.....	73
3.11	Research Objective 1.....	74
3.12	Research Findings .....	75
3.12.1	Process 1: Church Reflection and Decision to Hire.....	75
3.12.2	Process 2: Search Committee Established .....	79
3.12.3	Process 3: Develop Profile and Criteria for Candidate.....	84
3.12.4	Process 4: Solicit Candidates .....	90
3.12.5	Process 5: Screening/Interview/Decision Process .....	95
3.12.6	Process 6: Candidate Meets and Interacts with Congregation.....	108
3.12.7	Process 7: Congregational Vote.....	111
3.13	Research Objective 2.....	115
3.13.1	Scriptural Influences upon Pastoral Hiring.....	116
3.13.2	Cultural and Contextual Influences .....	119
3.13.3	Urban/Rural Dynamics .....	122
3.14	Summary of Findings .....	124
3.14.1	Research Objective 1 .....	124
3.14.2	Research Objective 2 .....	124
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>125</b>
4.1	Introduction .....	125



4.2	Analysis of the Pastoral Hiring Process .....	125
4.3	Internal Factors that Shape Church Hiring.....	126
4.3.1	Pragmatic Nature of Evangelical Pastoral Hiring.....	126
4.3.2	Lack of Critical Reflection in the Hiring Process.....	132
4.3.3	The Growth and Success Metaphor .....	136
4.3.4	Need for Leadership Development .....	142
4.4	External Factors from the Broader Societal Context .....	152
4.4.1	Values Inherent within the Church Today .....	152
4.4.2	Evangelical Theology .....	157
4.4.3	Contextual Challenges to Pastoral Hiring within Canada.....	159
<b>Chapter 5: Key Learnings, Recommendations and Conclusion.....</b>		<b>166</b>
5.1	Introduction .....	166
5.2	Key Theoretical Learnings from Hiring Process.....	166
5.3	Practical Theological Reflection .....	168
5.4	Recommendations to the Evangelical Church .....	172
5.5	Limitations of the Study.....	176
5.6	Future Research.....	176
5.7	Conclusion.....	179
<b>Bibliography .....</b>		<b>182</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>		<b>197</b>
<b>Appendix A1 Denominational Consent.....</b>		<b>197</b>
<b>Appendix A2 Informed Consent Form .....</b>		<b>198</b>
<b>Appendix B Code List.....</b>		<b>200</b>
<b>Appendix C Research Questions .....</b>		<b>207</b>
<b>Appendix D Profile Form.....</b>		<b>210</b>
<b>Appendix E .....</b>		<b>220</b>
E1	Senior Pastor Job Description.....	220
E-2	Senior Pastor Job Description .....	223
<b>Appendix F Qualifications Sample.....</b>		<b>225</b>
<b>Appendix G Desired Characteristics Sample Form .....</b>		<b>227</b>
<b>Appendix H Bylaw Sample .....</b>		<b>229</b>

<b>Appendix I Profile Selection Checklist .....</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>Appendix J Interview Transcripts .....</b>	<b>232</b>
C1U1BP1 .....	232
C1U1BP2 .....	242
C1U1SP1.....	247
C1U1SP2.....	254
C2U2BP1A&B.....	260
C2U2SP1 .....	269
C2U2SP2.....	276
C3R1BP1.....	281
C3R1BP2.....	289
C3R1SP1 .....	295
C3R1SP2.....	304
C4R2BP1.....	311
C4R2BP2.....	319
C4R2SP1A&B .....	325
C4R2SP2 .....	330
RL1.....	336
RL2.....	347

# Chapter 1

## 1.1 Research Title

A practical theological exploration of pastoral hiring processes within the Canadian evangelical church

## 1.2 Introduction

This research was a descriptive study of the pastoral hiring process within the evangelical church in Canada. Hiring involves the various planning, recruitment (internal or external candidates) and selection processes (evaluating skills, aptitudes, education or other requirements) necessary to find and ultimately choose a person that is best suited to fulfill a particular role within an organization and then coming to agreement regarding terms of employment (Gusdorf, 2008). Pastoral hiring involves a similar framework and considers aspects of biblical knowledge, technical skills such as the ability to preach, manage staff and a budget and lead the church forward in its mission. It also involves the very important considerations of spiritual maturity, character and sense of calling as one set apart to serve the church as a spiritual leader. A primary source of pastoral candidates is often from recent graduates of denominational seminaries and institutions or from recruiting ministers who are in transition or looking to move and are willing to submit their names for consideration to fill a pastoral vacancy. The hiring practice varies within the different denominational groups within Canada. Many church groups follow a similar process of selection occurring at the local church level (British Columbia and Yukon District: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 2017; Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, 2016), although some involve a more formal ratification process and involvement at the denominational level (Christian Reformed Church - Pastor Church Resources, 2021; The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 2019). Within the Anglican Church in Canada and the Catholic Church, the placement of priests within a congregation is typically done through the considerations of the denominational offices and the overseeing spiritual leadership there (Archdiocese of Toronto, 2021; Diocese of Toronto - Anglican Church of Canada, 2019), with less direct involvement at the congregational level.

To examine the practice of hiring is an unusual investigation within the field of practical theology as such practical elements of church life are not something that are typically in view. It is important to scrutinize this process because the pastoral role is a significant leadership function within the church and is critical to the ongoing health, nurturing and spiritual development of the church and its members. Therefore, this particular practice of the church - the process by which pastors are hired, is crucial to the overall activity

and health of the church. It reflects the values, perceptions and priorities of the church and, perhaps by extension at times, the denomination. The pastoral role and function receive significant attention within practical theology and therefore too, the process by which a pastor is selected is important and requires attention. While a practical aspect of the church, the selection of a pastoral leader is more than an employment exercise as it involves an important spiritual component and speaks of the values of the church. The pastoral hiring process often points to and is undergirded by a values system that reflects such things as expediency, meeting personal needs, success and congregational growth motivators. 'Practices, then, contain values, beliefs, theologies and other assumptions which, for the most part, go unnoticed until they are complexified and brought to our notice through the process of theological reflection' (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 20). Swinton and Mowat identify the importance of the examination of various church practices and evaluating them in light of a theological priority and reflection so that they might represent the image of the church as it is intended to be. Values influence church practices and therefore church processes need ongoing, deep reflection in order to consider if there are appropriate, spiritual values that are influencing or informing church practices. This study of the pastoral hiring process is valuable to practical theologians, as part of church administration and management, because it brings attention to the system of values and interconnected elements that comprise the process and allowed for a critical reflection which may inform future practice.

This study explored and critically reflected upon the pastoral hiring process of the senior pastor of a church. This study described the process and factors involved in the hiring of a new pastor, and it observed the values that undergird that process. Swinton and Mowat offer a definition of practical theology as 'critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world' (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 6). Swinton & Mowat identify four key points that are encompassed within practical theology. They involve: critical reflection of the practices of the Christian community; theological reflection; that such reflection also engages with the practices of the world, even with the tensions associated with it as their respective worldviews have radical dissimilarity and discontinuity; and finally, the primary task of practical theology is to ensure and enable faithful practices (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 6 - 9). Osmer points to some social trends such as the decline of the status of pastors compared to other professionals, greater cultural pluralism, the secularization of institutions and the resulting compartmentalization of religion that have influenced a change in the role of a pastor (Osmer, 2008, pp.

18-19) and that encapsulate some of the elements utilized within this study. These apparent culture influences within the context and values of the church must be considered in a pastoral hiring process.

Increasingly, concerns are being expressed about leadership in the church and the impact of secular forces upon the church and pastoral role. This includes a distancing of ministry from the word of God – the Bible, and the reduction and disbursement of the pastoral role and calling to competencies and keeping busy with the affairs of the church (Lischer, 2005, p. 168). As Sims notes, the hectic pace of life and ministry tends to carry the church forward so that its practices often do not represent or embrace scriptural values and beliefs as they instead default to attending to practices and needs in a primarily pragmatic manner (Sims, 2011). In light of what appears to be an increase in the pragmatic nature of the church, it points to the necessity of intentional and critical reflection of church practices to seek to understand and reveal the values that are evident within current church practices.

Dreyer suggests that aside from the external circumstances that put pressure on the church, a primary contributor to the crisis of the church is ‘the church not being able to be church’ (Dreyer, 2015, p. 1). In this, Dreyer suggests that the church may be unaware of what it is to be and do and may have reverted to mere human activity or a reliance upon human wisdom and effort to address needs and guide it through the challenges before it (Dreyer, 2015, p. 4). The impact of external and internal forces upon the church and its practices may be revealed or measured in a number of ways such as finances or attendance – heightening a sense of crisis for the church (Dreyer, 2015, p. 1). There has also been a significant, increased incidence of reported misconduct by pastors (Krueger, 2020). The growing issues facing the church makes one wonder, at least in part, if they have started in some way or have implications within the pastoral hiring process. These various influences, issues and pressures appear to have significantly impacted the values of the church that inform and shape church practices. This study of the pastoral hiring process sought to describe, understand and to critically reflect upon the elements of that process.

### **1.3 Background to Study**

This study was located within the evangelical tradition of the church in Ontario, Canada. The evangelical tradition was selected for this study due to their significant representation within the church in Canada and that they are more congregational in their organizational structure. That is, for the purposes of this study, that the individual congregations have a significant, independent role and engagement in the hiring of their pastors.

The pressures of secularization and the feeling of marginalization by the church are not uncommon in an ever-changing society. Brian Stiller, the former Executive Director of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada noted:

The Canadian evangelical community is under pressure from its surrounding culture. It is antagonized, assimilated and co-opted, vacillating from reaction to pro-action. Given the increased pressure of a secular-minded culture, the greatest danger we face is not theological liberalism, but assimilation into a culture of materialistic individualism (Stiller, 1991, p. 202).

Also in evidence within Canada is the emergence of a post-secular culture. Post-secularization implies moving beyond the secular and reaching a satisfactory level of constructive integration and collaboration between educational, religious, political and other social systems, where religion is viewed as a more individual and subjective choice of components that give meaning to the life by an individual and characterized by an increased focus on personal religion within a pluralistic society and with a general attitude of indifference or irrelevance of the society towards faith, God, or any religion (Oviedo & Lumbreras Sancho, 2021, p. 5; Dalferth, 2010, p. 339; Hogue, 2010, pp. 348-349; Beyers, 2014, pp. 9-11). There is a marked separation between church and state and individuals become determinant for spiritual choice or religion in their own lives. This is becoming more obvious within the context of the church in Canadian society.

The Canadian culture is exerting significant pressure upon the evangelical church, and the impact of these pressures are being seen in many areas of the church. A significant Bible Engagement Study was just completed in Canada in 2013 that was sponsored by the EFC and nine evangelical organizations comprising the Canadian Bible Forum (Hiemstra, 2014, pp. 8,30). From the Canadian Bible Engagement Study (CBES), released in May of 2014, results were obtained that reveal how secularism appears to have crept into the church:

About 14% of Canadian Christians read the Bible at least once a week. The majority of Canadians, including those who identify themselves as Christians, read the Bible either seldom or never. About two in ten Christians (21%) reflect on the meaning of the Bible for their lives at least a few times a week (Hiemstra, 2014, p. 5).

The huge diversity within the evangelical church and denominations in Canada related to matters of governance, structure, practice and some theology made it important to focus this research on one group in order to adequately consider the numerous elements of the hiring process. The pastoral hiring process

is not standard for all churches, as organizational structures vary. Thus, when the notion of evangelical church is raised, it is done so with the understanding that the participants and focus of this study is limited to one denomination and that the results may not be generalized to reflect the whole of the evangelical church in Canada. Even within the sample denominational group there is some diversity. Each church subscribes to a similar evangelical statement of faith, including the assertion that the bible is the 'final authority in all matters of faith and practice'. As there is no denominational policy or authority in matters of practice, each church functions as an autonomous entity but they do have access to resources and personnel from the denominational office.

The influences of consumerism and individualism are very evident within the church. This investigation attempted to understand the extent these influences have been incorporated into the pastoral hiring process and the rationale behind such inclusions. Consumerism reflects a shift within churches of the attitudes of believers from being dedicated to following God's precepts and values to being independent, selective consumers of what a church might offer (Bruce, 2006, pp. 36-37). Individualism stresses individual rights, personal ethics - standards of right and wrong and can also influence the freedom a person feels in response to societal values and norms and the adoption of their consumption choices. Individuals become the focus of the church and may make subjective determinations of the shape of church practices based upon felt needs and experiences (Branson & Martinez, 2011, pp. 154-160; Beyers, 2014, p. 9). The impact of a diverse, shifting culture and the response of the evangelical church relative to these pressures provides the basis for this study. This warrants investigation and the church's response understood within their current context and the pastoral hiring process. There has not been sufficient reflection in this area. The results of this study provide a critical reflection of the pastoral hiring process that identifies a growing convergence between the church practice and a typical organizational process.

#### **1.4 Research Problem Formulation**

While the evangelical church is traditionally known for upholding scriptural principles, in the case of pastoral hiring there are no clear guidelines for what that practice could be. The church therefore must integrate various knowledge and practices into their pastoral hiring process and determine their suitability. Each church is under no obligation to conform to any particular denominational standard or formal policy for pastoral hiring, however there is an expectation that the practices of the church would reflect Christian values and that they would not contradict scripture. The pastoral hiring process is a necessary practice and need within the church, however there is no clear manual or handbook for pastoral hiring that is regularly

checked, reviewed or reflected upon. Within other industries and career sectors, there is much more literature, reflection and adjustments made to hiring practices and criteria on an ongoing basis in order to maintain a competitive advantage. It appears that there are several challenges facing the church related to the pastoral hiring process.

Firstly, there is a pragmatic challenge. There is a pragmatic side to the pastoral hiring process that incorporates elements typical to most hiring practices, such as establishing a job criteria and role expectations, candidate recruitment, assessment and interviewing, but these appear to be the primary focus as the church seeks to obtain a new pastor. There are other significant considerations within an evangelical or sacred setting such as calling, biblical character and an appropriate and unique spiritual fit within the congregational and ministry context that appear to be overlooked. Within the pastoral hiring process there is a vagueness or confusion - about the process, what the criteria and priorities for a pastor should be and what evaluations are in place that might enhance the process. There appears to be a blurring in areas related to the role of a pastor and the criteria found within a job description and the expectation for the pastor. For example, there is a perceived need for a job description, so often the job description is adopted from other churches and congregational surveys or simply a cut and paste from denominational materials, without a thoughtful and critical reflection upon the values and priorities they represent – or that they should exhibit. There is a history of resources to support the pastoral hiring process, but they have been reduced to reflect the pragmatic “how-to” of the actual process and the role expectations more than anything else. There does not appear to be any space of time dedicated to reviewing and reflecting upon the process or issues that may develop during throughout the process. There appears to be an emphasis upon the pragmatic side of the pastoral hiring process more than a consideration of any theological or scriptural values. These appear to be simply assumed. It appears that this pragmatic side is coming from secularization and individualism and the values represented within the current society. Within an individualistic view, there is a high degree of pragmatism, where what seems to produce results is often seen as worthwhile and successful whether it aligns with other values of an organization that should be considered or not (Branson & Martinez, 2011, p. 164). It would seem that the church is being influenced by the pragmatism and consumerism that is in the broader society. An example of this is the high priority of a church to hire a pastor and their willingness obtain who they want by attempting to influence another church’s pastor to change churches because they find that pastor to be successful.

Secondly, there appears to be a new normative practice for pastoral hiring. What may have started as an innocent adoption of secular hiring elements that serve a pragmatic purpose may have now become the



new normative practice of the church, and a digression from critically engaging with the biblical values that the church affirms. The church may sometimes uncritically adopt their practices without evaluating or deconstructing what they are doing. There is often little evidence of elements of the sacred nature and scriptural values in the selection of a pastor within the hiring process. The typical criteria of education and relevant experience are relatively easy to demonstrate, but the various skills, abilities, character, “ministry gifts” or “calling” expected within a pastoral context are not so easily observed, particularly in a truncated process. For example, an issue to be raised is the difficulty for churches to effectively assess a candidate’s capacity to fit within their culture and environment with the necessary skills and required character without a lengthier process or the ability to know a candidate more fully. This may be identified as a problem within the church but not enough of one to warrant any reflection or change as the process continues without probing these areas further. These things are overshadowed by the overarching, pragmatic need for a pastor. That pragmatic need appears to drive the new normative within church practices. If there is a practical solution and it appears to meet the need, then it is adopted and can become normative for that practice – without regard for whether it aligns with scriptural values. There does appear to be a lack of critical reflection by the church of its practices and any scriptural considerations or values that may inform or guide such practices. The church is typically aware of and known for biblical teachings and values related to a variety of issues, but the actions or practices of the church do not appear to demonstrate a consistent emphasis or alignment with such. More reflection is needed to evaluate and guide church praxis. Reflection is needed on whether the values demonstrated within the pastoral hiring process reflect what was intended within the Christian teachings, traditions and values. While it is important to realize that the practices relate to each particular church community (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 20-22), specifically Christian practices ‘contain a normative element which is crucial for Christian formation and faithful living’ (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 21). This normative task is more one of adaptive innovation in light of the changing nature of society and culture (Zscheile, 2015, pp. 22-23). This would involve a critical reflection in order to integrate biblical principles, values and traditions into the current realities and practices of the church. It appears as though the Canadian Evangelical church has not always embraced or reflected upon a biblical, normative element from which to ground their practices. For a church denomination that affirms the authority of the Bible to inform their faith and practice, scriptural paradigms or values should be a significant basis for evaluating, reflecting upon and informing their practices.

The evangelical subculture has somewhat uncritically embraced the fundraising techniques, technological advances like radio, television, and the Internet, business structures and marketing techniques, and even

corporate language... They seem to believe that with the right research, and the correct techniques, and the correct business model, good leadership, and attractive buildings and programs, they will grow and succeed. Thus, practitioners will often read books... hoping to find some knowledge from science that will help them “succeed” using the same definition a secular business might use. Unfortunately, we wonder if we are unintentionally feeding a tendency within evangelicalism that encourages practitioners to priorities questions like “What can I do to grow my church?” ...By its own logic, evangelicalism prioritizes the Bible as the final authority, and Jesus as the primary example – not numerical growth. Their ecclesiology suggests they first ask different questions, like “What does it mean to be a faithful witness of the reality of Jesus?” Sometimes the answer to that question may require the church to do things that will not add to its numerical or budgetary success (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 208-209).

Thirdly, the church appears to struggle in its efforts to contextualize Christian values within its current context and practices. Churches are impacted by the values systems within society. The values system embedded within the typical description of the way things are done - the consumerism, materialism and individualism are coming from the impacts of living in a modern society and no one is exempt. ‘Evangelical subcultural boundaries are porous, and their congregations absorb certain cultural influences’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 55). For example, this is seen in the attitudes of Christians in their decision to attend church or not. It is often viewed as a personal choice rooted in an individual sense of authority, the ability to determine one’s own beliefs and choices of conduct or an opportunity to spend social time with others and not a time to engage with God and respond to a ‘transcendent moral authority’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 57-58). The Bible affirms a priority for and describes aspects of preferred character for those selected to lead within the church. The church expresses a value for the teachings of scripture and so one would expect the practical processes within the church to be deeply embedded within and reflective of these Christian values and principles. Instead, there appears to be increasing reports and news articles of significant scandals involving church leaders — both moral and financial (Chamberlain, 2021) that has resulted in many pastors stepping down from their role. Where formerly there was much more emphasis on character in the recognition of pastors, these biblical, spiritual values seem to be marginalized in favour of pursuing quick results and potential growth. This is a problem for the church because they do not appear to reflect deeply and fully upon what they do or upon what they incorporate into their practices. They have possibly been overwhelmed by the pragmatic element within their context and do not invest the time necessary to consider how their practices might reflect biblical values.

This uncritical adoption of, or lack of reflection upon practices of the church, the emphasis upon the pragmatic and an apparent struggle to contextualize scriptural values within the current church context, leads to the exploration of church practices and to the research question - specifically considering the pastoral hiring process in the current Canadian context as it may be key to: leadership development within the church; its faithful witness to the reality of Jesus; a significant and ongoing impact for the church's future.

Within this study, the main research question is:

What is the pastoral hiring process of the evangelical church in the Canadian context so as to understand the various influences on hiring and the implications for church practice? In order to answer the research question, the following objectives are:

1. To explore the practical process of the pastoral hiring task in churches.
2. To understand the various scriptural, cultural and contextual factors that shape the way hiring practices are carried out, which allude to underlying values.
3. To reflect on the current pastoral hiring process and its implication for church practices.

The first objective was to explore the practical, current pastoral hiring processes that are typical of an evangelical church and describe what was actually taking place within a church's hiring process from the perspective of the church leadership, the hiring committee and the denominational leadership as a snapshot of a particular point in time in the church's history. It also sought to understand the means by which the process for pastoral hiring was arrived at and the elements that are included from the initial decision to hire, the soliciting and assessment of pastoral candidates to the final selection decision, and any challenges that were presented. They also include specific issues such as: the establishment of desired candidate criteria; methods of soliciting candidates, including how to inform potential candidates of a position; and the assessment criteria and methodology and ultimately, how the final decision will be made.

The second objective was to understand the various issues that could influence the pastoral hiring process and the possible values that were represented or alluded to within those issues. These could include: scriptural injunctions like 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 dealing with character, conduct and basic competencies to teach and instruct a congregation. Other scriptural factors would include Christian values that should guide general conduct and practices of the church. The practices within a church's hiring process reflect internal (church specific), external (denominational) and cultural/historical/governmental influences. This could include issues such as: institutional culture and historic, traditional or

denominational practices that have been followed; external input from other sources – books, hiring agencies, transitional ministries and other leaders; and governmental influences regarding acceptable hiring practices and interview questions. The consideration of these issues and influences, and the church's response to them could reveal certain values that were inherent within those practices.

The third objective was to make a practical, theological reflection on the overall, current pastoral hiring processes in a modern society. Ultimately, it was to reflect on the theology, the culture, and other influences in order to make observations regarding the pastoral hiring process and show the implications arising from this practice within this study. One of which was the recommendation to attempt to lure a pastor away from their present church to meet another church's need; or the availability and use of a hiring agency to find a church pastor; or to look more closely at the priority and emphasis placed upon success as being primarily measured by numerical growth.

By answering each of these objectives, it gave a greater understanding of the pastoral hiring process and how it may be influenced by the culture of the day. This is a time in North America, where it is suggested that unreflected, corporate models are encroaching upon church cultures (Gibbs, 2007, pp. 157 - 164). Joynt, in his research concurs. 'Clergy have not escaped the professionalization of their occupation which steered the focus of the clergy's work from fulfilling a traditional calling to the gaining of results' (Joynt, 2016, p. 2). The pastoral role is vital to the health and life of the church, and through that role, to the many people within its walls who engage the world, serve in seminaries and Christian institutions. The pastor serves as a teacher, role model and primary leader within the church community and the broader community (Joynt, 2016, p. 1; Elkington, 2013, p. 1). Therefore, the selection of a pastor is critical to many things associated with the Church and its health.

## **1.5 Significance of the Research**

The area of the pastoral hiring process within church practice is often marginalized or treated as peripheral to what are typically seen as the significant areas for practical theology within the life of the church. The significant areas of preaching, worship, missionaries, pastoral ministry, social justice, outreach and living life as a Christian outside of the church are typically in view. The necessary church practices, such as the hiring of a senior pastor, that give support, instruction and framework to these other areas are often overlooked within practical theological research and not critically reflected upon within church praxis. The practical theological value of this study is that it is hard to come by as almost a first-time accounting of what the steps in pastoral hiring are, and it has revealed gaps within the process. The value is enhanced

by the added reflection that took place of the gaps within each of the processes and the reflection of the influences on the process – internal, external and denominational, with a deep reflection of the values used in the process. Further, this study adds value in the area of church administration, where the pastoral hiring process is situated. The pastoral hiring process reflects on all other processes within the church and upon the values and integrity that are demonstrated as representative of the church’s Christian witness. The hiring process should not be dismissed as purely administrative as there could be profound learnings from evaluating this ministry practice.

## **1.6 Definition of Terms**

In order to maintain clarity and a common understanding of terms with respect to the research and the evangelical community that is in view, it was important to define significant terms and elements used within this study.

### **1.6.1 Hiring**

Within this study, the operational definition of hiring is ‘the practice of finding, evaluating, and establishing a working relationship with future employees, interns, contractors or consultants’ (Entrepreneur Staff, n.d.). This definition was used because hiring within a pastoral search process encompasses these same elements and also involves other aspects within the components of the search process. The spiritual components of character and calling and the expectation of God’s involvement are also significant to the hiring process.

### **1.6.2 Pastoral Leadership**

Within this study, a pastoral leader is defined by biblically measured qualities involving godly character and having an appropriate and growing knowledge of God and of people and ministry. They are also to have some degree of skill for the tasks involved in instructing, directing, nurturing and influencing their congregations towards a deepening relationship with God and to the particular expression of God’s redemptive mission identified within their church (Malphurs, 2006). This operational definition utilizes Winston and Patterson’s definition of a leader, which is:

is one or more people who selects, equips, trains, and influences one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the follower(s) to the organization’s mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives. The leader achieves this

influence by humbly conveying a prophetic vision of the future in clear terms that resonates with the follower(s) beliefs and values in such a way that the follower(s) can understand and interpret the future into present-time action steps (Winston & Patterson, 2006, p. 7).

This definition is further contextualized for pastoral leadership to frame it within the context of the church and with God's priorities, purpose and mission of His church in view. This definition was used because it adds value and illuminates the practical and the spiritual nature of the pastoral leadership role. Contrary to some perceptions and definitions, the pastoral leader is not a manager (Zscheile, 2015, p. 19) and keeper of the church's programs and practices. Although appropriate sensitivity to a church's culture and history can aid in the ongoing and dramatic shifts (Gibbs, 2007, p. 165) that can occur as a church navigates their course with God leading them forward, a pastoral leader is a servant of God, identified and affirmed by a congregation to act as such within their church context.

### 1.6.3 Pastoral Ministry

The operational definition of pastoral ministry used within this study is: a specific, vocational, spiritual leadership role that typically involves teaching or preaching a relevant and applicable life message from the Bible on Sundays, officiating and serving at life events such as marriages, funerals, times of family or personal crisis, baptisms and other church ordinances. Often pastoral ministry involves financial remuneration by the church in order to free the person from other employment in order to serve a church, usually in line with an established job description directed towards the spiritual care and nurture of a group of believers and meaningful service within the community the church is located in. This definition was used because it adds value to the study and illuminates the diverse nature of the pastoral role. A challenge to this understanding is often that people confuse the function or gifting indicated by the term "pastor" with that of the office generally established within churches (Stevens, 2000, pp. 146 - 149). Schilderman notes a distinction between "pastoral office" and "pastoral profession" and defines them as differing aspects of pastoral work within his research (Schilderman, 2005, pp. 112-113). Within the context of this research it is a vocational role that is in view. Within most evangelical churches, 'pastoral ministry is understood as something to which a person is gifted and called by God for, and is publicly recognized through ordination' (Fowler, 1992, p. 33).

#### 1.6.4 Secularization

Secularization often refers to the changes brought about within culture and society as a result of modernization. It has a significant influence and impact upon the church and its role within society, how they operate and even their level of relevance within society (Penning & Corwin, 2002, p. 29). Unfortunately, within research, the term secularization has several different definitions and phenomena associated with it and there has been a general lack of agreement on what it actually is (Shiner, 1967, pp. 207, 219). For the purposes of this study the operational definition of secularization refers to: an attitude of indifference to religious institutions and practices as they once existed and thus religious systems and institutionalized religion have lost control or influence over societal issues as religion has become just one element within a differentiated society (Shiner, 1967, pp. 208, 211; Dobbelaere, 2009, p. 2). This differentiation in society means that ‘the various aspects of society – economic, political, legal and moral, become increasingly discrete in relation to each other’ (Dalferth, 2010, p. 329). The other aspect of secularization that is relevant to this study is the notion of individual secularization, where compartmentalization takes place and religion for the individual is kept separate from and does not inform other aspects of life, such as economics, education, family and other societal elements (Dobbelaere, 2009, p. 6). This definition was useful because it reflects both a historical as well as a more current perspective on its usage and serves the evangelical church community perspective, their environment, and the elements being considered within this study.

#### 1.6.5 Evangelical

The definition of evangelical is one that has had expression in several forms and carried with it differing connotations, depending on the perspective of those who utilize it. For the purposes of this study, the operational definition of evangelical follows the *Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology* (CCET) in its adoption and expression of David Bebbington’s four Pillars of Evangelicalism. The CCET defines an evangelical as:

An Orthodox Protestant

1. One who stands in the tradition of the global Christian networks arising from the eighteenth-century revival movements associated with John Wesley and George Whitefield;
2. One who has a preeminent place for the Bible in his or her Christian life as the divinely inspired, final authority in matters of faith and practice;

3. One who stresses reconciliation with God through the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross;
4. One who stresses the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual to bring about conversion and an ongoing life of fellowship with God and service to God and others, including the duty of all believers to participate in the task of proclaiming the gospel to all people. (Crossley, 2016, pp. 122-123)

This definition was used because it adds value and these qualities, or pillars stand as the basis for a definition, and also illuminates qualities and priorities that are to be characteristic of an evangelical life.

#### 1.6.6 Institutional Culture

Institutional culture, for the purposes of this study, is defined as ‘the collective, mutual shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs and assumptions that guide the behaviour of individuals and groups in higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions’ (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, pp. 28-29). While this includes a higher educational context, it also serves as an appropriate definition for the church context as it adds value to the study and illustrates many relevant aspects of the internal culture within the church which are being explored. Institutional culture may also be identified as organizational culture, which is often shaped by the values of an organization’s founder (Kwantes, 2015, p. 1). ‘Behavioral norms that are consistent with those values take root, and stabilize as the default way of behaving. These norms are then taught to newcomers as the “right” way to behave in that particular organization’ (Kwantes, 2015, p. 1). Institutional culture may not be readily visible, but it has significant impact upon the expectations, behaviors, practices and perceptions that exist within the organization.

#### 1.6.7 Spiritual Maturity

Spiritual maturity within this study is defined utilizing the four levels toward Christian maturity, identified using Kohlberg’s insights. They include: ‘(a) accommodation to God’s law; (b) respect for and obedience to God’s law; (c) principle-centred commitment to a Christian worldview, and (d) Kingdom-centred commitment to God’s glory’ (Gibson, 2004, p. 295). This recognizes that persons may be at different points, but are committed towards progress in their faith and spiritual development. Spiritual maturity identifies persons who are progressing in their spiritual development in relationship to God and these four levels identify developing degrees of the outflowing demonstration of that relationship and commitment.



This definition of spiritual maturity was used as it added value and allowed for a means to understand components identified and expressed within the study when the concept of spiritual maturity is raised.

## **1.7 Methodology**

### **1.7.1 Research Assumptions**

The formulation of the above research question was based on particular assumptions towards the research. The normative vision for this study (given the evangelical sample) assumes the principle of scripture as being the final, trusted ‘authority (sola scriptura) for the evangelical church in matters of faith and practice’ (The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, n.d.). This principle highlights the Bible as the source of faith and confidence for Christian practice. It is rooted in a position of faith and trust - that God is truth and can be trusted, that the Bible is God’s inspired Word, and therefore the Bible can be trusted (Barrett, 2016, pp. 298-299). One other aspect of the reliance upon scripture for faith and practice, is the distinguishing between scripture and tradition (George, 2000, pp. 188-193) – with scripture as a truthful and reliable source for salvation and for information life and practices, and tradition as something that is to be subject to and measured or assessed by scripture to ensure faithful practice and witness to God and His character (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 20-27). This positional regard for scriptural authority carries with it the assumption that the hiring process of the evangelical church would somehow demonstrate and reflect scriptural values. Those values would include honesty, integrity, good governance, dealing with other churches, candidates and search committee members fairly and with respect, dealing with being thorough and above reproach in all activities. The scriptures may be considered the final authority, however aside from some references to character and basic competencies, scripture gives no clear direction on the specific process of pastoral hiring.

A second assumption is that the Church is significantly influenced by society’s values and this in turn impacts how a church engages and relates to its community and society. In their study, Reimer and Wilkinson point out that the cultural influences of affluence and self-realization have been embraced by the evangelical church so that participation is made to be fun - where wealth and pleasure are no longer frowned upon or challenged, and tolerance is a defining characteristic in all areas. They identify that individualism and the priority of personal choice has apparently replaced the concept of any group consensus or authority and that the church has become a place of interactive relationships that are positive but governed by personal boundaries. (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 54-55). The appeal of personal choice, experiences, and emotional elements give meaning to what is now a more personal spirituality and

allows for personal choices of church doctrine (Beyers, 2014). This marks a significant shift from the traditional experience and undermines some more traditional church values, while accommodating more of society's values (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 54-55). To a degree, this is seen by Gibbs, in his article cites Guder's book, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* when he identifies that the shifts in culture are occurring so frequently, that the church must be continually remaking itself and prepared to move in new ways in response to the new challenges the culture brings (Gibbs, 2007, p. 165). Zscheile identifies this as an 'agile approach to religious community and practice' (Zscheile, 2015, p. 25) that would engage with those outside of the church and adapt their programs, practice and presentation of the Bible to more fully engage the culture.

The third assumption was that the pastoral role is hugely vitally important to the ongoing health and development of the church (Joynt, 2017, p. 2), and therefore, the pastoral hiring process should be managed well. This speaks to the values system of the evangelical tradition upon which this study is based. 'Pastors are instrumental in its (the church's) growth, both spiritually and numerically, by equipping members in their relationship with God, one another and those within their communities' (Joynt, 2017, p. 2).

A fourth assumption of this research was that every pastor requires a sense of calling to vocational ministry and to a particular church. This is significant and yet many pastoral candidates struggle to discern or confirm an accurate sense of calling to a specific church or even to pastoral ministry. Joynt cites this struggle in his findings related to the exodus of clergy (Joynt, 2016, pp. 4-5; 2018, p. 7). Joynt further noted that clergy often left pastoral ministry because of 'not being called in the first place, or having a dual, or seasonal call' (Joynt, 2018, p. 7). This sense of calling may not always be present and its absence for someone engaged in pastoral ministry can significantly impact their ability to fulfil and be sustained within a pastoral role.

The discovery and development of vocation are critical for modern clergy, not only because the legitimacy of their work rests on traditional claims to selflessness and divine direction, but also because their own identity and personal worth are defined by the call. Without a conviction of God's leading, clergy are left to pursue the secular, rational, professionalized goals of individual careers (Christopherson, 1994, p. 222).

A final assumption was that Christian leadership and its development is critical to the sustenance of the church. Those in leadership, aside from the pastor, are influential in the ongoing development of the congregation and in overseeing a pastoral search process, particularly when a church is without a pastor.

The congregational leaders typically are then tasked with ensuring the ongoing progress and nurturing of the church while they wait for a new pastor to be identified and hired. The congregational leaders are also the ones that are responsible for the critical reflection of their practices, particularly their pastoral hiring process so that it can be accomplished in an effective and Christ-like manner and contributes to the ongoing nurture and spiritual development of their church.

### 1.7.2 Theoretical Framework

This study utilized a theoretical framework, which, for the purposes of this study, is defined by Ngulube et al., citing Ennis, as: ‘The theoretical framework is a structure that identifies and describes the major elements, variables, or constructs that organize your scholarship’ (Ngulube, et al., 2015). This study used some elements from Olian and Rynes (Olian & Rynes, 1984), whose work on organizational staffing from a general perspective provided a specific framework for key aspects of hiring that were examined in this study. Olian and Rynes give a definite structure to elements within a typical hiring process that helped frame the data collection and exploration and gave shape to aspects of the reflection stage so that the pastoral hiring process could be considered in light of what are typical processes for hiring. As there are clear differences between typical job hiring and roles and that of a pastor, where the mysterious significance of calling and religious origins maintain some distinctives (Nillsen, et al., 2014, p. 21), the framework of this study was further refined by the integration of elements that make up the pastoral hiring process (Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, n.d.).

### 1.7.3 Research Methodology

The research paradigm utilized was interpretivism, considering the influence of social and cultural factors upon the church and its practices and the active role of the researcher in the gathering and interpreting of the data within this study (Crossley & Jansen, 2021). Interpretivism is defined as: ‘a sociological approach that emphasizes the need to understand or interpret the beliefs, motives, and reasons of social actors in order to understand social reality’ (Kent, 2007, p. 182). This research paradigm was appropriate for this study because it allowed for the researcher to be part of the research and engaged with the research participants to consider the social and cultural influences upon individuals and focused on the lived experience of the participants (Crossley & Jansen, 2021; Brown, n.d.) involved in the pastoral hiring process and finding meaning within their context.

The ontological assumption of this study was that the realities examined were representative of the values, understandings and perspectives of the study participants (Slevitch, 2011, p. 79) and that they were expressed through the shared experiences of the individuals. The data collected therefore from the study participants was intended to capture a full description of their lived experience and perspectives relative to their involvement with the various elements of the pastoral hiring process.

Epistemologically, an interpretivist approach was used, which allowed for direct engagement within the specific, pastoral hiring process environment to allow the participant's voice to be heard in the gathering of knowledge as they were able to share their experiences and observations from the pastoral hiring process (Slevitch, 2011, p. 77; Brown, n.d.). This approach allowed for significant insights into the specific context of the pastoral hiring process (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020, pp. 42-43).

The research approach was qualitative. As this study was subjective in nature and sought to understand and interpret the particular and common elements of the pastoral hiring process within church congregations from the actions and lived experience of those engaged in the practice (Osmer, 2008, pp. 49-50; Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 29-32), a qualitative research approach was an appropriate. Further, the research conducted focused on processes, the realities of the hiring practices within particular and yet unique situational contexts and an interaction with culture and themes that arose through the research (Neuman, 2000, pp. 16-17) which necessitated a qualitative approach.

The research method was a descriptive and explorative case study, primarily involving a multiple case study approach in order to best investigate the research question and validate the results (Leedy, 2010, p. 137). It was: descriptive in that it attempts to present a clear and thorough image of the elements and considerations of the pastoral hiring process; and explorative in that specific research into this area of the evangelical church and the various influences impacting upon it have not been thoroughly studied and warranted investigation. (Neuman, 2000, pp. 16-17, 508, 510). A case study is an 'in-depth examination of a specific program, person(s) or activity for a defined period of time in order to gain understanding or inform similar practices' (Leedy, 2010, p. 137). Sometimes a single case is studied. 'In other instances, researchers study two or more cases... to make comparisons, build theory, or propose generalizations; such an approach is called a multiple or collective case study' (Leedy, 2010, p. 137). In order to more fully respond to the research question of this study with a full and more comprehensive description, a multiple case study approach was warranted. The case study was necessary to this study's methodology as it allowed for the investigation of the hiring process within a church context over a defined period of

time (the period of the hiring process to the point of the interview) and encouraged the collection of extensive data in order to better understand the process (Osmer, 2008, p. 51). A multiple case study approach allowed a greater potential understanding of the pastoral hiring process and was more useful in identifying possible patterns. Resultant comparisons, reflections and interpretations of patterns within the hiring process were therefore better triangulated as the multiple sources of data converged (Leedy, 2010, pp. 137-138,157).

#### 1.7.4 Practical Theology Methodology

‘Practical theology is critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world with a view to ensuring faithful participation in the continuing mission of the triune God’ (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 25). It involves ongoing, critical, theological reflection and development and shaping in the praxis of church life and ministry – aware of and engaged with current church practices, tradition and the realities of current context and society that all exert influence in these areas. This praxis models involves the practice and then reflection, which informs and shapes further praxis – leading to further practice and reflection. The practices in view within the church are more than simple actions that are done to or for someone. They contain or reflect certain ‘values, beliefs, theologies and other assumptions’ (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 20-21). It is the task of practical theology to more fully engage with these practices to be able to fully describe and reflect upon them – to inform future praxis.

This study utilized two of the four core tasks of practical theology, as identified by Osmer, to understand the current praxis of the church in the area of pastoral hiring – ‘what is going on? – the descriptive-empirical task’ (Osmer, 2008, p. 4). The descriptive-empirical task involves the engaging with persons connected to the practice being studied and attentively listening, to gather information about the practice and observing the participants. The descriptive-empirical task, as Osmer describes it, ‘is grounded in a spirituality of presence’ (Osmer, 2008, p. 34). That is, taking the time to listen - to fully hear and attend to what is actually going on in the practices of the church and the lives of those individuals who are a part of that community (Osmer, 2008, p. 34).

Especially when the methods of qualitative research are used, empirical research is a disciplined way of attending to others...It allows leaders to deepen their understanding of what is going on in particular situations and contexts. (Osmer, 2008, p. 39)

As Swinton and Mowat point out, situations are complex and involve not only the human experience, but elements of history, culture, traditions, social experiences and expectations can play a role (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 15-16). This descriptive-empirical task was foundational to this exploratory study in order to capture as full and complete a picture and accurate description of what is actually going on during the hiring process within the diverse history, experiences and makeup of churches within the sample group. It provided the framework for the case study design and methodology of this study in an effort to respond to the initial emphasis of understanding what was occurring within the practice of pastoral hiring. The study then moved to interpret and reflected upon the pastoral hiring practice from the lived experience of the participants and materials collected in order to understand and consider ‘why is this going on? – the interpretive task’ (Osmer, 2008, p. 4) in order to fully respond to the research question. The interpretive task requires critical reflection, utilizing the information from the lived experiences and from other sources that may influence or impact upon the practice. This includes the use of other academic sources, theories as well as cultural and organizational factors to contribute to a better understand of why such practices, responses and dynamics are happening (Osmer, 2008, p. 4). Both tasks may utilize social sciences and other experiences and influences that may inform the practice and give further shape to a fuller description and understanding of what is being observed. The value of using the descriptive-empirical and the interpretive tasks was that they allowed for the capture of the most information and detail and therefore provided understanding for this exploratory study regarding the present hiring practices of the sample group. They also provide a solid preparation for more, deeper work at a normative or at a strategic level for future studies.

A critical correlation approach was used within this study. This means that the practices, lived experiences of the church and the normative texts of the Christian tradition, along with the contemporary, cultural context are involved in the critical and objective analysis and evaluation of a particular issue in order to make sense of what is going on and to inform further praxis (Browning, 1996, pp. 44-47; Klaasen, 2014, pp. 3-5). This uses both social scientific and theological ways of inquiry (Ward, 2017, p. 91) to be able to respond to the ‘core tasks of practical theological interpretation’ (Osmer, 2008, p. 4) to describe and perceive what is going on within the area of pastoral hiring. Typically, the praxis of the church is viewed as encompassing the Christian vocation of the church – involving congregations, denominations, religious education, pastoral counselling and elements of the clergy and their role and activities within the church and society and their overall Christian witness (Kim, 2007) in a manner that is pleasing to God. It has an emphasis upon action and what people do in living out their faith and religion and is often left within the

domain of religious practices. Within this study, that definition was broadened further to consider all aspects of the church, including the administrative and management activities utilized particularly in the pastoral hiring process, which should also consider the texts and values of the Christian tradition in their actions as religious practices in reflecting the priorities and mission of God (Ganzevoort & Roeland, 2014, pp. 91-96; Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 22-24).

The normative element of Christian practice typically relates to, or determines standards or values for Christian and Church life and practices that are rooted in God and the biblical text (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, pp. 5-6). The practical issues explored in this study are not directly addressed within the biblical text, hence the normative becomes values that are aligned with scripture. It is important to note that in the implementation of any theological normativity, there are some areas where the bible does not prescribe normative guidelines for practice. Therefore, in those instances, practices should align with Christian values and should not contradict the biblical text. This religiously, or theologically rooted normativity is an instrument for balancing any gap between the administrative necessity in the pastoral hiring process, and the spiritual nature of the church (Ershova, 2012, p. 242). Primary values that are articulated within the bible for the pastoral role may be encapsulated as: ‘Christian character, spiritual maturity and well-rounded godliness’ (Keathley III, 2004). These qualities reflect a person’s character and the primacy of a depth of relationship with God as necessary for a pastor. Further to that, there are additional expectations for competency and appropriate spiritual giftedness for the position, as well as a suitable fit, or relational connection with the church (Hybels, 2002/2009, pp. 81-85). Regarding the role and functioning of a search committee in their execution of their responsibilities within a hiring process, those persons engaged with the search should reflect similar qualities and values and be able to identify or discern them in a candidate. Other values, such as honesty, integrity, diligence, wisdom, humility, faithfulness, Christian charity, and faith are found throughout scripture and encompass other necessary elements for the pastoral hiring process.

## **1.8 Sample**

The evangelical church was selected as it represents a significant entity within the church landscape in Canada. The sample for this study has a regional office and a large number of churches within a reasonable distance for travel purposes. The sample denominational group was chosen because they share the same organizational structure and foundational beliefs, including the acknowledgement of ‘the Bible as the final authority on matters of faith and practice’ (The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, n.d.), which is

significant to this study. The particular denomination was also selected because of a relational and historical connection with the researcher. Due to this relationship, there was an awareness of available churches that were in a period of transition and searching for a pastor, and the support of the regional office to make connections and introductions to these churches. This denomination was a strategic choice from which to sample because: they have a significant history within Canada; they represent a large percentage of evangelicals; and they have a strong representation of both urban and rural churches to draw from.

Within Canada, the sample denomination was identified in the most recent census data as a significant denominational group within the evangelical tradition, with strong presence across the country and specifically within the province of Ontario (Canada, 2003, pp. 6,17). It was also the only protestant denomination within Canada (and Ontario) that reported a gain in numbers during the represented time frame (1991-2001) (Canada, 2003, pp. 12,17).

The sample was comprised of two rural and two urban churches for this study. It was intended that through conducting four case studies more patterns in the data would be observed. Of the more than 270 churches associated with the denomination, approximately one third of them would be considered rural or small population centres. Between the different rural and urban settings, there may be population ethnicity, other cultural, historical, social or even physical factors that impact upon their respective processes in similar or dissimilar ways (Leedy, 2010, pp. 137 - 138). Randall suggests that rural and non-rural clergy are in themselves not so different, but noted that role expectations by congregations do differ between the two contexts (Randall, 2011, p. 125). These expectations may stem from the rural rootedness. Williams and Ruesink affirm there are 'significant differences between rural and urban residents' that reflects this especially with respect to attitudes, beliefs, values and lifestyle (Williams & Ruesink, 1998, pp. 17-19).

The congregations were chosen to provide a good cross section of the denomination and their urban and rural contexts, which was intended to bring greater diversity and representation to the sample. That diversity sought to include any particular cultural differences related to the congregational demographics and societal factors relative to the different settings that might impact the pastoral hiring process. These four unique case studies allowed for a reasonable number of factors to be considered and provide a realistic snapshot of the hiring processes and cultural considerations for those practices at this time. Swinton and Mowat point out that any representative generalizations from the resultant findings of qualitative research may not accurately describe each situation, but they may offer transference of findings to other contexts



with a sense of identification and resonance through similar circumstances (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 46 - 47).

In order to be gender sensitive, it is important to note that within the tradition of this study sample, the denomination identifies a minister as an exclusively male role and only men are trained as ministers, although females might be leaders within other capacities.

## **1.9 Sampling Technique**

The sampling techniques used for this study were purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling requires a deliberately selection of study participants who have experience or knowledge about the issue being studied and that could provide relevant information regarding the specific research subject (Etikan, et al., 2016, pp. 2-3). Secondly, convenience sampling was also utilized. Convenience sampling refers to a nonrandom sampling where selected study participants meet criteria that is convenient or practical for the researcher, such as them being more available or geographically accessible to the researcher (Etikan, et al., 2016, p. 2). Within this study, there were practical considerations for the selected sample, which were a matter of convenience for the researcher due to the close proximity of the regional office and the large number of churches with willing participants within a reasonable commuting distance for the purposes of scheduling and conducting the interviews.

## **1.10 Data Collection**

The primary data collection method was in-depth, semi-structured interviewing with the study participants. In-depth, semi-structured interviewing involves ‘conducting intensive individual interviews... to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation’ (Boyce & Neale, 2006) using a core set of questions and the ability to add further questions to probe areas more fully or to clarify aspects as needed. As a primary method of data collection, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were appropriate as they followed a consistent set of questions, allowing for the ‘building of rapport with the participants, putting them at ease and more willing to share their experiences’ (Leedy, 2010, p. 188). Personal interviews have the highest rate of response, allow for more complex, standard questions and follow-up, and allowed for the observation of any nonverbal cues (Neuman, 2000, pp. 272-273; Leedy, 2010, p. 188).

Fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted from four churches – two from rural and two from urban settings. Two additional interview candidates from the regional leadership were also selected as they were

in a position to be able to give additional perspective and input into the pastoral hiring process of their churches and region and add a further depth to the study. In total, seventeen in-depth interviews were conducted.

Researcher observations, various church and denominational documents and other materials that had a bearing on the church pastoral hiring process were also included in data collection in order to gain a full description of the practices and experiences within each case. As a qualitative, case study research methodology, this study sought to create a deep, ‘rich insight into the practices and lived experiences of the participants’ (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 63) related to the pastoral hiring process. Additionally, available documentation from the church or denomination related to this research study was collected. This included any observations made by the researcher, job description, job postings and other materials or relevant data related to the concepts being explored (Leedy, 2010, p. 137). These combined data sources provided a well-rounded picture of each case’s hiring process.

### **1.11 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

For this study, a thematic analysis approach was used. ‘Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). It is also ‘a useful method for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and generating unanticipated insights’ (Nowell, et al., 2017, p. 2). It is appropriate for research, particularly in this case study as the framework for the development of themes was linked to specific parameters related to the participant’s experiences within the pastoral hiring process therefore allowing for greater coherence when developing themes (Nowell, et al., 2017, p. 2).

### **1.12 The Role of the Researcher**

One aspect of the analysis of the data is that there are historical, cultural, political and contextual sensitivities that the researcher must be aware of and be able to work with (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 57-58). This was particularly important within this study as they were central to the investigation and each had bearing on the key research question. Swinton and Mowat describe the researcher as “the primary tool” by which and through whom the knowledge-formation and qualitative research is carried out (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 58-59). They also touched on some key dynamics that were required of the researcher in the qualitative process. The researcher must be aware of their own contributions to the

research process and how they may impact the proceedings, critically monitoring themselves throughout and not imposing their own agenda upon any participant (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 58-65).

The researcher is an evangelical church member of a differing denomination but has relationships and experience with persons and institutions across the evangelical spectrum, including the participating denomination from this study. The researcher does have some background knowledge of the denomination and therefore was aware of the gap and the need for this kind of research. However, the researcher endeavoured to keep any bias in check and do the work of a researcher while objectively, neutrally and critically interacting with the data.

### **1.13 Ethical Issues**

This data was collected from 2018 until 2019 and its collection did not fall in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher was unaware of any dependent relationships within the proposed sample populations which could threaten the validity of the study.

All of the guidelines provided in UNISA's Policy on Research Ethics, particularly Part 2 - Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants were attended to. The researcher was aware that ethical responsibility represented a significant consideration in the development and implementation of this study and for the participants and institutions involved. Referring to *Ethical Principles in the Conduct of Research with Human Participants* (American Psychological Association and American Psychological Association Committee for the Protection of Human Participants in Research, 1982, pp. 25-75) and the key principles of ethical research identified there, particular attention in this study was made to:

#### **1.13.1 Informed Consent and Agreement**

Initial consent and approval of this study was obtained through the regional office. Further consent was requested and required for any voluntary interview participants. A copy of the regional approval and a sample of the participant consent document may be found in Appendices A1 & A2. Prior to signing the informed consent forms and the conducting of interviews, all volunteer participants were made aware of the research, its scope, intended use and procedures related to the process. Opportunity for clarification about the research or its use was also provided prior to, during and after the interview process. Denominational consent for the research was acquired at the outset of this study and they assisted in identifying and contacting of potential churches to participate in the research. All participants were given both verbal and written information about this study and all were eager and agreed to participate.

Participants were informed that they could withdraw from participation or suspend participation at any time should they experience any adverse effects due to their participation. If needed, counseling and support was available through their regional office. The researcher also made an effort to be alert to any indications of discomfort or distress during the course of the interviews and all interactions.

#### 1.13.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The identities of the denomination and those participating in interviews and their right to privacy was protected throughout the entire research process. All information about the participants, their names, occupations, church associations and particular church names and all other data of a personal nature and that was obtained during the study has been kept confidential and secured on an encrypted USB drive and in a locked file. Specific names or confidential materials were altered to protect the privacy of the participants and denomination.

#### 1.13.3 Clarify the Nature of the Research to the Participant at the End of the Study

In an effort to ensure that there were no misconceptions regarding the study, at the conclusion of each interview the researcher shared again how the data would be used and committed to sharing the completed research report with the participants and the denomination. This is to ensure clarity around the study and its conclusion and to enhance the experience of those participants due to their participation and contribution to those outcomes.

### **1.14 Chapter Outline**

Chapter 1: Introduction and background

This section identifies and develops the research problem and associated considerations (cultural, biblical, denominational) as well as the aim and significance of the research. It provides the necessary background information for the study and the sample being investigated as well as a definition of terms relevant to this investigation. It has an introduction and a conclusion to highlight key aspects of the research and to guide the reader.

Chapter 2: Literature Survey

The literature survey presents an overview of relevant materials and an integrated argument and critical discussion for this study. It provides a critical interaction with the literature and the elements being

examined. It begins with an introduction to the materials contained and ends with a conclusion, summarizing the key arguments and discussion.

### Chapter 3: Field Work

This section provides a detailed description of the methodology and theoretical framework for this study. It also includes the questions and data obtained through the individual case studies. This section has an introduction to guide the reader, as well as a summary conclusion of the results obtained. It contains a description and evaluation of the steps observed within the pastoral hiring process and addresses research objectives 1 and 2.

### Chapter 4: Discussion

This section summarizes the key concepts and challenges derived from the research findings. Chapter 4 addresses research objective 3 as it discusses those elements with relevant literature to make points pertinent to the sample population as well as to the academic and broader contexts.

### Chapter 5: Recommendations of the study

This chapter highlights the key learnings from the study, presents recommendations, identifies areas for future research and identifies the limitations of this study.

## Chapter 2: Literature Survey

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter sought to engage with relevant literature of the various issues that are evident within a hiring process in order to build a foundation of understanding for this study. A ‘literature review is an information analysis and synthesis, focusing on findings and not simply bibliographic citations, summarizing the substance of the literature and drawing conclusions from it’ (Randolph, 2009, p. 2). This chapter was conceptualized in a manner that looked at the broad picture of the contextual issues of the evangelical tradition and then moved towards a more detailed consideration of specific issues related to the study. The chapter was divided into three core sections: contextual issues within Canada; church leadership, management and leadership issues; and practical hiring process issues - specifically including concepts relevant to this study. The evangelical tradition, Canadian issues and culture were dealt with initially in order to centre this study within the broader context in which it took place and to understand how the context impacts and shapes practices. From there, literature focused around church administration and management and leadership was surveyed in order to understand how these concepts are known and lived out in practice and to further narrow the focus. Finally, the chapter was directed towards the practical issues, unpacking the different processes to show the challenges and complexity related to the hiring process in order to complete the picture of the elements relevant to this particular study.

At the start of this literature review it was important to review the studies conducted in this field, so as to locate this study and also to highlight the importance and relevance of taking on this study. The field of pastoral hiring has seen several studies related to job satisfaction, clergy turnover, mismatches between clergy and a congregation (Mueller & McDuff, 2004), pastoral ministry as an occupation and clergy as employees (McDuff & Mueller, 2000). There have been studies on the priority and impact of education levels of clergy upon perceived status – thus impacting selection and income levels (Perl & Chang, 2000), and workplace practices within the church (Knight Johnson, 2018). There are very few studies however, specifically related to an exploration of the elements of the pastoral hiring process itself. Within broader, organizational literature, there are many studies related to hiring processes, often narrowing the field of discussion to very specific aspects of the hiring process. They include aspects of matching employer culture with prospective employees within hiring as a significant element within hiring practice (Rivera, 2012); an emphasis upon various methods of recruiting prospective candidates (Marsden, 1994); the use of emotions in candidate evaluations during the interview process (Rivera, 2015); hiring based upon the

use of assessment tools and clearly identified competencies (Grigoryev, 2006); and the integration of clear organizational needs and strategy within the practice of hiring (Olian & Rynes, 1984). There is significant literature from which to draw from, especially from outside of the realm of the spiritual context, which may contribute to a broader and more comprehensive understanding within the area of pastoral hiring. This study aimed to critically explore the pastoral hiring process - a unique study on its own, and in order to consider church traditions and considerations of biblical doctrines and values, coupled with literature from social sciences, what was needed was 'constructive but critical dialogue between management sensibilities and the theological sensitivities about the Church' (Watkins, 1993, p. 375).

## **2.2 Contextual Issues**

This section deals with relevant literature that gave a contextual basis for the elements of this study within the evangelical tradition in Canada.

### **2.2.1 Evangelical Tradition**

The impact of the world and culture and their models for leadership and identifying leaders may have some apparent similarities to some of the practices of the church and pastoral hiring today, but they are often in stark contrast to a biblical, theological paradigm. Much of the evangelical tradition is understood, or assumed in its practices. While the church is a human organization and as such utilizes similar elements within their hiring process as is found within management sciences, the church is also unique. There are elements of the church and its practices, which as a spiritual entity move beyond the pragmatic level and a sole emphasis upon managerial effectiveness to that of spiritual discernment and being aligned with God's purposes (Watkins, 1993, pp. 378-380). The biblical doctrines of the church as a spiritual entity, the Body of Christ and the bearer of God's Spirit for God's purposes in the world, sees the church transcend human organization and makes it different in expectations for its practices and approaches in many areas, and for the purposes of this study in particular, in its approach to its management practices and governance (Watkins, 1993).

Historically, when selecting and training candidates for ministry, everything stemmed from the belief and conviction that a pastoral candidate had been called by God to ministry. This involved a period of discernment and recognition of the character and necessary gifts by the local church and through a screening process by a ministerial recognition committee. From there, a potential pastor was accepted into a school for academic and a requirement for practical, ministry and vocational training. Once completed,

a potential pastor would serve in a probationary capacity somewhere for at least three years, full time, before they were granted ordination and available for a pastoral charge (Davies, 1962). The current evangelical traditions and practices flow out of the diverse roots and background discussed in chapter 1. Evangelical spirituality is therefore rooted in other Christian spiritual traditions and their practices have grown out of the framework of their core evangelical beliefs (Chan, 2011, p. 3). Central to those core beliefs and traditions of the evangelical church is the conviction of the authority of the Bible – that its ultimate author is God and that the primary focus and content is Jesus Christ and that it is instructive for life (Chan, 2011, p. 9). ‘When the Bible is read canonically, biblical practices are not just those that the Bible explicitly prescribes, but may come from the examples, types, history, events, and stories’ (Chan, 2011, p. 9). The Bible may not be clearly prescriptive for all of the practices of the church, but it contains many elements that can inform those practices as the church reflects upon the priorities, character and purposes of God contained within it.

Believers can go to evangelical congregations in various places in North America and find a familiar message; this message emphasizes such things as religious conversion, the importance and protection of the traditional family (coupled with traditional sexual mores), the authority of the Bible, loving one’s neighbour, and the like (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 43).

This is what has historically given shape to the evangelical traditions and practices. Differing denomination groups may emphasize certain doctrines or prescribe differing practices, but the core of evangelical tradition remains rooted in the definition of evangelical as described in chapter 1.

### 2.2.2 Canadian Evangelicalism

The Canadian Evangelical Church is a broad and diverse group with complex and varied issues. Churches that would be characterized as evangelical would include: Pentecostals; Christian and Missionary Alliance; Baptists (more than 4 distinct groups); Brethren; Associated Gospel Churches; Mennonite and many other groups. In terms of pastoral hiring, some of these denominations use a more hierarchical approach, where denominational offices are much more involved in the hiring and appointment of pastors. In other groups, the local churches function with total autonomy in their hiring practice.

Canadian churches, although they are affiliated with various denominational groups, they establish ‘their own identity, rituals, and stories that make each congregation unique’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 7-8). This distinctiveness is often a reflection of the people, and the pastor and their own unique makeup, gifting and experiences. However, within the broader evangelical groups there is a common set of



‘behavioural expectations, which include congregational participation and devotional practices like reading the Bible and praying. They share similar moral boundaries, particularly in areas of sexuality’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 43). These are common expectations for the evangelical church, framed within a common language and understanding of the biblical text. There is an expectation of practice, whether in personal devotional time, reading the Bible, church attendance, church or Christian service and financially supporting the church as indicative of an evangelical Christian identify in Canada (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 8-10). Evangelicals are reported to be ‘more likely to attend church and hold to the church’s teaching as compared with other Christian traditions’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 18). The Canadian statistics cited in Reimer and Wilkinson’s work, from Reginald Bibby’s *Project Canada 2005*, demonstrate a higher degree of agreement within evangelical beliefs and yet they acknowledge some practical challenges impacting the evangelical landscape (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 18). Some evangelical congregations, particularly rural ones in Canada struggle to meet their financial needs and coupled with an aging and decreasing population in some of these churches is causing them to close (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 19).

Recent studies and articles show that the Canadian church demonstrates less priority to the Bible and to sharing their faith (Hiemstra, 2014) (MacInnis, 2021) – significant, foundational elements of the evangelical church. A significant study was commissioned and sponsored by ten evangelical groups within Canada and published in 2014, examining Canadian Christian’s confidence in the Bible. As the bible is identified as the authority or final rule for faith and practice amongst evangelicals, it is relevant to consider the results of this study as another aspect to understanding the cultural influences acting upon the hiring process within the evangelical church. Among evangelicals, ‘44% read the Bible a few times a week and 54% reflect on the meaning of the Bible for their life at least a few times a week’ (Hiemstra, 2014, pp. 10, 22).

Other studies indicate that Canadians are not attending church as regularly as they used to (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 15) although Evangelicals tend to demonstrate greater vitality and growth as the statistics are examined. A part of this, reason Reimer and Wilkinson, is that evangelicals tend to have greater resources in the areas of attendance, volunteer time and financial giving to their congregations (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 20).

One element that is difficult to examine more closely within any specific denominational context, is the increase within Canada of those identifying as spiritual and do not identify any religious affiliation. There

may be many evangelicals who seldom attend a church anymore as life is busy and perhaps the scandals that have impacted many prominent evangelicals and matters related to residential schools have impacted levels of confidence (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 16) in the church in general and to some extent, evangelicals in particular. ‘Not surprisingly, the affluent, self-actualized, individualistic ethos of modern society has made its way into Canadian evangelicalism as well’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 54). This has made pastoral ministry more challenging but it is reflective of the reality within the Canadian church and society.

Canadians are more likely to leave a congregation if they do not get what they want, and “shop” for religion elsewhere. They are demanding consumers of religion, evaluating the religious “products” presented by clergy to see if the suit their needs. Clergy calls for institutional commitment often fall on deaf ears. Individualism results in less deference to clergy. (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 136)

In their conclusions, Reimer and Wilkinson note that ‘many evangelicals are not institutionally committed, some embracing the broader culture, and others who more aggressively embrace evangelical traditions, beliefs and practices’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 203). In their research, while suggesting that evangelicals are situated reasonably well, there are concerns as they: face leadership shortages, struggle to retain their youth, face aging membership, aging clergy and financial pressures and the projections from Statistics Canada suggest that the proportion of Christians will decline as non-Christian religious groups will increase in the coming years Canada’s population growth is coming primarily from immigration and not all will be coming from an evangelical tradition (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 203-206).

Canadian evangelicalism has moved from a significant position of engagement, involvement and respect within Canada, to being relegated more to the sidelines in terms of public role and identity. ‘The Canadian culture is not supportive of its churches’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 203). It is within this context that the pastoral role must continue to function, not for the sake of maintaining an institution, but in continuing to act as agents of God’s grace and redemptive work in the communities they serve, even as the Canadian culture distances itself from the church.

Other factors that have impacted the church in Canada are noted by Reimer and Wilkinson as increased religious pluralism, managing religious and ethnic diversity in public institutions, consumerism and the focusing of attention on individual rights and away from religion and any common ideology for the Canadian identity (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 46,48). ‘The net result of these Canadian cultural and demographic changes is declining institutional Christianity in Canada’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p.

48). The evangelical church (and the church in general) formerly had greater recognition and social position, but with the changing social, cultural and political landscape in Canada, the church has been impacted as it seeks to adapt to these changes.

Through this background of the history of the Canadian Evangelical Church we can begin to see how broad and diverse this group is and how complex and varied the issues are.

### 2.2.3 Regulatory Factors

The church has always been faced with the issue of external factors pressing in upon its practices and structure. Within church history, there was significant regulatory influence exercised by secular authorities in the area of church leadership and their selection. This dates back to the time of Constantine I where church leadership positions were generally filled by candidates acceptable to the secular authorities, who would often overrule any communal choice (Herrin, 1987, p. 63). The evangelical church of today must still engage with regulatory factors and authorities as it exercises wisdom and discernment to move forward in its ministry, organization and leadership. Churches are to function according to their legal descriptions, constitutions and bylaws, which are fundamental descriptions of the churches purpose and an indication of rules and principles for how they will conduct themselves. They must be filed with the government before the charity may be registered.

In recent years, there have been more legislative and legal decisions that impact charities, which also touch the evangelical church in Canada. A monthly Bulletin and other research are published by the Canadian Council of Christian Charities, detailing legal decisions, updates and their potential impact upon the church (evangelical or otherwise) (Canadian Council of Christian Charities, n.d.). An example of this was a court challenge by a former employee of a Christian organization, who was dismissed after it was determined that they no longer aligned to the lifestyle and morality commitment of the organization. The Ontario Human Rights Commission ruled in favour of the former employee and thus created some tensions around the issue of competing rights- the rights of an individual to not be discriminated against and the rights of religious institutions to require adherence to core doctrinal and theological beliefs (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2010). The Bulletin also serves to remind the church of their responsibilities under governmental regulations to ensure compliance and to safeguard their charitable status. Such reporting and legal awareness may have some effect upon hiring practices. One recent article mentions that there are over two hundred statutes across Canada, some dealing with health and safety, vacation pay and other matters relevant to human resources. The article also warns that Board Directors may be liable

for the actions, or inactions of their church (Pellowe, 2014, p. 9). Such material, while helpful, could instill a fear that could cause churches, in their hiring processes, to prioritize certain legal and liability issues over the spiritual and scriptural standards that are intended to guide practice for church life and ministry.

Within Ontario, Canada, the Employment Standards Act governs the required standards for employers to provide to their employees. It covers areas such as: overtime, paid holidays, benefits, considerations for termination of employment, limitations on hours of work and many other employment matters. What is interesting to note is that there are a few exceptions to those who are covered by these employment standards. ‘Religious Officials’ (pastors) are not covered by the employment standards established for the majority of the workforce within Ontario (Government of Ontario, 2019). So, while the majority of employed persons are covered or protected by this regulatory act, pastors and their role within churches are not.

Within Canada, the Canadian Human Rights Commission publishes and updates relevant materials that affect hiring processes and employment in general. In particular, application or interview questions specifically asking about a person’s: age, sex, religion, marital status, ethnic origin, race, height, weight, sexual orientation, disability, medical conditions or criminal background are not allowed as they are not deemed to be relevant to a person’s ability to perform a job. They are considered discriminatory and are grounds for legal action against an employer on the part of the applicant (Birshtein, 2010) (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2007). Evangelical churches, by the nature of their history and practice, have certain biblical considerations and positions that they seek to uphold that extend to their hiring practices. There are laws and requirements that govern the church’s practice, particularly when their authority (spiritual) and ministry engages what are describe as vulnerable populations (Government of Ontario, 2020, pp. 36-38). Churches must be aware of these requirements as they try to assess potential candidates for hiring purposes – yet they are restricted in what they can ask on an application form, or during an interview. While it is necessary for the church to attend to the legal, organizational and reporting requirements that permit them to function as a charitable entity in Canada, it does appear that the church is being significantly influenced and its practices and presence altered by the pressures of the surrounding culture and regulatory factors.

#### 2.2.4 Secularization

The impact of the world and culture and their models for leadership and identifying leaders may have some apparent similarities to some of the practices of the church and pastoral hiring today, but they often

stand in stark contrast to a biblical, theological paradigm. Within their work, Ershova and Hermelink suggest that ‘due to decreasing membership and thus decreasing financial resources, protestant churches often re-orient themselves towards a more rational culture – which supports and emphasizes attitudes and therefore a management perspective necessary for pursuing and obtaining additional resources’ (Ershova, 2012, p. 236). The pressures that could be exerted by the lack of funds to hire additional staff to attend to administrative matters, or to consistently pay the salary of the Pastor can change the focus or emphasis of activities and affect the expectations for the Pastor as leader by the congregation, as well as the perceptions and expectations of the Pastor as role expectations and priorities may change. ‘The size of a church determines its market power and thus the quality of leadership it can attract. This puts undue emphasis on increasing membership for economic rather than for missional reasons’ (McMillan & Price, 2003, p. 19). This financial reality and expectation of financial remuneration and material benefit impacts both the pastoral candidate and the church. They are often used as a means to measure success or one’s position. They are also motivators for pastors to accept a position. Being able to provide and care for oneself and family is a practical consideration and an important one within a pastoral hiring process as pastors expect to be fairly compensated. These types of considerations and expectations can vary according to the situation of the pastor, as well as the realities of a church budget. The larger the church, typically, the greater the financial and material benefit. These factors alone could influence hiring processes and decisions, although they may cloud the issue of “calling”.

There are many factors that may be wrapped up within the concept of secularization. Culture seems to be influencing and impacting the evangelical church and its practices. Roxburgh points to the reality that the world is shifting and that radical transition is not only present, its pace is picking up speed. Such change and associated confusions are not going away (Roxburgh, 2005, pp. 33-35). ‘No church is above culture. It is as much shaped by the culture in which it is birthed as by the gospel that it seeks to live by and proclaim to the world’ (Gibbs, 2007, p. 157). Eddie Gibbs identifies that the North American church is significantly shaped by its culture, sometimes in a negative way (Gibbs, 2007, p. 157). Although Gibbs does reference the Evangelical Church, his comments also include what he refers to as “traditional denominations” as well within the decade of the 1980s (Gibbs, 2007, p. 159). ‘The answer to the secular challenge therefore, cannot be found in individual self-cultivation alone, but in recovering the traditional power of the church whose basic identity is being shaped as it indwells the Christian story’ (Chan, 2011, p. 7). This individualism has been noted in several other sections within this literature survey. It is not exclusive to Canadian evangelicals but is wrapped up in the many elements of secularism within the

church and society as the church moves further away from its place within the purposes and mission that God intends for it. Culture and its impact and the secularization of society has been an issue for many years although more has been written about it as of late (Beyers, 2015). Beyers notes that there has been an increased tendency of the church towards commercialization. The church has commercialized itself - marketing, presenting and selling its product. The franchising of the church and its advertising is another indication of the growing secularization.

I get the sense these days that many of my colleagues have external rewards in view...How do I get published?... Those are questions that are beside the point. We're not a market-driven church, and the ministry is not a market-driven vocation. We're not selling anything, and we're not providing good and services. If a pastor is not discerning and discriminating...then the demands or the desires of the congregation can dominate what he or she is doing – and that creates the conditions for nonpastoral work (Wood, 2002, p. 19).

In Wood's article, an interview with Eugene Peterson, Peterson highlights some of the secular challenges as evidenced by the pursuit of external rewards, rather than a satisfaction with the pastoral role. He hints at the claims, demands, desires and potential practices of the congregation, which may not be aligned with what God intends and through which the pastor must discern and navigate and lead. Peterson dismisses the market forces upon the church and the pastoral vocation as something that is external to what the church is to reflect and engage in and be driven by – which is to be rooted in God and His word and His purposes.

The work of managing churches and church institutions races on... Church consulting and fund-raising firms proliferate... Videos, CDs, training programs, and workshops pop up all over the U.S. and around the world. The business of the church is a growth industry. Much of this activity continues, however, without thorough research, study or critical theological analysis by practical theologians, and without any broadly accepted method for practitioners to assess and reflect theologically on church practices (Frank, 2006, p. 115).

Much of the growth of these church associated initiatives is driven by the opportunity to capitalize financially on the practices and programs of the church or in the professionalization of advice given to make the churches more 'successful'. Success and efficiency may have become more of a focal point for the church and ministry however, the value and development of persons should be a priority, with efficiencies within the church serving to meet those priorities (Nass, 2015, pp. 8-9). The church presents an opportunity to generate significant income to enterprising individuals. There are more church

consultants applying business principles to the church, where ‘leadership is reduced to management; faith in providence is replaced with strategic planning; and the gifts are reduced to advanced skills’ (Beyers, 2015, p. 6), which points to how much secularization has permeated the spiritual. What was once the domain of pastors to lead and a church congregation to determine, is now contracted out to church consultants, for almost every aspect of church life.

The emphasis now is more upon management, strategic planning and the hiring of specialized skills to meet various needs. The result of this, Beyers points out, is that ‘the church is managed like a business and no longer is distinguishable from secular institutions within society’ (Beyers, 2015, p. 6). There has been an obvious shift in how the evangelical church functions. Schmidt suggests that within his denomination, the Mennonite Brethren Church, he has observed that it has become a ‘professional, pastoral-dominated system’ (Schmidt, 1979, p. 3). He observes that ‘church leadership now parallels business and secular models and that cultural conditioning is more determinative than scriptural directives’ (Schmidt, 1979, p. 4). This professionalization appears to be evident in other denominational structures, as Schilderman, Van Der Ven and Felling (1999) point out in their study of Dutch Catholic pastors. Although the Catholic, hierarchical-pyramidal authority structure appears to continue to be present, there is a growing shift away from an orthodox conception of church authority in favour of what they term a functional authority based upon the local communities being served and pastoral know-how (Schilderman, et al., 1999, pp. 80-82). They identify that within the Catholic church, the process of professionalization they are wrestling with may signify a struggle for authority as they attempt to overcome the historical, ‘legal claims of the church’ (Schilderman, et al., 1999, p. 82). While these issues of authority and professionalization within the Catholic church are distinct from those within the evangelical church, they do affirm a similar struggle with adapting to the current cultural influences and pressures.

Christians should also be critical of any assumptions that underlay their current practices as well, and what has become normative may not be accurately rooted in scriptural principles. There have been other examples of how the secular practices have entered into church practices. These tie in to the concept of expectations perhaps, but are part of the lived experiences of pastors and often result in conflicts while navigating these differences. In Knight Johnson’s study, she found that:

clergy and their spouses find that congregations function much like secular employers, and many find themselves navigating conflicts between what they expected or hoped (an ideological framing of the church as an employer) and the reality that churches are no different from secular employers (Knight Johnson, 2018, p. 3).

That pastors view their churches more like secular employers may demonstrate a shift of organizational structures and practices to reflect more of the examples available within the business community and the increased secularization of the church. While some aspects of the church as employer are governed by governmental requirements and things such as payroll deductions and taxes, the attitudes behind the practices of the church as employer or ‘boss’ may be more in view.

Today, we know a nonprofit is such because it has the appropriate legal status. It becomes harder and harder to determine an organization’s form (business, government, or charity) based upon functional activity alone...this blurring of sector boundaries stems from cultural shifts that unfold over a long period of time (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 957).

The secularizing pressures and cultural shifts that press in upon the church have resulted in a blurring of identity and an inability to identify a church as it was intended to be as evidenced by the lack of recognition based upon an observation of the conduct, activity and witness of the church within its context. The church in Canada is reflective of the culture and society around it and is less distinguishable as a separate entity as it too has been molded and shaped by changing attitudes, perspectives and the values of society.

#### 2.2.5 Post-Secularization

Post-secularization implies moving beyond the secular and reaching a satisfactory level of constructive integration and collaboration between educational, religious, political and other social systems, where religion is renewed as a more individual and subjective choice of components that give meaning to the life by an individual and characterized by an increased focus on personal religion within a pluralistic society and with a general attitude of indifference or irrelevance of the society towards faith, God, or any religion (Oviedo & Lumbreras Sancho, 2021, p. 5; Dalferth, 2010, p. 339; Hogue, 2010, pp. 348-349; Beyers, 2014, pp. 9-11). There is a marked separation between church and state and any ‘reference to religion or spirituality is no longer of basic, principal, or indeed any importance at all for its self-understanding and self-definition’ (Dalferth, 2010, p. 324) and individuals become determinant for spiritual choice or religion in their own lives.

The concept of post-secularization and its impact upon the church is a relatively new phenomenon, which posits a movement past the rationalism of the modern and secular and introduces a system of society that embraces four significant components that influence society. Beyers identifies these as individualization, fragmentation, and fundamentalism and civil religion (Beyers, 2014, pp. 9-11).



Firstly, there is the element of individualization. This is where religious authority for belief and the determination of right and wrong rests with the individual and not religious authorities. Often an individual's spirituality may be private or practiced within a small sphere involving close persons and where the elements of one's spirituality may be characterized as subjective and may be exchanged or replaced by other elements at the individual's discretion. Personal emotions and experiences also become acceptable methods of determining meaning religious authority and the authority of the institutionalized church is diminished.

Secondly, there is fragmentation. This represents the separation of the various spheres of social systems, such as politics, education, religion, science, law and others. There is no integration of faith or the influence of religion within these systems, unless society permits it.

Thirdly, there is the concept of civil religion. Civil religion identifies a potential response to the subjective and multiple responses to religion by recognizing the adoption of specific religious beliefs along the lines of a particular culture or segment of society in an effort to maintain a particular religious heritage of set of beliefs.

Fourthly, there is fundamentalism. This represents another response to the perceived changes to religion brought about by modernism and post-modern society. Its intention is the maintaining and reinforcing a moral and ethical framework in society by reinforcing institutional and doctrinal authorities within communities of faith and by restoring more traditional values. This may be accomplished through either a rigid effort to return to the historic way things were done, or by an authentic demonstration of the faith, hope and love that characterizes God and is outside of the typical societal framework.

With this movement from a secular to a post-secular culture, some may move towards a definition as a period where there is a 'renewed interest in the spiritual life' (Dalferth, 2010, p. 317). However, the opportunity for a renewal in spirituality given the changing elements of society does not necessarily translate into the reality of one. Within a post-secular society there is the opportunity for a renewed interest in spirituality and faith and a way forward for the Christian church in a reoriented manner rooted in a dependency on God (Dalferth, 2010, p. 339) and one that is not reliant upon a position of privilege afforded it by government above other elements of society.

### 2.2.6 Exodus of Clergy

Closely aligned with and perhaps impacted by the contextual issues identified here thus far, is a challenge facing the church, which has been the numbers of clergy that are leaving ministry. There has been an ‘exodus of clergy’ (Joynt, 2016; 2017; 2018), which has significant impact upon the church as ‘they are instrumental in its growth, both spiritually and numerically, by equipping members in their relationship with God, one another and those within their communities’ (Joynt, 2017, p. 2). While Joynt references a South African context, Elkington suggests that this is more of a global phenomenon, and that ‘three pastors leave the ministry in North America every day, and significant numbers experience ministry burnout’ (Elkington, 2013, p. 7). A significant negative implication of this for the church is that people may then view the whole church in light of these perceived failures. They may then avoid or dismiss the church and matters of faith and those within the church may avoid any interest in serving the church in pastoral ministry. This would further reduce the number of potential pastoral leadership candidates to serve the church in the future. There has been a notable decrease in the enrolment of seminary students in recent years in North America, which would contribute to a developing pastoral shortage. Also, within Canada it is significant to note that the average age of pastors is increasing and a significant percentage of pastors are of retirement age or already over 65 (Paddey, 2018) without sufficient numbers of new pastors entering the ministry to replace them.

There are several reasons why such an exodus has been observed and several authors have written about some of the suggested reasons. Such reasons include: the notion of poor, or ‘toxic’ organizational cultures or leadership by those responsible for encouraging, supporting, identifying or preparing clergy for a vocational role (Joynt, 2017); the lack of a clear or defined call and adequate preparation for ministry, or not being actually called to vocational ministry at all (Joynt, 2016); pastors who are not Christians and recognize that within the context of their ministry and leave (Dennett & LaScola, 2010); conflict within the church or ministry (Joynt, 2018); an initial mismatch between clergy and the congregation, leading to conflict, job dissatisfaction and leaving (Mueller & McDuff, 2004); and pastoral burnout (Chandler, 2009). All of these highlight challenges associated within the church context which have significance for elements of the practice of pastoral hiring.

## 2.3 Church Administration, Management and Leadership Issues

This section deals with issues related to church administration and management, organizational culture, governance and broader leadership and church aspects that impact the pastoral hiring process.

### 2.3.1 Church Administration and Management

There are many factors and variables to be considered during a pastoral search process. There may be more considerations for a pastoral hire than for those within a secular workplace, yet a strong leadership selection process is critical, especially with an understanding of all of the complexities of finding a strong match.

Within the context of a rural church pastor, unlike an urban one, ‘there is less likely to be a church office and parish administrator... and they need to give extra priority to these roles’ (Randall, 2011, p. 123). Regardless of the setting, administration in a church is vital. Within an urban church, there is more likely to be paid staff to attend to many of the administrative functions in a timely fashion. In a rural context there is less likely to be additional paid staff, and volunteers serve in a significant capacity to keep the church running.

One of the most important aspects of organizational culture is leadership... For churches, such issues as leadership and leaders are one of the most important ones, and they are strongly connected to the conflict between spiritual and administrative management (Ershova, 2012, p. 235).

In this, Ershova and Hermelink rightly identify the tension that can exist in leadership as there are realities and expectations that must be addressed, often on a daily basis. In identifying the administrative aspect of the church, they emphasize leadership that is more reflective of management and general organizational culture, including and emphasis upon goals, finances, maintaining necessary legal requirements, buildings and their maintenance and other factors (Ershova, 2012, pp. 231-232). For those pastors whose primary work is considered spiritual, there is often a dissatisfaction with performing administrative functions and they press towards the more traditional role of a pastor. However, there is often a recognition that the administrative tasks are necessary for the church and so it often falls to the pastor to fulfill them (Ershova, 2012, p. 237). ‘Studies indicate that ministers are forced to spend almost two fifths of their total work day in administrative work which they regard as of minimal importance, which they despise, and for which they’ve received little training’ (Bomberger, 1967, p. 11). This has not changed, in fact, administrative tasks may occupy more time today. In recognition of the increased complexity of church ministry operations today, the executive pastoral role has seen an increase within the church. In order to address the administrative and management roles of the pastor, this new role has been adopted by churches that can afford multiple staff to attend to the administrative duties and alleviate some of the responsibilities of the senior pastor. ‘Among these duties are strategic planning; budget development and management; staff

selection, development, and oversight; vision and ministry alignment; facilities and other resource utilization; spiritual leadership; and the myriad daily challenges faced by senior pastors' (Powell, 2009, p. 245). There are many duties and expectations placed upon a pastoral leader. A church leader often lives in both realities as they are to be primarily concerned with nurturing and developing the spiritual identity and health of those within their identified community. They must also be aware of and attending to the very real administrative needs to ensure: that any facility is maintained and adequate for their spiritual function and access; any other staff, whether volunteers or paid are properly screened, supervised, trained, encouraged and cared for; and a host of other administrative functions that occur on a regular basis. These tasks often go beyond the scope of expectations that a pastor may have, and their theological education would not likely include training for the scope of these administrative tasks. Such administration goes beyond what are typically considered the pastoral roles of preaching, counseling, visitation and spiritual oversight. In larger churches, where they may have multiple staff, such administrative tasks might be the responsibility of other persons, but in smaller congregations, with a smaller volunteer base and financial budget, the expectation may be that the pastor attend to these matters. Capable and discerning leadership is necessary to navigate the challenges associated within the diversity of the roles they may be hired for.

Oosthuizen and Lategan suggest that there is a strong biblical basis for the five basic functions of management, specifically 'planning, organizing, leading, staffing and controlling in order to effectively achieve desired goals' (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015, p. 552). They also suggest that these functions are necessary for the church and that the church is 'crying out to be managed effectively and efficiently' (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015, p. 554). As they further develop their thoughts, they affirm and differentiate between leadership, management and administration within the structure of the church (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015, pp. 564-566). They suggest that most within the pastoral role are engaged in leadership, management and administration (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015, p. 565). While this may be accurate, their solution to this appears to be greater education and managerial training for those who would serve the church in order to address obvious deficiencies (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015, p. 566) in order to 'manage the household of God more effectively and efficiently' (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015, p. 566). They suggest that Moses was unable to manage the people of God and that it was a problem until someone with better skills stepped in to assist (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015, p. 566). There is an appeal to the expectations of a consumer society, pointing to the need of the church to update their structures and management styles. This may be the solution, however updating the church according to consumer needs and expectations and developing new management styles and organizational structures solely on the basis

of societal expectations and management science may require more critical reflection from a theological perspective to ensure faithfulness to God's mission and purposes for His body. In this the church can avoid the temptation of believing themselves fully capable of accomplishing God's mission through their own innovation, knowledge, skills and competencies to effectively control and mobilize the various people that make up the body of Christ (the church) and to become more efficient in the use of available resources.

David S. Steingard, has developed an approach called 'spiritually informed management theory' (Steingard, 2005, p. 227) wherein he affirms Mitroff's assertion that 'Spirituality is the essence of management. Spirituality is an integral part, if not the very essence of management' (Mitroff, 1998, p. 77; Steingard, 2005, p. 237) emphasizes that within any management system, there is a spiritual component. Steingard suggests that there is a distinction between religion and spirituality. Referencing Guillory, Steingard identifies religion as form, or structure, while spirituality is categorized as essence or experience (Steingard, 2005, p. 228). Steingard suggests that one can use a religious structure organizationally and produce something spiritual - a desired experience, however he acknowledges that this causality is not guaranteed (Steingard, 2005, p. 228). The church, while considered an organism, is also perceived as an organization and one that has elements of working with, or managing people. This serves as a reminder of the conceptual distinction and importance of spirituality over mere religious form or praxis, especially within a church context as often administrative and management elements may overshadow the emphasis upon the foundational nature and purpose of the church.

Mitroff in his treatment of ethical management, acknowledges that spirituality does not conform to conventional economic thinking but rather it is unique in its priority to care for, love and value others (Mitroff, 1998, p. 76). Perhaps the same may be said for other management science constructs if they are used in an attempt to mold the spiritual into a new paradigm, rather than allowing spiritual and biblical foundations to inform practices around organizational management and practices. Things such as human resource functions and the synergy that is found within diverse and unique skills being brought together to accomplish a common goal and objective may be better realized if things are ordered, particularly within the church, according to the various parts that are identified and brought together for the purposes that God intends rather than trying to force a structure, organization and people to fit what may only be the plans of a few individuals. 'Management theory and practice can never be value-neutral. Management is underpinned by specific values, whether people are aware of them or not' (Dyck, et al., 2009, p. 186). Those values typically reflect societal values, and, as noted by Dyck, et al., emphasize materialism and individualism and have been secularized for decades (Dyck, et al., 2009, p. 186). They emphasize that the

moral orientation or perspective of an individual informs their interpretation or management practices and influences their actions as a result (Dyck, et al., 2009, pp. 192-193). They also suggest that the choice or decisions rooted in an individual's moral orientation demonstrates an 'act of faith' (Dyck, et al., 2009, p. 193).

Competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency are the most important things, and that a focus on profit-maximizing behavior is the best way to serve humankind... or do we believe that social justice, spiritual and intellectual growth, and sustainable development are as important as competitiveness and productivity (Dyck, et al., 2009, p. 193)?

Whether in organizational management or the church, the moral orientation, or point-of-view of people and the values or priorities that they view as the highest worth, frames the manner in which they approach and determine the management and therefore the priorities of the group. 'Whether we admit it or not – when we teach and practice conventional management, we are already promoting a normative order through the values that are inherent in the materialist-individualist moral-point-of-view' (Dyck, et al., 2009, p. 193). There are underlying assumptions that seem to influence organizational management theory and practices that are rooted within their secular nature and development.

So, while the Church experiences similar difficulties to other organizations in the harmonious management of this people, it cannot simply be prepared to adopt managerial practices which are blatantly manipulative or which are based on an ethic of harmony in itself (Watkins, 1993, p. 379).

While any attempts to manage a church congregation through involving the membership in a consultative process by the leadership may help people feel involved and connected, however the primary emphasis for the church leadership is to be about spiritual discernment and what God may intend for the church in making a decision. The primary purpose in decision-making and church management should not be to ensure harmony within the congregation as conflicts may undoubtedly arise (Watkins, 1993, p. 379). It is to be sensitive to the people, but honoring, reflective and discerning of the priorities and choice that God would intend.

There are many available books and resources on church administration for practitioners. Everything from financial polices and procedures, personnel and office administration, managing churches and not-for-profits, to planning special events and legal matters (Powers, 2008) are addressed with practical resources for a pastor to navigate the administrative aspect of the church. There are significant aspects to the administration of a church, made more complex by the growing size and nature of a congregation and the

application of the various aspects of administrative will vary within each church context. The challenge is to adequately identify and differentiate between the pastoral role and the myriad of administrative and management tasks involved with in the church so that the church reflects what it is to be.

### 2.3.2 Church Governance and Organization

Within most churches, some form of governance or organization structure is established to allow for greater organization and clarity of roles and responsibilities. The pastoral hiring process is not standard for all churches, as organizational structures vary from: an independent, autonomous congregational church entity (for example, Baptists), where decisions and authority rests within the congregation; hierarchical churches (for example, the Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Church), where authority and decisions typically flow to the congregations from higher officers; and denominational churches (for example, the Presbyterian and Christian Reformed Church), which fall between the two others and where authority and decisions are resident in elected ministers and lay persons who serve the broader constituency. Levels of congregational involvement and decision-making varies depending upon the individual denomination (Zech, 2003, pp. 325-326).

Within several evangelical denominations within Canada, they typically have an elder board, comprised of both lay and paid officers (elders, overseers, pastors). They are primarily responsible to teach and preach the bible, to give oversight and leadership to the church and to guard it from error (FEB Central b, n.d.). The pastoral position is a part of this elder board. They also have a deacon board, primarily responsible for assisting the elders in spiritual matters and dealing with business matters and administrative duties of the church (FEB Central b, n.d.). These structures are often required to comply with legal requirements due to regulatory oversight and governmental requirements. They may vary depending upon the type of charitable status and legal organizational structure that a church is required to have.

Within church governance and organizational structure, if a church is incorporated, then the articles that were identified in setting up the corporation ‘forms the basis for the corporation’s governance and legal existence’ (Ross, 2013). From the articles, a church establishes its bylaws, which determine and establish the rules that govern the church’s operations and internal practices regarding membership, how decisions are made by the organization, how directors are identified – their qualifications and the scope of their authority and responsibility. Once the bylaws are established, the Board may establish policies that are

aligned with the bylaws and constitution and typically deal with hiring practices, job descriptions, employment policies and general procedures for the church to observe in its practices (Ross, 2013).

Ershova and Hermelink note in their research that from an ‘organizational culture point of view, the administrative side is a significant part of church culture, and very meaningful to its members’ (Ershova, 2012, pp. 241-242). They also note that leadership is vital to the organizational structure and can shape the orientation of its structure (Ershova, 2012, p. 235). The results of their study suggest that within the protestant churches they examined, the leaders are more goal and achievement oriented and that their ‘orientation is more towards a rational culture in order to address various problems like decreasing membership and finances’ (Ershova, 2012, p. 236). This has implications for their organizational structure, as well as their priorities on a weekly basis in ministry. Church structure, governance and their leadership culture are significant elements with a pastoral hiring process and may influence a search committee and board as they consider and evaluate potential pastoral candidates in this light.

### 2.3.3 Understanding of Organizational Goals and Purpose

An understanding of the organization, the position and work environment should be clearly known and understood by those seeking to select and hire a candidate. Even in the establishment of criteria for a candidate, this is a significant requirement. ‘Hiring criteria should also be consistent with long-term organizational goals and with strategies, policies and procedures appropriate for goal accomplishment’ (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 173). In a church environment, this would require that the church has a clear understanding of what their purpose and mission is and develop the position description and criteria that reflects that understanding. An accurate understanding of the organization, translated into a clear job description and expression of the characteristics and culture of the organizations, helps to recruit suitable candidates and there is a tendency that they will also remain with an organization longer (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 177-178). Having an understanding of the organization and its culture is significant, particularly for religious organizations such as the church as the church and other religious institutions typically hold more strongly to their values and practices (Naidoo, 2017, p. 532) and can become entrenched in a particular mindset or way of doing things. Citing D. Collins, Naidoo affirms that ‘organizational culture impacts on organizational processes, even its performance’ (Naidoo, 2017, p. 532). Since organizational culture impacts things such as goals, purposes and processes it is a significant element for an organization and particularly a church to be aware of as it reflects upon elements of its practice when embarking on a pastoral hiring process.



#### 2.3.4 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is one of the most important forces acting upon institutions and organizations (Naidoo, 2017, p. 531). While not readily visible, it nonetheless has significant influence upon an organization's practices and actions. The 'concept of organizational culture reflects aspects of organizational life that are not visible, yet have enormous impact on both employees and organizations' (Kwantes, 2015). It is a shared, 'shaping pattern of norms, values, practices, beliefs and assumptions' (Naidoo, 2017, p. 532) that are considered valid by a group and are passed to new members as the way to interpret and respond to similar events and activities (Naidoo, 2017, p. 532; Kwantes, 2015).

Organizational cultures develop from forces within an organization, such as its mission, the values of the founder of the organization, and the values of top management. It is also strongly affected from forces outside the organization such as societal cultures and forces from the profession or industry within which the organization functions (Kwantes, 2015).

There are many outside forces that act upon the church and therefore can influence the organizational culture and can be more visible in the interaction between a search committee and pastoral candidate during a hiring process. Many forces are also internal to an organization and as Kwantes identifies, many things related to the mission and values of an organization are developed through the founder of the organization. 'Congregations, like any organization, have a culture. A congregation's culture is likely to be influenced by the theological tradition of the congregation. These differences in culture represent and produce different meanings and interpretations of the leader's role' (Dollhopf & Scheitle, 2013, p. 681). While the founder of an organization may establish original values, within the church it is the ongoing theological traditions of the congregation or religious group that may maintain, or influence future values and interpretations of the role of the pastor. Leadership transitions therefore may prove challenging within a church where the organizational culture may become embodied through a particular pastor. When that pastor leaves, it is difficult to find another pastor that clearly embodies the congregational culture in the same manner and with the same emphasis in their role to meet the congregational interpretations and expectations of what that leader should be.

The selection process for church leaders requires a good understanding of what is the culture and environment of the church. This can be a problem if such an assessment and evaluation has not been completed. The selection committee is tasked with sifting through candidates to assess the possible suitability and fit of the person to their pastoral role and need. In their research, Mitchell, Holtom, Lee,

Sablynski and Erez included within their research dimension and surveys the concept of fit as in “I feel like I am a good match for the company”. However, these single items are potentially unreliable’ (Mitchell, et al., 2001, pp. 1116-1117). They defined fit as: ‘an employee’s perceived compatibility or comfort with an organization and with his or her environment’ (Mitchell, et al., 2001, p. 1104) and included considerations of ‘corporate culture; job knowledge; skills; abilities; fit to the community and surrounding environment’ (Mitchell, et al., 2001, p. 1104). The ability of an individual to be able to practically determine their fit solely on the basis of how they feel apart from these other, objective criteria is limited. Mitchell, et al. identify this within the scope of their study and suggest a ‘linkage between fit and an employee’s feeling tied to an organization both professionally and personally’ (Mitchell, et al., 2001, p. 1104).

Within a secular environment, many effective organizations ‘constantly modify and refine the mechanism by which they achieve their purposes – rearranging their structure of roles and relationships and their managerial processes’ (Miles, et al., 1978, p. 547). Miles et al. identify that there has been a progression of adaptation by organizations and that systems and structures are needed in order to deal with the complexities of ‘mixed views around strategy and structure’ (Miles, et al., 1978, p. 561). While noting these complexities and the struggles of organizations to deal with mixed management strategies, they envision that such struggles may produce a new organization type (Miles, et al., 1978, p. 561).

One other area of needed assessment for a church in a pastoral search and transition process at an organizational level, coupled with a knowledge of their mission and purpose, would be ‘the overall health of the church, its readiness for change, and the adaptability and ability to learn and develop new capabilities on the part of the congregants’ (Pearse, 2011, p. 5). A new pastoral hire brings with it transition, and at times, change. It is important to understand the impacts of organizational culture and its readiness for change even as the elements of a pastoral hiring process commences and after a hire as a church navigates the introduction and transition of a new person within a senior pastoral leadership role. ‘It’s not always a mismatched skillset that’s to blame for a failed hire. A culture clash may be just as problematic, maybe even more so’ (McDonald, 2013, p. 62). With organizational culture not necessarily obvious to an outside observer, its importance and significance during a hiring process, and for a new pastor at the start of his ministry, cannot be understated. At times, a pastoral hire may not work out. Often it may not be a result of skills or competencies but rather the inability of the new pastor to understand and integrate into the new context, or for the congregation to adapt to, accept or respond positively to a new pastoral leader.

### 2.3.5 Leadership Selection

The desire for a positive hiring outcome – one that results in a good candidate, with appropriate skills and the ability to successfully contribute and accomplish the role for which they were hired is the typical goal for both Christian and secular work environments. There are often many hours invested in a search process, and several variables that are considered to accomplish that goal. Some of those variables are more apparent, like skills, training or experience – all valuable to a role, while others may reflect the character and environment of the workplace, or external regulations and considerations that govern or influence the process. Within both the church and a secular environment, the concept of leadership is key. Within the business world, or almost any secular organization there are tremendous amounts of literature emphasizing the priority of hiring the right person, and the consequences of a poor hire, which can have obvious effects on productivity, and less tangible ones which impact the morale of a group thereby impacting other people by the results of that hiring decision (Dobson, 2015, p. 2).

Without a doubt, the costs of hiring wrong person could be massive. Cost alone may not be the only consequence of “wrong hire” ... In the business world, the costs of “wrong hire” at the management level can also cause side effects like the departure of subordinate staff, who feel the lack of care from above and for whom there are many alternative career options outside the organization that can be pursued. The quality of hire is perhaps the most critical of all measurement parameters. It’s apparent that companies need to invest in proper pre-screening and assessment system in order to improve quality of new hires and minimize risk of hiring wrong people. Any short cuts in the hiring and selection process can be devastatingly expensive. (Canada Human Resources Centre, n.d.).

There is a strong consensus as to the importance and priority of good leadership selection across all organizations. There is also a recognition that taking short cuts or not being thorough in a hiring process and also lead to poor outcomes. Varied or unclear definitions and expectations for a new leader, depending upon the context and culture that they might work in can present a challenge in selecting a good leader. A further challenge is to understand, in the midst of the current culture and various influences, what that looks like for the evangelical church. The availability of suitable candidates, or suitable candidates who may be willing to serve in a particular church context may add additional challenges to a hiring process. This may be particularly true for either rural or urban churches where the cultural realities of a community may be vastly different from a candidate’s experience or comfort and thereby in effect, further reducing the potential number of persons to consider for a pastoral role. So, while leadership selection is important,

the ongoing development and recognition of leaders is vital to there being healthy pool of candidates to select from.

Within a typical work environment, employees and even leaders may transition on a periodic basis. To varying degrees, such changes will be impactful to the efficiency and operations of the business. A possible scenario which might lessen the upheaval and challenges cause during a time of transition would be for an internal candidate to be identified and chosen. Within both secular and Christian environments, there are benefits to developing and promoting internal candidates. Within a Christian environment, ‘leadership transitions occurring internally produce less conflict’ (Dollhopf & Scheitle, 2013, p. 690), but church ‘growth was harmed more by a person already involved in the congregation becoming the congregational leader’ (Dollhopf & Scheitle, 2013, p. 689). So, within a church it appears that there is less conflict in a transition when an internal candidate is hired – presumably because the candidate is known and the match to the identified selection criteria is more widely observed. That this appears to negatively affect growth may be an indicator of the culture of the church and perhaps a sense of complacency or a maintaining of the status quo, since not much has actually “changed” from the perspective of the congregation and its various constituent groups. This speaks to the selection process, but more widely to the church culture and possible issues of expectations, comfort levels and resistance to change.

A significant challenge to pastoral selection is how to maintain the quality and number of candidates and being able to critically examine the standards and practices used in recognizing, assessing and selecting pastoral leadership. This potentially speaks to the role of bible colleges and seminaries in the education of future pastors and leaders in their spiritual formation and their theological and biblical training. It also speaks to the role of the church in their ongoing nurturing and development of their congregants towards what could be termed “spiritual maturity” within the evangelical community. Finally, it speaks to the role of those entrusted with the search and hiring process – that they may be able to navigate all of the complexities of the process, with a discerning mind and the necessary skills and/or tools at their disposal to hopefully ensure the best fit. With the importance of leadership selection and balancing all of the variables, considerations and complexities that entails, often by those in a volunteer capacity, there may be some important considerations for tools to be developed that might assist or establish some type of normative practice to serve the church in its pastoral hiring process. Most pastoral hiring processes tend to involve an assessment of a candidate’s training, previous experience or accumulated skills or competencies (Mueller & McDuff, 2004, p. 262).

When looking at job descriptions for a senior pastor, there are many common elements involved, so there is an apparent recognition of the role, the tasks, the expectations and the value that a church may place on its spiritual leader. The pastor is typically called to serve a very specific role and purpose within the church and be compensated for it so that they are available, dedicated to the task, the people and the pursuit of desired outcomes.

### 2.3.6 Christian Leadership

Anderson commented that ‘although there are numerous books on leadership and leadership training opportunities, fewer leaders are actually being developed and agreement on any theology of church leadership is minimal’ (Anderson, 1994c, p. 136). Fewer potential leaders available for consideration for ministry positions makes it more difficult to select the best person for the role and not simply settle for the best of who is available. ‘... with few candidates, it is tempting to be less selective, and the resulting fall off in quality may well lead to clergy misconduct and legal entanglements’ (Kolbet, 2009, p. 194). The priority for quality leadership and especially pastoral leadership is evident.

If dissatisfied clergy leaves one church in search of another, congregations are more frequently faced with periods without a permanent pastor, and periods during which they must search for and recruit another minister. Few would argue that such periods are “spiritual growth” times for the congregation (Mueller & McDuff, 2004, p. 270).

Within a church context the loss of their primary leader, the senior pastor, impacts almost every aspect of the church and is a time when the church is often unable to progress forward in ongoing and meaningful ministry. ‘Clergy play an important role in the church. A shortage of clergy has a negative impact on the numerical and spiritual growth of the church as an organization’ (Joynt, 2016, p. 5). Spiritual leadership and their role within the church is significant to the ongoing spiritual growth and development of a church (Purnomo & Wibowo, 2021), particularly as the structures within the evangelical church and church life are often centered around the pastoral role and ministry. The hiring of any new pastor to fill the role does not necessarily translate immediately into a renewed time of growth and stability as it takes time for relationships to form and for all constituent groups to identify and trust that this new pastor is their new leader as even the concept of leadership is one that holds different meanings and emphases for different people. A further challenge within the area of Christian leadership stems from the assumptions made regarding a pastoral candidate within institutional settings as a completed degree and course of study is

often seen as a validation of pastoral competency and calling (Perl & Chang, 2000, p. 172; Malphurs, 2006, p. 52).

### 2.3.7 Vocation and Calling

Vocation and calling are similarly used to convey the ‘idea of a clear identification of one’s specific purpose within the body of Christ’ (Veith, 2011, p. 119). This may be in service to the church, as with a pastor, but it also refers to the general idea of one’s specific role or vocation in life. Nel and Scholtz identify that while ‘calling is a core concept in theology and ministerial practice, it is used in different context and means different things to different people’ (Nel & Scholtz, 2015, p. 1). They go on to identify four distinct historical periods that each contributed a distinctive element to the meaning of vocation (Nel & Scholtz, 2015, p. 1). They further suggest that in the early church, the ‘understanding of vocation was in keeping with the New Testament understanding of the term as a call to discipleship that included the call to community’ (Nel & Scholtz, 2015, p. 1). As history unfolded, the idea of calling to a particular role extended to secular work with a recognition that a call to serve is one that is general and shared by all, yet each particular call is distinct (Nel & Scholtz, 2015, p. 2). ‘Vocations are located within the kingdom of earth, where we are called to love our neighbour’ (Nel & Scholtz, 2015, p. 2). This was a position that was held by Luther, but as more time passed and culture continued to change, vocation became more identified solely with the idea of a person’s occupation.

For the purposes of a pastoral calling, ‘initially this is something believed to be granted by God and His Spirit at work in an individual. This is often to be confirmed often within a group of Christians as they see evidence of such an identification and purpose demonstrated within the life of a person who feels called’ (Bonis, 2015, p. 17). Elkington in his research suggests that ‘those who enter vocational ministry do so because they believe that it is a call from God, and they want to be obedient to that call’ (Elkington, 2013, p. 7). There is some form of inner prompting or conviction that may come with the idea of calling. ‘Clergy (pastors or whatever other name they may carry) are called to full-time ministry from among the working people of God (in a sense as one of them) with a specific calling towards the very same people’ (Nel & Scholtz, 2015, p. 5). The direction of this sense of calling may potentially be from amongst a group of people to serve within that same group. An important element of the identification of a calling comes from the participation of a congregation to recognize and validate such a calling (McKenzie, 2013, p. 2; Price, 2013, pp. 89-91). These elements of affirmation may also verify that vocational ministry is not the desired call (Price, 2013, p. 92). ‘The religious language of the call doesn’t focus on personal victories, money,

or church size; when used correctly the calling offers a way to talk about work in selfless and spiritual terms' (Christopherson, 1994, p. 230). The concept of calling is one that needs to be emphasized and used correctly as even the notion of calling has at times, lost its religious significance.

In their research, Nillsen et al. acknowledge that even though the idea of calling has been expanded to encompass more roles, the traditional definition and application of "calling" to clergy in ministry still has significance and is distinctive from the other vocations they researched in characteristics related to satisfaction and turnover (Nillsen, et al., 2014, p. 17). Wrzesniewski et al. identify the notion of career as being fulfilling through financial measures and advancement within a person's occupational field, and with calling the work is integral to one's life and fulfillment is found in doing the work itself (Wrzesniewski, et al., 1997, p. 22). There is more derived satisfaction to being engaged in and fulfilling the task of pastoral ministry than monetary rewards. 'For clergy, a call involves among others, a spiritual aspect which is demonstrated in service to God and the faith community within the structure or organization of the church' (Joynt, 2016, p. 4). The concept of calling has its origin and substance in God and encompasses a spiritual aspect that is evidenced through the actions of the pastor. Within his research, Joynt identifies that within his analysis of the data he compiled from the interviews conducted, 'the category "calling" comprised the most codes' (Joynt, 2016, p. 5). This sense of calling permeates the work of the church and those involved in full-time pastoral ministry and service. Joynt also made several observations as he explored the concept of calling through interviews with pastors. He observed that this sense of call was something that often 'evolved over time, whether it was being called to full-time pastoral ministry, a change in direction in the call, realizing one is not called to full-time ministry, or using full-time pastoral ministry as a stepping stone to another call' (Joynt, 2016, p. 3). With any sense of call, there is typically a process of discovery and affirmation by others and those who one may be asked to serve.

### 2.3.8 Scriptural Values in Church Management

While scripture (the Bible) does not explicitly give instruction for the various practices involved in church administration and management, it does provide principles and values for guiding conduct. Values such as: honesty, integrity, moral character, respect, love and responsibility, justice, servanthood, generosity, (Tumiwa, 2017; Jenssen, 2018, p. 8; Nass, 2015, pp. 10,14; Jenssen, 2018, p. 13) are used to frame practices, provide accountability and inform management (Tumiwa, 2017, pp. 70-71). Scripture also contains values aligned with church leadership. Within literature on this area and in scripture, it is 'presumed that Christian values should guide behaviour' (Jenssen, 2018, p. 8). The scriptural perspective

on church leadership and management embraces both Christian spirituality and ethics informed by scripture (Kessler & Kretzschmar, 2015, p. 2). Character reflects both behaviour and specific traits which are considered necessary for Christian leadership. Character reflects more fully the life of the person and it may be an indicator of how a person may act (Purnomo & Wibowo, 2021, p. 14). There are many biblical principles that relate to and inform aspects of character development and church management. This section is not intended to be a full theological treatment of all of the biblical verses related to character, values and leadership and management as that is not the focus of this study. The following examples are for illustrative purposes to emphasize some of the biblical considerations and values for this area of church practice. From the instruction to church leaders in 1 Peter 5:2-3:

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Church leadership is framed by a willingness to care for people and serve them as people entrusted to you, and by conducting yourself in a manner that is a good example of Christian character - reflective of God's priorities and character. From Matthew 20:25-26, Jesus addresses His disciples with a comment on leadership from His perspective: 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their superiors exercise authority over them. It shall not be this way among you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant'. The perception and model of leadership for those following Jesus was one of authority and power being wielded over people. Jesus says this is not the way of leadership for those following Him. Instead, they are to be marked by a character of selflessness and service to those they may lead. In the familiar passages of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, the qualifications identified there and used for church leadership predominantly reflect character, with only one related to skill (able to teach) and one related to experience (not a new convert). So, while skills and experience may serve and be useful, there is a significantly greater emphasis upon character that is worth noting and considering for church management and the identification of church leadership.



## 2.4 Practical Issues in Pastoral Hiring

This section looks at specific elements that are dealt with in the pastoral hiring process.

### 2.4.1 Employment Procedures

In any organization with the need to hire for a position, the issues that they face are similar. ‘The goal is to hire the person who is the best match for the job and specific work environment’ (McDonald, 2013, p. 62). That same goals would be true of any workplace position and within the church. The core hiring processes within these contexts are similar in their main elements. ‘A full understanding of staffing methods would require consideration of the environmental, organizational, occupational, and individual features involved at each of these stages’ (Marsden, 1994, p. 980). This section seeks to give an overview of the key elements of the hiring process and as such, will not conduct an exhaustive review of the intricacies of all of the elements within each stage. A basic hiring process includes: a determination of the criteria desired in a candidate (education, experience, particular skills, etc.); determining how to publicize and attract potential candidates (newspaper ads, online postings, hiring private hiring agencies, referrals); nature of the position and job description; choice of means of selection and screening candidates (tests, interviews, information on application forms or other devices); checking references or background checks; making a final decision and extending and negotiating a final hiring agreement (Marsden, 1994, p. 980) (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 171).

### 2.4.2 Stakeholder Expectations

The area of expectations is a significant one in a pastoral hiring process. The candidate, church board and congregation all will have expectations about many factors. Whether through bible college, seminary training, previous experience or the influence of family and culture, a pastoral candidate will have expectations about their role and sometimes even whether there is upward mobility from a beginning church pastorate to a larger church over time (Chang, 2013, p. 1). From a church or board perspective, those expectations may be shaped by their experience with previous pastors, input from denominational leadership, other churches or may be rooted in the personal needs or wants of the congregation or significant influencers within the congregation. The more common expectations within pastoral ministry typically include ‘teaching, public worship, counseling, administrating, ministry to the sick, community relations and youth’ (DeLuca, 1980, p. 237). Other roles or expectations of pastors include decisions related to money, property, staff and employee management some administrative responsibilities or

support; empowered leadership, meaning the pastor has not only the responsibility but some authority to lead and direct congregational engagement. The challenge as Anderson notes, is that

the expectations of the church in the 20<sup>th</sup> century are for a “Superman” model. Pastors are expected to know and do everything. They have even been called “ministers” as if the ministry was to be done by them for everyone else and better than everyone else (Anderson, 1994b, p. 390).

A congregation would expect that any person that was called to serve in a pastoral capacity would exhibit certain characteristics, qualities and competencies. Sometimes a congregation will expect a pastor to numerically grow the church because they need the additional anticipated income to pay the salary that they offered to attract a strong pastoral candidate (McMillan & Price, 2003, p. 16).

The candidate would expect that any hiring committee would be able to clearly and accurately represent the expectations of the board and the congregation during the process. Whether these expectations are clearly articulated or even understood by a congregation or board prior to embarking on a pastoral search process is important. ‘The pastoral ministry is a high calling. That calling can only be fulfilled if the expectations are clearly understood by the congregation and the pastor alike’ (Johnson, 2011, p. 105). Pastors often have an expectation and motivation that they will grow a church numerically, and that they will experience positive support from their congregation (Reimer, 2010, p. 3). Expectations on the part of both the candidate and the congregation can significantly influence the hiring process and subsequent ministry for both parties.

Congregations typically would expect that when hiring a pastor, the pastor will display a certain loyalty to the congregation, that they would become a part of their community and there would be a lengthy period of service and continuity of ministry (Wildhagen, et al., 2005, p. 397). Often that expectation is an assumption based upon a congregation’s historical view of calling, ministry and the church. However, studies show that this may be a faulty assumption regarding a pastor’s sense of calling and loyalty to a particular church, based upon economic pressures and opportunities for pastors to move to other churches that are perceived to offer greater economic benefit (Wildhagen, et al., 2005, p. 396).

Pastors who commence ministry after some formal training, whether Bible College or Seminary, and equipped with a sense of calling, may enter into that ministry with some expectations. It has been observed that ministry, community and the demands on their time may not be what they had anticipated (Elkington, 2013, p. 7). In a random sampling of 8150 Evangelical and Reformed pastors from 31 states and 20 countries, conducted between January 2015 and July 2016 of 8,150, lead researcher Dr. Richard J. Krejcir

of the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development noted that ‘52% of pastors feel they are overworked and cannot meet their church's unrealistic expectations’ (Krejcir, 2016, p. 16). These expectations may flow from the congregation, or the board and typically, pastors are expected to be on call and available all day, every day (Krejcir, 2016, p. 18). These types of expectations, while not necessarily communicated during a search process, may rest within the culture of a church and the reality that crises may occur at any time. When such crises happen, a church will typically look to their leadership – expecting their pastor to be available to engage with whatever situation arises, whenever it does. While it is not reasonable to expect that there will never be a crisis outside of the typical business hours of a pastor’s work week, the reality of the challenging nature that such demands bring, might need to be considered and planned for in managing those circumstances and expectations. Differing ideas, expectations or beliefs about what it is to be the church as an employer and the pastor as employee are identified as a conflict area. As churches attempt to care for their pastors there is often a tension beyond the salary costs associated with a pastoral hire and things like vacation, health care, pension or other benefits all become points of negotiation (Knight Johnson, 2018, p. 3). It is unlikely that such areas of negotiation are part of a seminary curriculum, or are typically included with pastoral orientation.

When comparing rural and urban contexts, the expectations and priorities for the pastoral role vary. Rural congregations expect their pastor to be more engaged in leading public worship, leading within their broader community and taking the time to personal visit his congregants, while in an urban context, the expectation is that their pastor be more engaged as a spiritual director (Randall, 2011, p. 123). A church’s history and culture (and a candidate’s) may have significant influence in their perceptions and expectations. Clear communication and understanding of role expectations is important for both the church and any potential candidate within a selection process. ‘People act on their perceptions, whether they are consistent with reality or not’ (Mueller & McDuff, 2004, p. 264). The church is not a homogeneous entity. This emphasizes the need for attention to clarify stakeholder expectations within a thorough hiring process and for both the church and the candidate to consider, understand and communicate what their expectations may be. In Joynt’s work, he identifies that there can often be conflict between a pastor and the board or congregation because there is poor communication, or a lack of clarity around role expectations, leadership, authority and accountability (Joynt, 2018, p. 6). Some of this conflict might be avoided through more effective communication around expectations and by both the candidate and the church board (and congregation) actually listening, hearing and understanding one another in their interactions (Joynt, 2019, p. 127). Since expectations are rooted in a person’s beliefs or hopes of an

outcome in line with what they want or their perception of how something should be done, where there is more than one person involved in an activity, communication and clarity around those expectations is vital.

#### 2.4.3 Developing Selection Criteria

While hiring criteria should align with an organization's purposes and goals, it can be challenging to establish clear criteria. Olian and Rynes, citing Miller indicate that 'although there are no standard techniques for translating organizational goals and strategies into selection criteria, many organizations establish criteria that reflect skills and abilities that traditionally have been perceived as effective' (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 173). Yet, Olian and Rynes also noted that 'selection criteria must reflect more than immediate job requirements if hiring decisions are to be maximally effective' (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 173). Typical criteria reflect knowledge, competencies, capabilities and qualities of a candidate that would match job requirements and provide the most likelihood for success (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 175).

Values are always a part of a process of making decisions, however the use of an explicit values-based selection criteria has been used increasingly within the selection and hiring process, where shared values have formerly been assumed (Rebelo dos Santos, et al., 2017, p. 93). 'Using a values-based approach in recruitment and selection, at least in some jobs, can be a useful criterion alongside others for considering individuals' fit in the organization's culture and thus a factor in their subsequent performance at work' (Rebelo dos Santos, et al., 2017, p. 93). The selection criteria established within the hiring process is a critical element. Depending upon the role, some criteria and skills required are more obvious but other necessary criteria are less so. Within a church environment in particular, character qualities and values are typically reflected within any criteria for pastoral leaders.

#### 2.4.4 Recruitment of Candidates

Ultimately, once the criteria are established, there is the need to recruit candidates to apply for the position so that they can become a part of the organization. The goal of candidate recruitment is to make qualified prospects aware of the opportunity within an organization and encourage their application. Most methods of recruiting candidates include: word of mouth; public or private recruitment services; print or online services and job boards; recruiting on appropriate school campuses, or searching for qualified candidates internally (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 176). If no qualified, internal candidate is available, then the various recruitment methods may be utilized. McDonald suggests that by hiring internally, the person 'would have

a good understanding of the business, culture and protocols' (McDonald, 2013, p. 62). He does acknowledge that:

a better job could be done to internally develop future leaders and that such an initiative could make the hiring process more efficient, prevent losing potential future leaders to other companies and any investment that had been made in training these persons (McDonald, 2013, pp. 62-63).

Internal candidates would have an understanding of the role, the organizational culture and other aspects of the position, and would be generally recognized by the organization as a possible fit, thereby reducing some of the tensions and additional training that may be required. Such an identification and fit would possibly be even more evident within an organization and community such as the church.

of the total range of possible organizations that exist, individuals only select certain organizations to which they apply for employment. That is, people find organizations differentially attractive, based on numerous factors; and their perceived congruence or fit with that organization determines whether or not they apply for employment (Goldstein, et al., 2017, p. 4).

People may typically apply for roles at companies that they deem to be a desirable workplace, or at least, desirable as a step towards another position and for a role that they feel fits with their skills and other factors. At the outset, how a church may present itself or how a prospective candidate may view the desirability of the church and position offered and their potential fit for the role, it will influence a candidate's decision to even apply.

Depending upon position and organization, methods of recruitment do not all yield similar results, so the choice of recruitment methods often varies. This may yield, more creative or sector-specific methods being used. (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 176). Trying to initially find suitable candidates for such a diverse environment as the church is also a challenge and may involve referrals, external recruiting through Christian job boards and websites, or denominational services for making known a church's need for a pastor or for a potential candidate to indicate that they are looking. 'External recruiting is only one facet of staffing practices. Other important stages include the practices and standards used to select employees from the pools of interested applicants recruited' (Marsden, 1994, p. 979).

#### 2.4.5 Screening

The ability to test, assess and evaluate candidate qualifications and suitability for a role is a vital aspect of the hiring process. It involves a screening process of various methods designed to more accurately assess the candidate, often including ability or capacities, motivation or a candidate's values and what drives

them and their personality and what they like to do (Furnham, 2017, p. 202). ‘Common techniques for evaluating applicant characteristics and qualifications include interviews, assessment centers, reference checks, work samples, and aptitude or ability tests... carefully chosen to minimize overlap and maximize the amount of information gained’ (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 178-179). These are the most commonly used techniques for screening, however within each technique, the level of detail or the specific means used can vary – for example, the degree of structure that an interview or its questions may have.

Traditionally, the selection interview focused on predicting a candidate’s technical skills relevant to the job in question. By asking the right questions, it is possible to ascertain a wide variety of criteria during the interview. These include the applicant’s personality, interests, motivation, person–job fit, organizational citizenship behaviour and integrity, among others... the interview can be administered in different formats for a variety of purposes, ranging from a two-person interaction with standard questions to a multifaceted, multi-person encounter (Blackman, 2017, p. 183).

Interviews often form a common and significant basis for screening and assessment in hiring. Many criteria may be explored during the interview process, which may take on various forms.

Furnham, in assessing the research evidence, identifies that the reference letter has only limited value in candidate screening as it demonstrates significant bias and may be more of an indicator of the referee than the character, competencies and suitability of a candidate and their potential (Furnham, 2017, pp. 215-216, 220).

Another significant element in a screening process is often the reference letter, but as Furnham points out, it is of limited value, Persons applying for a position would be unlikely to submit a reference that would not reflect positively for a candidate. ‘Many employers...ask for references only after candidates have been offered the job simply as a standard legal requirement but without taking into account any evaluative judgements made about the candidates’ (Furnham, 2017, p. 216). There are implications for the elements of the screening process and their usefulness therefore as a means towards the final decision. Some elements may only be included because of legal requirements or for other technical reasons after a decision is made. This may warrant a change to their use as criteria.

#### 2.4.6 Decision

Any screening process definitely needs to consider a possible fit, and in doing so must consider the individual’s capabilities and potential contribution to the organization according to the criteria that is established as well as how the candidate and the organization may feel about the relationship dynamic and

potential within the role. According to a Canadian Survey of more than 300 Canadian human resource managers, ‘nearly six in 10 (58 per cent) HR managers have misjudged a candidate’s fit with their company’s work environment while nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) have lost employees because they were not suited to the work environment’ (Dobson, 2015, p. 1). That seems to be a large percentage of persons that are hired that are not a good fit, or properly suited for the environment that they were hired into. Even with the appropriate skills in place, there is much more to be considered. Equal consideration for both the necessary skills and the fit of a person to the organization is seen as a significant element in the process of hiring (Dobson, 2015, p. 1) and one that requires a diligent effort on both the part of the organization and the candidate to determine this, as both are capable of a wrong assessment (Dobson, 2015, p. 1).

Olian and Rynes identify that the final hiring decision can have different forms. An organization might hire the first suitable candidate or continue to look for one that is considered ideal. An organization could also suspend their candidate search for a period of time. There are several factors that can influence the ultimate hiring decision that are not candidate specific but may reflect the organization’s own policies or culture around decisions making, the urgency of the positional need, or the persons making the decision and the many factors of the selection group itself who are a part of making a hiring decision (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 180). For the church in a pastoral hiring position, there is typically a greater sense of urgency as they are without someone fulfilling that specific role.

Each organization employs the majority, if not all of the core components and adapts them to suit their purposes. ‘If one is to trust practitioner surveys on what kind of personnel selection procedures organizations use, then the answer seems to be: ‘not much’’ (Konig, et al., 2010, p. 17). Konig et al., suggest that there is a gap between what is advised to be done through various research informing the personnel selection procedure and what is actually practiced (Konig, et al., 2010, p. 17). There does not appear to be a clear or consistent selection process or procedures being typically followed by organizations as they seek to select new personnel.

## **Chapter 3: Field Work**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This descriptive study explored the influence of secularizing tendencies upon the practices of the evangelical church. Due to the wide scope of practices within the church, the specific focus of this study was directed towards the pastoral hiring process within the evangelical church. This chapter begins with a review of the main research question and the objectives that framed it and includes the parameters and methodology of this study. The main portion of this chapter is a description and evaluation of the research findings as it flows most naturally together and in order to avoid unnecessary duplication. It is conceptualized around the seven primary steps of the pastoral hiring process. An analysis will follow in chapter four.

### **3.2 Research Question and Objectives**

Within this study, the main research question is: What is the pastoral hiring process of the evangelical church in the Canadian context so as to understand the various influences on hiring and the implications for church practice?

In order to address the research question and to properly understand and reflect upon church hiring practices, these objectives were the focus:

1. To explore the practical process of the pastoral hiring task in churches

Within this chapter, objective 1 was addressed within the first section, which is explorative and descriptive and focuses primarily upon the data. This section sought to encapsulate the various elements that make up the pastoral hiring process within the evangelical church in Ontario, Canada in an effort to thoroughly describe ‘what is going on’, making particular note of differences and unexpected elements that appear within the cases and their rural or urban contexts. This description of the process was helpful in creating an understanding of and evaluating the elements of the current practice and the priorities that were emphasized both in the establishment of the process and the specific criteria that were utilized for any potential candidates.

2. To understand the various scriptural, cultural and contextual factors that shape the way hiring practices are carried out, which allude to underlying values.



It is important to understand what undergirds and influences the pastoral hiring process as it occurs within a particular time and space. This objective highlights the emphasis that the church places upon scriptural values and considers the apparent influences of culture and context upon the hiring process. It also reveals any underlying values which may be in evidence. This objective is addressed within the latter portion of this chapter under the heading: Understanding the Scriptural, Cultural and Contextual Influences.

3. To reflect on the current pastoral hiring process and its implication for church practices.

This third research objective will be addressed in chapter 4, where a reflection and analysis of the entire pastoral hiring process and key themes that have arisen from the data occurs. The analysis will reflect upon the practices and values demonstrated within the pastoral hiring process. This is important because such reflection may inform the ongoing praxis of the church within this practice.

### **3.3 Research Process**

The qualitative methodology utilized was a descriptive, case study approach. There is a difficulty with proposing generalizations, particularly if examining a single case. Therefore, this study involved multiple cases in order to best investigate the research question and observe any commonalities and triangulation of the data in order to propose generalizations or develop transferability related to the pastoral hiring process (Leedy, 2010, pp. 137-138; Slevitch, 2011, p. 78).

There were four cases in this study. They were churches all from the same evangelical denomination and located within the province of Ontario. This study also included interviews with regional leadership that serve the denomination and offer resources and support to the pastoral hiring process. The case study was selected because it allowed for interactions with people, to hear their voice and to allow them to illuminate and a full and rich description of what is going on within their hiring practice (Gillham, 2000, p. 10; Osmer, 2008, p. 51).

### **3.4 Practical Theological Methodology**

This study primarily utilizes Osmer's 'descriptive-empirical task of practical theological interpretation... attending to what is going on in the lives of individuals, families and communities' (Osmer, 2008, p. 34). Through this approach, members of the church boards, search committees and regional leadership each had a voice in describing their roles, perspectives and experiences within the hiring process during semi-structured interviews. The emphasis for the practical theological interpretation is predominantly framed by the questions Osmer suggests can 'guide our interpretation and response...: What is going on? Why is

this going on?’ (Osmer, 2008, p. 4). The purpose of the researcher was to understand what was going on in the experiences of the participants and to accurately describe and represent those experiences. Then, working with their shared experiences and the associated materials collected, to engage in an ongoing interpretive, hermeneutical reflection (Osmer, 2008, pp. 20-21) throughout the process.

### **3.5 Theoretical Framework**

Within this study, the theoretical framework utilized the work of Olian and Rynes on organizational staffing from a general management science perspective to provide provided a framework for key elements of the practical aspects of a hiring process. Their work provided both elements of the practical hiring process as well as raising the importance of vocational ideals such as values, character considerations and competencies for any candidates. Olian and Rynes utilize a five-stage model of staffing (which refers to hiring) that reflects what is typically found, practically, within a hiring process and suggest that ‘different organizations require different types of people for effective performance’ (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 170-171). The elements of the staffing process they describe provide a good foundation for the practical investigation of this study, framed by aspects including: the choice of selection criteria; the selection of a recruitment method; marketing strategies; selection techniques; and elements involved in making a final decision (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 172). Olian and Rynes, from their respective backgrounds in organizational behaviour and industrial relations, and personnel and human resources also suggest several characteristics which are relevant to the hiring process that they build their propositions upon. They include: clear job requirements; personal skills and knowledge; previous achievements; external or internal recruitment; job criteria that is consistent with organizational goals, organizational form and structure; candidate’s education; character and personality, and decision-making process (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 173-181). These elements helped frame the data collection and exploration of this study. Specific areas of inquiry reflected these character aspects and included questions relevant to a church context. Within the practical theological framework of this study, this allowed for engaging with and understanding the elements found within the pastoral hiring process. These mirrored much of a typical hiring process as far as current pastoral hiring elements and practice (Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, n.d.). The typical pastoral hiring elements included: church reflection and decision to hire; establishing the criteria for a search committee and staffing that committee; establishing the profile and criteria for candidates; soliciting and recruiting candidates; the screening/assessment and interview process; the presentation of the candidate to the congregation and the final decision and vote. Within the hiring process is also the

notion of the fit of a candidate. The integration of these elements allowed for a fuller exploration of the hiring process and additional observation on how the evangelical church applies any character and values components that could inform their practice.

### **3.6 Sampling Technique**

The technique used for this study was purposive and convenience sampling. Cases were selected with a view to fitting within the following criteria: the churches were members of the identified denomination/association; the churches were engaged in a pastoral hiring process; there would be equal representation of cases from both the rural and urban community contexts; and the participants selected from those cases would be members of either the search committee or the church board, with representation from both so that a more complete understanding of their process could be obtained. The selection of interview candidates from the regional board was also purposeful in that they were positioned to be able to give additional perspective and input into the pastoral hiring process of their churches and region and add a further depth to the study.

The regional office was initially contacted to request their participation and support of this research. They were very willing to participate and provided assistance through a designated regional leader in support of this study. This support was in the form of regional communication and identifying potential churches to participate. Once the prospective churches were identified, either the church board chairperson or the interim pastor facilitated contact with the church board and search committee members on behalf of the researcher. This enabled the researcher to communicate directly about the research study, the ethical considerations, identify participants and obtain informed consent. The interview participants were selected from the search committee and church board, who were willing and consented to participate and were available to meet within a reasonable timeframe. It was also a matter of convenience due to the close proximity of the regional office to the researcher. There were also a large number of churches within a reasonable commuting distance (eight hours) for the purposes of scheduling and conducting the interviews, which was also a convenience in the selection of the cases.

### **3.7 The Sample**

The sample consisted of four evangelical churches - two urban and two rural or small town and all from the same evangelical association within Ontario, Canada. Seventeen participants were involved in fifteen interviews from the four cases. From Glenn and Hill's research they noted that the backgrounds -beliefs,

religious practices and social context of the rural or small-town sample may be more traditionalist and conservative and ‘contribute to an attitudinal and behavioral differentiation of the urban population’ (Glenn & Hill, 1977, pp. 39-44). The churches selected for these case studies were intended to represent evangelical congregations and their urban and rural contexts, which brought some diversity and representation to the sample. The four churches were selected from a single denomination in order to maintain a consistency of the churches studied as it pertained to their organization, doctrines, theology and core identity, being able to focus on the core research question and objectives and limiting possible variances due to differences in the evangelical tradition. In this way, the greatest degree of homogeneity available across the sample might limit the degree of bias (Gerring, 2001, p. 20). While allowing for the distinctiveness of each of the four church’s voices to be heard, all were from the same region and denomination with common instructional resources and organizational and theological perspectives, thus allowing for less comparison or bias that could enter the data from these influences if differing denominational groups were included in the sample. It allowed for the primary focus of the study and data to be upon the hiring process and not any denominational distinctives.

The specific churches were selected based upon being currently engaged in a pastoral search process, being located within Ontario and representative of either the rural or urban context. Since the hiring process often varies in the amount of time required, the churches involved were at different stages within their process. Since church involvement in a search process is dependent upon their respective needs to hire a pastor, the availability of churches for this study did not fit within an easily controllable timeline.

### 3.7.1 Case 1:

Designated: Case 1, Urban 1 (C1U1)

This church has been in existence for approximately seventy-two years serving within this medium sized, urban community. The church itself is on the outside of the community on a property that might be considered rural. There are no significant buildings or residences in the immediate vicinity, although several single-family dwellings and rural properties are within a couple of minutes’ drive. The population within this community is fairly homogeneous, predominantly of white, European descent although this demographic has been changing within the community. The church has seen a population decline over the years due to an aging population and the migration of youth to other centres. The church itself is predominantly Caucasian. There is a mix of rural influence as some people commute from the country more than forty minutes to attend church. There is a loyalty and association with this particular

denomination. The church has had more than nine senior pastors during their existence. Their average attendance during the time of this study was approximately ninety persons. They had a pastor, a church administrator and custodian on staff. There were four individual interviews conducted here involving two board members and two search committee members.

### 3.7.2 Case 2:

Designated: Case 2, Urban 2 (C2U2)

This church has been in existence for approximately sixty-three years serving within this large, urban context. The demographics of their community are diverse. There are many nationalities represented here, both within the congregation as well as on staff and in leadership positions. The community that the church draws from is a significant mix in terms of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, education and employment. It would be difficult to typify this congregation as anything other than significantly diverse. The church itself is located on a busy road with significant industrial, institutional and commercial properties around it and another large evangelical church just a few blocks away. There are areas of single and multi-family dwellings within a reasonable distance to the church. There is a loyalty to their denominational tradition and ministry that draws people from a wider area. Their average attendance during the time of this study was more than three hundred and fifty persons. They have had a number of pastors during this time frame. They have a considerable membership. This was a multi-staff site, with administration, custodial, and multiple pastors on staff. There were three interviews conducted here involving two board members (as a combined interview) and two individual search committee members.

### 3.7.3 Case 3:

Designated: Case 3, Rural 1 (C3R1)

This church has been in existence for approximately fifty-nine years serving this small-town and farming community context. The congregation is diverse as far as socio-economic status and educational levels. Considered a small town, there is a significant infrastructure with business, manufacturing, retail and most of the amenities that would be required. Housing is typically single-family homes, with some smaller multi-family residential units and is spaced out across the community. The community is central to other, smaller towns and within easy driving distance to a larger, urban centre. The population is predominantly Canadian, with a European influence. The church itself is predominantly Caucasian with a reasonable mix of ages and gender. Their modern church facility is located on the outside of the town and is readily

accessible for those who come from the surrounding communities. Within this small community, there are eight churches identified. The church has had several pastors during their existence. This was a multi-staff site with an administrator, custodian and multiple pastors. Their average attendance during the time of this study was approximately two hundred and fifty persons. There were four individual interviews conducted here involving two board members and two search committee members.

#### 3.7.4 Case 4:

Designated: Case 4, Rural 2 (C4R2)

This church has been in existence for approximately sixty-five years within this small-town and farming community context, located within a small residential neighbourhood. Their facility is a newer building, not what would typically be expected within an older, rural community. The community itself has seen significant changes over the years as some major employers have closed, thus creating challenges for young people to obtain work – so there has been a migration of younger people to larger, urban centres. This has created some challenges for the church in attracting and retaining young families. Within this small community, there are more than ten religious groups offering services and a chance to connect. They have had a number of pastors over the years, with more of a turnover in their recent history. Their average attendance during the time of this study was approximately fifty-seven persons. The congregation is predominantly an older, Caucasian demographic. Housing availability within this community is limited and is predominantly single-family dwellings. The houses are spread out, with smaller pockets of homes and no significantly large residential neighbourhoods. There were four interviews conducted here involving two individual board members and three search committee members (1 individual and 1 two-person interview).

The size of the staff in each church was typically a reflection of the size of the congregations they served. All of the churches had multiple volunteers serving in ministry and support capacities. Perhaps it is due to the Canadian culture, or the realities of the areas where each of these churches is situated and the lack of options within the same denomination, but with each church location there is a significant loyalty or identification to the church or denomination. Some people may commute for significant amounts of time (up to one hour) to attend.

### 3.7.5 Additional Interviews:

Two additional interviews were conducted involving leaders from the regional office. They have a significant role in resourcing churches, providing orientation and support for search processes and have an overview perspective of the pastoral hiring processes within the churches of their region. They were also a source for potential candidates through their profile system (refer to Appendix E. for the pastor's profile system.) These interview designations were: Regional Leadership 1, or 2 (RL1, or RL2).

## 3.8 Data Collection

The identification of potential participant churches was predicated upon them needing to hire a new senior pastor, so it took time to acquire the required number of churches and persons willing to participate. Therefore, the data collection for this study spanned a twenty-one-month period, with the interviews for each case study participant conducted according to their availability – typically, all grouped within two weeks of the initial interview within each case. One case study however was extended to an eight-week timeframe in order to accommodate the participant's schedules. The experience of interviewing at varying time frames within a church's search process allowed for some examination of the influences upon the hiring committee and their responses to these influences as they practically worked through their process. Given the nature of the interviews and scheduling of each church's search process, the time frame for each case study seemed to fit within a reasonable window and allowed for a snapshot of a similar experience. For each interview, participants were met in a public or other appropriate setting.

At each church, a minimum of four participants were selected in order to have representation from the church board, as well as the pastoral search committee in order to gain a varied perspective and input into their hiring process to provide for a full description. Typically, the church board is accountable and responsible to oversee the pastoral hiring process and ensure that the process reflects the necessary elements as required by the church's governing documents and any other requirements as stipulated by the laws of the country regarding their hiring practices. A church board member could therefore bring a differing perspective to the data collection process and help to provide additional details to broaden the description and understanding of the process. A pastoral search committee member would generally be a person from the congregation who is not on the board but may represent some other area of church life, whose primary role and function is to engage in the search process. They too could bring a different perspective to add to the richness of the description and understanding of the pastoral hiring process. In total, there were seventeen interviews - fifteen interviews from the four cases and two additional

interviews from the regional leadership. Given the nature of the study and the descriptive process, this number appeared to be adequate for each case as there was a significantly common experience for the participants to respond to. Duplication was evident in the participant's description of the process – thus further triangulating what was reported in response to the interview questions and negating the need for additional interviews as a level of saturation was reached.

Prior to the participant interviews, the interview questions were developed and pilot interviews were conducted with persons with pastoral, board and regional leadership experience in order to test the questions. Following a review of the data collected and feedback from the test participants and thesis supervisor, the questions were further refined in order to best address and support the primary research question and objectives of this study

The primary data collection method utilized semi-structured interviews within four case studies and with two of the regional leadership. Each of the face-to-face interviews lasted between fifty to sixty-five minutes, while the time spent interacting with each participant typically extended beyond that time. Following one interview at a board member's home, they generously offered to go to their church office to request additional documentation in support of this research. The interview questions were also shaped by the staffing process elements of Olian and Rynes from the theoretical framework of this study. They included questions about the specific elements of the standard practical hiring process as well as the opportunity to identify character, competency and values issues. A sample of the interview questions used for each of: church board participants; search committee participants; and regional leadership participants; and a more detailed explanation of the specific questions that were asked, may be found in Appendix C.

### **3.9 Interview Questions Used**

#### **3.9.1 Church Board Participants:**

1. What is your board's role in your pastoral hiring process?
2. Could you describe for me your overall pastoral search process?
3. How did you identify the people and assemble your search committee?
4. What instructions or criteria did you give to your search committee?
5. What were your considerations when you were developing your job description?
6. What role does your church community have in the hiring process?
7. What priorities do you have for a new pastor?



8. Are there any final things that you would like to share, or any advice that you would offer to other hiring committees?

### 3.9.2 Hiring/Selection Committee Participants:

1. Would you describe your hiring process for me?
2. How did you develop your selection process?
3. What aspects of the hiring process do you believe have been the most significant for your selection decision?
4. How will you ultimately make your selection decision?
5. How have you evaluated a candidate's possible fit for the position at your church?
6. What have been some of the challenges or issues as you have worked to identify and select your next pastor?
7. Are there any final things that you would like to share, or any advice that you would offer to other hiring committees?

### 3.9.3 Regional Leadership:

1. How would you encourage a church to select their pastoral candidates?
2. How do you utilize the Pastor's Profile for pastoral selection and recruitment?
3. What observations have you made about how your churches hire senior pastors over the past few years?
4. What is the typical duration of a senior pastor's tenure at a church in your denomination?
5. What priorities do you feel a church within your denomination should have when they are seeking to hire a new senior pastor?
6. What kinds of support does your denomination provide for churches or candidates seeking to fill senior pastoral ministry positions?
7. Are there any final things that you would like to share, or any advice that you would offer to other hiring committees?

In order to more fully understand the hiring process, available documents from the church or denominational office related to this research study were collected. This included job descriptions, church constitutions (see Appendix I for a bylaw portion related to the search committee and process) or bylaws, regional hiring documentation, job postings and other relevant materials related to the elements being

explored (Leedy, 2010, p. 137). These additional resources provided a triangulation of data and created a fuller and more accurate depiction of the process and experiences of the participants.

Obtaining two rural and two urban churches to participate in the study in a timely fashion was a challenge. Churches are not always in a season of searching for a new pastor. The interview participants were selected as representatives from the church board and from the church selection committee. In some instances, due to the nature of the church and structure of their search committee, there were some overlapping roles. The interview questions in these instances were divided between the participants according to either church board or search committee in order to capture the fullest picture of both aspects of the process. In these instances, participants sometimes offered additional perspective given the nature of their dual roles. In one church, two board persons participated at the same time within one interview.

### **3.10 Data Analysis**

A thematic analysis was conducted. To obtain those themes a blend of Initial Coding (open coding) (Saldana, 2016, p. 115) and In Vivo coding was utilized. Initially, coding was done manually in order to capture key themes, quotations and maintain a close perspective on the tone and words of the interviews, making notes and highlighting quotations as coding progressed. From there, Atlas.ti, qualitative analysis software (Atlas.ti 9) was used, importing the interview transcripts into the software to code again. While the initial, manual coding notes were used to help guide the process, the data was captured and sorted by key words and phrases into codes which were then further reduced into groups and then themes. Codes with a low frequency of use were either merged into a broader grouping or category, or discarded. The transcriptions from all case studies were coded and analyzed as a unity since all case studies followed the same hiring process. Within the data analysis, the total number of codes was numerous and 27 categories were identified that were further developed around the research hiring process. That was further refined to an average of 2 to 3 themes within each of the seven pastoral hiring process elements. For research Objective 2, four key themes were found, also noting particular findings differentiating the urban and rural case study contexts. The code list from Atlas.ti, developed through the data analysis may be found in Appendix B. It shows what was obtained through Atlas.ti and shows the groups and categories that were refined to obtain the themes reflective of the elements of the hiring process. Additional interviews with the regional leaders were also included within the analysis.

### 3.10.1 Re-Conceptualization of the data

In the exploration and description of the pastoral hiring process, it is important to initially describe the standard elements of that process (see below with diagram) as the basis from which this study develops and from which the data was conceptualized.

#### ***3.10.1.1 Standard Pastoral Hiring Process in Sampled Churches***

Within the organizational structure of the sample, the elements of their recommended, standard pastoral hiring process typically align as follows (Johnson, 2011; Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, n.d.):

1. The church engages in a period of self-reflection or assessment, involving: congregational evaluations; a review of the church's mission and vision; board meetings and other input and makes the decision to initiate a pastoral hiring process. During this time in order to maintain their ongoing ministry and attend to practical needs, the church may also hire an interim or transitional pastor.
2. Criteria for search committee members is identified and a committee is established. The criteria are typically established by the church board or a church nominating committee and often informed by the church's constitutional documents. The congregation typically votes to ratify the prospective search committee members.
3. A profile and criteria for an ideal pastoral candidate is established. The criteria are often established after congregational input and put together by the church board, based upon desired qualities and skills for their pastoral position
4. Potential pastoral candidates are solicited by various means by the search committee. This involves word of mouth recommendations, advertising on Christian career sites and working through the denominational office for potential candidates with resumes on file or that regional leadership may be aware are available.
5. A screening, interview and selection process is used to identify and confirm a prospective, final candidate – by the search committee and in agreement with the church board.
6. The final candidate meets and interacts with the larger church body, typically during a candidating weekend
7. The congregation will vote to accept or reject the pastoral candidate as their next pastor.

The process concludes with the board extending an offer to the candidate and finalizing hiring details, which signals the anticipated start of the ministry of the new pastor. While each church hiring process

typically aligns with these seven steps, they may combine them, adjust the order or omit some based upon former practices and experience, their current realities or other considerations. These processes were discussed in the interview. Below is a diagram of the hiring process.

### 3.11 Research Objective 1

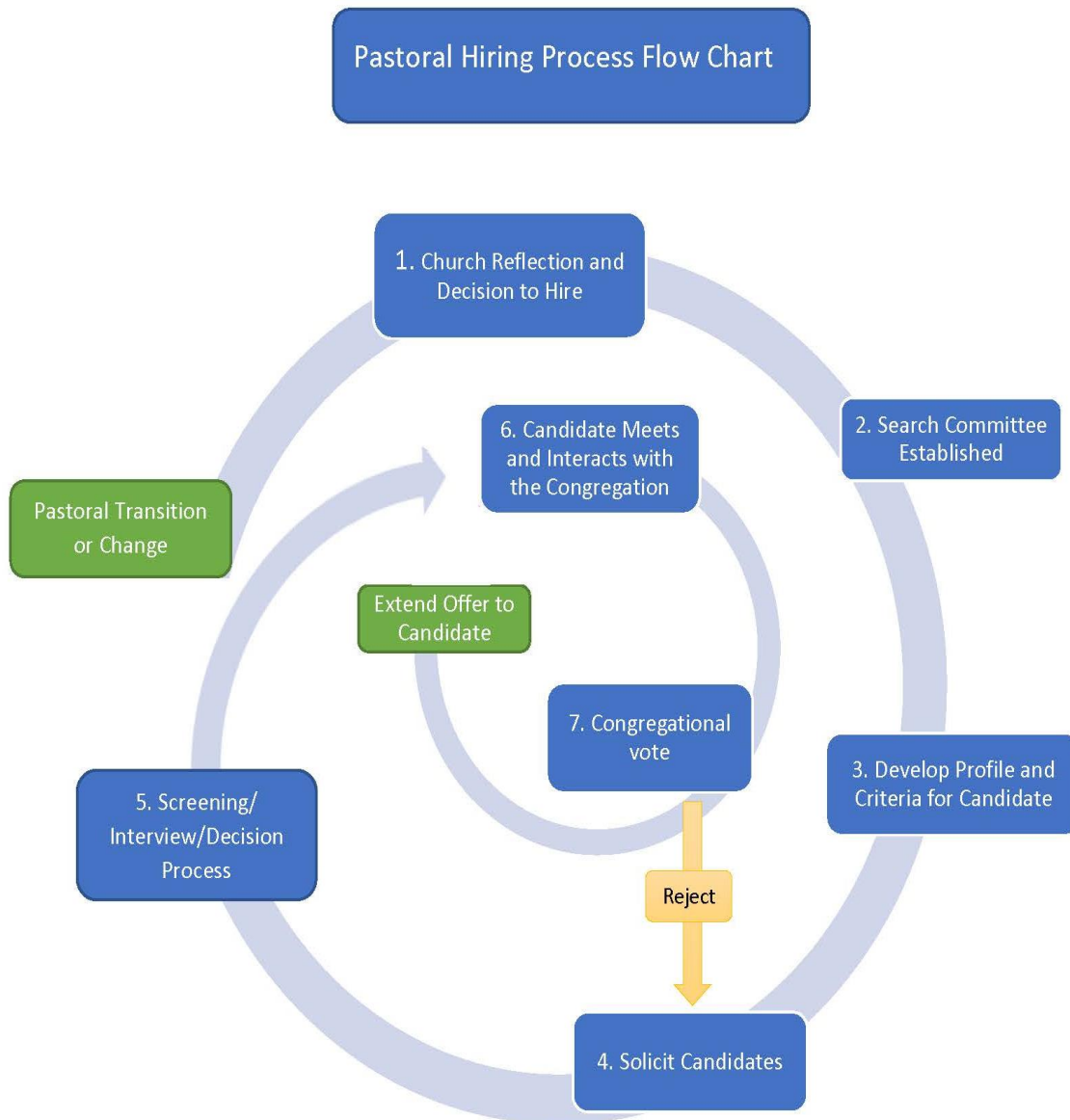


Figure 1 –Pastoral Hiring Process Flow Chart:

Figure 1 depicts the typical pastoral hiring process as described from the four case studies within a congregational church organizational model, and input from the regional leadership. A pastoral change or transition initially occurs, which triggers the beginning of the process towards the hiring of a new pastor.

### **3.12 Research Findings**

Within each category, the data was conceptualized and themes were created out of each stage of the hiring process. While the study revealed that though the hiring processes followed the typical pattern presented in figure 1, the findings were focused on unusual realities – things from the process that stood out and where the practices of pastoral hiring suggested something worthy of more critical reflection. These were quotations that brought certain issues to the surface, which will be discussed more fully in chapter four. This study was set in a very contemporary and secularized society. The following section will unpack these seven processes with their unusual realities identified by themes and will show evidence for each. Each of the seven process sections will conclude with an evaluation of the findings described within the themes. The findings follow the hiring process flowchart identified in figure 1 for ease of reference and context for the process. The full interview transcripts may be found in Appendix D.

Cases were identified numerically as a case (C1,2,3,4) and their rural (R) or urban (U) context was identified using either a capital ‘U’, or ‘R’ followed by the individual participant identifier in order to preserve the anonymity of the participants and adhere to ethical guidelines. Identification of individual participants was noted by ‘SP’ for search personnel, ‘BP’ for board personnel or ‘RL’ for Regional Leadership. Finally, each quotation is identified by a line number, indicating the line within each case where the quotation may be found.

#### **3.12.1 Process 1: Church Reflection and Decision to Hire**

After the loss of a pastor, churches typically engage in some form of reflection or assessment and then at some point the church makes a decision to hire – to seek a new pastor to lead their church.

##### ***3.12.1.1 Theme 1: Unclear About Church Needs***

There are various elements that may impact the initial decision to hire, and several items were noted in the interviews with the churches, which seemed to indicate that the church was unclear about what they needed. Some of this was related to an overall lack of awareness or the ability to identify the need. In other instances, it seemed to be reflective of a challenge of leadership to identify the need – perhaps due to the

leaders being unclear, or the challenging realities of diverse opinions and a lack of a clear understanding of the overall purpose and mission as a church. It may also reflect a difficulty in finding agreement regarding the church's needs as individual wants are expressed more.

*I think every Church should agree to an evaluation and a transitional interim pastor before they begin the search process. An objective evaluation, not how do we see ourselves but how are we really here?... If they do not really know what they need first then how do you identify what will take you to where you need to be?... The reality is that most churches cannot identify that. (C4R2BP2:234-243)*

*ok what do we need. Because in our church we have several different denominations. We have people that have come to our church from.... But we have quite a mix so all those people that have come in, it is almost like they all have their ideas of what they wanted and some of that has flared up. (C3RISP1 :82-86)*

The above quotations from are important because they speaks to two key areas. First, it identifies some of the difficulties a church may have in accurately and objectively viewing themselves, their condition and needs – practically, organizationally and spiritually perhaps. It also speaks to the reality that their may be an awareness of some obvious issues within the church, but the church is unable to proceed because they are unable to address the internal conflicts or challenges and their primary need might reflect having someone who can address that need. This also ties into another important hiring element, often associated with the marketing strategy or soliciting of candidates and that is the benefit of a realistic recruitment message that reflects the organizational reality (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 177-178). Beyond the obvious need of hiring a new pastor at some point, this touches at some core elements to be considered even before a decision to hire and a search process is launched about the health of the church and the unity of the church to their core identity and to one another.

The second key area to note is the comment that churches often do not know or cannot identify what is needed to take them where they need to be.

*What are you as a search committee member going to be asked to do? And that is to sit down and decide among yourselves what our church needs most out of a new man, a new pastor that comes in.(CIUIBP2:80-82)*

This final quotation identifies the challenge of church leaders to identify what their church needs, so the task is left to the small group serving on the search committee to decide what they need and what type of candidate they should pursue. This speaks to the identity and purpose of the church, and the challenges of a church. The expectation appears to be that once the search committee is assembled, they are to identify the church's need and decide themselves what the church needs most out of the new pastor. There is not a clear indication of knowledge of the church's purpose and mission and what the church should be looking for in a new pastor. This is very revealing because it shows that churches themselves are often not clear about their own organization - goals, form, policies and structure, which is a key principle of hiring (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 173).

### **3.12.1.2 Theme 2: Rushed Decision**

The second theme identified within the first stage of the pastoral hiring process, reflects the tendency to rush a decision to pursue a new pastor. As the following quotes from both search committee participants of an urban church and the regional leadership identify, there can be a tendency to rush into hiring decisions.

*For us we wanted to figure out where our church was going first before we jumped into the hiring process because in the past, we have hired several different men over time and things have kind of fallen through and not worked out for us. (CIUISP1: 4-6)*

*So, going into this all of the millennials who have grown up in the church that has been broken time and time again...that affected our decision in how we were going to pick somebody because we did not want to rush into anything. People wanted to take the time to fix some of those problems before we hired somebody new. We did not want someone coming into the toxic atmosphere of people being angry at the elders, people were angry with the pastor. (CIUISP1:82-89)*

*I think, and sometimes history can be very difficult but I think they need to look at it and deal with it. I think another factor the church needs to deal with, "are we ready for a new senior pastor?" And in some of our churches we knew there had been such ill health and by that I mean they had a quick turn over of senior pastors. And for a lot of churches that is cyclical. If you are not going to deal with the problem, you can gloss over it and make it look really nice but eventually it is going to rear its ugly head again. So, we would encourage those churches, "you know what? Do not look for a new pastor for two years". (RL1:388-394)*

Often seeing a new pastor as the solution to some challenges, or simply feeling a sense of urgency to hire a new pastor, a church may rush to fill a need. The church often has its own challenges and issues that need to be addressed, which can be made more apparent during a time of transition.

*One thing is that many churches would benefit from an intentional transitional interim... I think that would be really helpful but I see most churches say no, they just want to get their next pastor. So, I would like to see them do more of that because really to me that is strategic that would set them up for years to come. But nobody wants to wait (RL2: 234-237)*

This quotation from a regional leader, highlights what might be described as the pragmatic nature of the church. There is an obvious need sometimes that the churches have, so they make the practical decision to hire another pastor. Often, as attested to here, there is a reluctance to wait, particularly when faced with being without a pastor and the simplest way to address that is to move forward promptly to hire another pastor. This also ties into another important hiring element, often associated with the marketing strategy or soliciting of candidates and that is the benefit of a realistic recruitment message that reflects the organizational reality (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 177-178). Often that realistic perspective is not presented, or perhaps not even understood in the rush decision to hire. The willingness to move ahead to hire a pastor, without addressing congregational needs, has been demonstrated within the denomination to perpetuate the ill-health identified. Yet, the response to overlook the ill-health and to prioritize the hiring of a new pastor emphasizes the practical nature and priority of the church and may lead to rushing a number of decisions.

### **3.12.1.3 Church Reflection and Decision to Hire: Evaluation**

Within the evidence of this process step, several issues became apparent. It is evident that they do not have a clear understanding of the role of the church – that is, the mission and vision - the purpose of the church in a broad, general sense or in the specific context of their specific church. It is necessary to understand the purpose of the organization and the role and expectations that are being hired for. ‘...before the hiring team starts measuring candidates’ culture fit, they need to be able to define and articulate the organization’s culture – its values, goals, and practices — and then weave this understanding into the hiring process’ (Bouton, 2015). This would require taking the time for self-reflection, evaluation and objective assessment, particularly in light of the loss of a pastor - a key figure and leader within the church, prior to launching into a hiring process. If there is no clarity and uniformity as to the role of the church,



this would impact the ability of the church to clearly define and articulate the remaining elements of the pastoral hiring process, thus confusing the process and participants.

The result of an evaluative step, prior to embarking on a hiring process, might be to raise awareness of and attend to some necessary organizational issues prior to beginning a hiring search. It could also inform other elements of the process as each step is planned for. This ties into an important hiring element, and that is the benefit of a realistic recruitment message that reflects the organizational reality (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 177-178). Not engaging in reflection and conducting an assessment could impact the ability to accurately determine what type of candidate, including skills and competencies would be needed. Rushing a decision to engage in a hiring process, without adequate reflection and response, allows for any existing challenges, lack of clarity around what is needed, or patterns of ill-health within the organization to remain which could impact the integrity of and complicate the hiring process as it progresses.

### 3.12.2 Process 2: Search Committee Established

Moving beyond the reflection and initial decision by the church to hire a new pastor, the next stage in the process is to establish a search committee. Once the decision to hire has been made, the practical reality of identifying who will conduct the search is addressed through the establishment of the search committee. Typically, this is addressed within a church's constitution and bylaws as to the numbers and general makeup. The individual selection and other aspects of the makeup of the search committee is typically left to the church and its leadership to establish.

#### ***3.12.2.1 Theme 1: Spiritual Maturity Questioned***

The identification and selection of a spiritual leader requires an assessment of the necessary practical skills and competencies but it is also a spiritual initiative requiring discernment and a degree of spiritual maturity in assessing and affirming a candidate's overall fit to a church and its ministry.

*Regarding the makeup of the search committee, I would say to be honest, you could tell a few times it was a bit based on the popularity of the person in the context of the church or people's thinking well just because he is a successful business person, they will be successful on a pastoral search team. They could be, but I do not think that is your only criteria...Not so much weight maybe on the spiritual maturity part but I think an evidence of maturity is your willingness, am I plugged into my church, am I serving, faithful and consistent. (RL1:294-304)*

From the observation of a regional leader, it would seem that their perception of the makeup of a search committee reflected the popularity of an individual, or assumptions about the transferability of skills from the marketplace to the selection of a spiritual leader, which admittedly, could serve a search committee well. The comment captures an interesting perspective about spiritual maturity – in terms of its value on a search committee as not being given as much weight and a definition of its evidence through faithful service and being consistent and ‘plugged in’ to one’s church. The definition proposed by this study of spiritual maturity in chapter 1 does not align with what is suggested by the definition and expression identified by the regional leader. For the purposes of serving on a pastoral hiring search committee, it would appear that there is an expectation that people would prioritize and demonstrate some degree of all four levels of maturity (from definition on page 12) in their ability to participate on the search committee. Often, the assumption appears to be that all members of a church are spiritual and in some ways that is accurate, however secular skills, popularity, or attendance and involvement in church is not an indicator of spiritual maturity.

*I really think that is the weakness of some search committees. They do not have the depth spirituality to process things...So that is why I think the whole weakness of the search process is you are at the mercy of the pastor and he is at the mercy of them. So, for those on the search committee if they lack the spiritual depth then they just do the best that they can. (C4R2BP2:140-146)*

This statement by a rural church board participant seems to indicate their perception of a potential issues and an area of concern – that of spiritual maturity. A lack of spiritual maturity on a search committee would make a process of spiritual discernment in the selection of a new pastor a difficult task. This maturity is helpful and necessary as a search committee must wrestle through several issues as they progress through their search.

### **3.12.2.2 Theme 2. Polarizing Viewpoints**

Issues that are core to their congregational and denominational identity where there is not agreement, become polarizing issues that require spiritual maturity to work through on a search committee and may alter the makeup of the committee. Within the context of the interviews, it became apparent that there were some significant differences on some of the search committees that related to the core theology of the group.

*one of the challenges has been that within the context of the selection committee there is not a clear theological agreement on positions related to Calvinist theology.(C4R2SP1A&B:161-162) in order for the search committee to understand the specific doctrinal criteria that we want the next guy to believe and teach and represent - that means everyone on the search committee needs to understand that...we have had some frank conversations about that and you have to be a little sensitive to people that may or may not agree with that but now have to understand that I am representing not just myself and my own personal beliefs but I am representing what the church stands for. That I would say has been something significant we have had to deal with. (C3R1SP2:216-219)*

A search committee, tasked with finding the next pastor for their church is given some criteria to measure a candidate by. It would seem from these quotations that the issue here is that not everyone on the search committee meets certain criteria, especially related to agreement with the theological or doctrinal positions of the church. That this is pointed out within two different rural cases as a challenge is significant to the search committee and may point to other matters of significance for the church and the concept of clarity and agreement by the search committee about what they are looking for.

The second quotation appears to makes note of issues related to a unity and agreement by the committee with the church's theology and doctrinal positions. This appears to be an expectation of the church's practice and should be an area of unity. However, it is identified as a challenge. It would seem that the participant highlights the concept that the search committee is to represent the church and its positions as they search for a pastor instead of one's own, personal beliefs. This is significant to note. It would seem from this quote that the participant is identifying a possible issue related to the screening process for those selected to serve on the pastoral search committee. It may also be raising an issue related to adequate training or orientation for the search committee members regarding the church's theological and doctrinal positions.

### **3.12.2.3 Theme 3. Need For Training**

It can be overwhelming to search for a new pastor and so it does raise the question of how to adequately equip or support a search process and those responsible for it. This is very revealing because it shows that churches themselves are often concerned about competencies and criteria for a candidate, but may not similarly screen, equip or orient their search committee for their task of selection and hiring. Training and

preparation of the members of the pastoral search committee could help to establish clarity around the task, expectations and the search parameters.

*So, things like organization... our committee met for just over two years. That is a really long commitment for what we were anticipating. We all thought it would just be a few months thing we will get some resumes, we will pick somebody, it will be good. Because we took this journey of what we wanted this church to become and that sort of thing it took a lot longer than anyone expected. (CIUISP1:240-245)*

From this quote by the above urban search committee participant, it seems to identify an issue regarding a lack of clarity around the role and timeframe anticipated by those engaged in the search. It expresses a simple expectation of process elements on the part of the participant that may reflect a more normal job search process as opposed to what the committee was tasked with and indicated by the language of the journey taken. It would seem like a secondary issue is being raised regarding the overall clarity of leadership and direction for the church as the pastoral search team was tasked with determining what they wanted the church to become. This is significant to note and may reflect other areas of church life.

*One of the challenges early on was just the fact of a lack of experience and not knowing (C2U2SP2:150)*

*We are still lay people asked to be HR people. None of us have experience at that. We do our best... We do not even know how to conduct an interview. (CIUIBP1:349 -355)*

It would seem from these quotes from urban church search committee participants and a board member, that they are identify some of the early challenges faced by their committee. They seem to express the expectation that experience or Human Resources skills are a primary requirement for accomplishing a practical, yet spiritual task. It would appear that the issue is being interpreted by the participants as a need for some training, orientation or experience to lessen the challenge by providing some basic tools or skills and help the committee begin their process clearly and confidently.

*I think the thing with search committees, is we have to really keep it simple, organized and really prayer oriented - that is really bathing it in prayer and allowing God to work through the process. Sometimes there is a structure but we depend on the structure so much that we negate prayer (C2U2SP1:58-61)*

*As Christians we tend to rely upon our own strength and our own abilities to be able to guide a church and lose sight of that it is God who is building His church and His kingdom. That is the biggest takeaway for me is that prayer is very, very important and the most essential aspect of the entire process. Just as the spirit guided the early church it is the same spirit that guides the church now. (C2U2SP1:283-287)*

These quotes, from another of the search committees from an urban church, appears to highlight their perspectives regarding perceived, important elements of the search process. Training, orientation and structure would help the search committee understand more clearly their role in the process, but these participant quotations seem to indicate that the issue is more one of the necessity of reliance upon God for what is a spiritual task of discernment as well as the practical responsibilities of the search process. This was noted as unusual, because across all of the interviews, this was the only one that specifically acknowledged or made reference to God's unique role in the process of the recognition and selection of a spiritual leader.

#### ***3.12.2.4 Search Committee Established: Evaluation***

Building upon a clear understanding and assessment of the purposes and needs of the church, the establishment of the search committee is a significant step. The purpose of creating a hiring committee is to empower a group or persons to be objective as they bring the necessary skills and experience to the task of selecting the best candidate to fill the vacancy need, according to the objective criteria that they are given (Simplicio, 2007, pp. 256,258). This is of particular importance as the process of hiring is often not objective. 'Objectivity is often replaced by pure subjectivity and personal preference or bias' (Simplicio, 2007, p. 258). Within the evidence, it appeared that there were challenges as not all members of the committees shared a common understanding and agreement regarding their organization, their theology and the criteria established for the pastoral hire – or personal perspectives were added, which complicated the process. The selection of some committee members may represent a lack of reflection upon search committee criteria, a simple, pragmatic response to the need to establish a committee, or generally, that assumptions were made. In part, it may also reflect a lack of training and orientation for the search committee, where these concerns may be identified and addressed, and where all search committee members may be adequately equipped and focused for the task.

The role of the search committee within the hiring process was to assess a candidate's competencies, character and suitability for the role, and to discern a level of fit at a level characterized by what is often

termed 'calling'. Some might identify these assessment competencies on the part of the search committee as a function of spiritual maturity as there was a spiritual nature identified within the process of pastoral hiring. Practically, spiritual maturity cannot easily be measured, although attempts to do so are reflected in various studies, assessment tools and expectations (Wilks, 2008, p. 74). This concern of a lack spiritual maturity, raised in the context of the pastoral hiring process may be linked to what may be a lack of intentionality regarding spiritual formation generally within the church.

Spirituality is vital to effective leadership because it is linked to social responsibility, integrity and stability. It shapes values, beliefs and practices, and provides meaning to one's existence...Leaders who live integrated lives are committed to creating a work environment that maintains high standards in idea and practice as well as an atmosphere conducive to wholeness, inspiration, empowerment and trust...A pastor whose leadership style is transformational may be more inclined to provide training and development to church leaders who will in turn provide ministry services to smaller groups of congregants. (Carter, 2009, pp. 264,270).

Spirituality and maturity would reflect upon the character, the posture and practices of the committee and be an impetus for critical reflection, thoroughness and congregational service throughout the hiring process. A search committee that does not reflect some depth of spiritual qualities would likely be faithful in fulfilling their responsibilities, but gaps may appear within their selection process. Decisions may be more pragmatic; assumptions may be made through the process; and steps may be skipped or rushed through.

### 3.12.3 Process 3: Develop Profile and Criteria for Candidate

As the search committee begins to engage in the process, a significant step is the development of the desired profile and clear criteria by which the committee may solicit and assess potential pastoral candidates.

#### ***3.12.3.1 Theme 1: Lack of Clarity in the Criteria for a Candidate***

The concept of a lack of clarity around a hiring process, specifically the criteria for a pastoral candidate is significant. This impacts the process and its ability to move forward effectively when you do not clearly know what you are looking for in a candidate or have the criteria to solicit or assess them.

*I think they met once in the summer with the other elder and then I came on after... I would say, there was not really a clear sense of any mandate, other than we have got to find a pastor. There was not really any reflection at that point. (CIUIBP1:114-120)*

This quotation by an urban board member would seem to indicate the issue of a general lack of clarity around what the church is looking for and how they are to proceed. It would appear from this participant's quote that a secondary issue may be that the church has progressed to step three of the process before they have established some clarity around some key elements. This is worth further discussion.

*So, the first thing we did was to establish parameters for the candidate we were looking for and that was from a questionnaire from our denomination. So, we took that and added to it. We thought about what we felt the needs of the church were and tried to look at what would be important to us in terms of an age range, a skill range, and just the things that we thought were important to our church at this point in time. (C4R2BP1: 33-37)*

It would seem, from this quotation from a rural board person, that they did not articulate any specific, pastoral competencies or preferences for their candidate criteria but referenced adding to a list from a questionnaire. It is important to note that it reflects a variety of aspects, each from a perspective of what was important to those creating the job description and candidate criteria, and also what they thought was important to their church at 'this point in time' to meet their needs, specifically identifying an age and skill range. This is very revealing because it shows that churches themselves are often not clear about their selection criteria, which is a key principle of hiring (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 173).

*The churches tend to pick things in their guide that they should be anyways which is what I pick the candidates to be. (RL2:160-161)*

It would seem, from this comment by a regional leader, there is an expectation of church practices in the establishment of pastoral candidate criteria, that they reflect some kind of typical, normative criteria which reflects the items on a pre-populated list from the denomination. While a helpful tool that provides a checklist of what is expected to be the primary criteria for a pastoral candidate, the inclusion of a significant number of personal preferences and desired qualities within the data indicates that there is a general lack of clarity about what the criteria should be.

*Now our last pastor had a whole slew of credentials behind his name and he had a large staff under him but when he arrived ... But we realized in that a whole string of credentials and a staff*

*underneath you, does not really mean squat you know. It helps I am sure but sometimes it does not really mean anything. (C3RISP1:147-151)*

It appears that the recognition of and reliance upon credentials by this rural participant, based upon a historical experience, is being minimized due to a poor hiring outcome. A typical hiring process often uses credentials as a means of measurement and perhaps prestige. Using historical experience is expected within a new context, but this quote seems to indicate an issue related to the need for clear criteria to be established and agreed upon and that there are things other than credentials and previous experience to be considered.

*Just because I assume it is taken for granted, which I probably should not do, there is obviously the scriptural requirements and qualifications from 1st Timothy and Titus, maybe even 1st Peter that clearly describe what God's Word lays out for consideration and meeting the standard of a pastor and so, that would obviously be foremost and foundational... I think a lot of it is measured in character and attitude. So, there would have to be some degree of examination of past ministry. So, experience and history in other churches, references. (C3RISP2:168-174)*

This quotation is important as it makes reference to some scriptural requirements and qualifications, with the comment regarding the assumption that they are being included. The participant also comments on character and attitude being examined. It would seem that the issue here is a lack of clarity regarding candidate criteria as what may be considered normative for a pastoral hiring process is presented as an assumption. The participant mentions that they assume that such criteria are taken for granted and acknowledges them as foundational criteria. This was significant because this was the only participant to reference any scriptural requirements or criteria. If scriptural requirements, values and criteria are important, yet assumed, they may not be assessed or included by the search committee. These assumptions or lack of clarity around candidate criteria may then impact other elements within the pastoral hiring process and is worth further discussion.

### ***3.12.3.2 Theme 2: Lack of Clarity in the Job Description***

A lack of clarity around the job description also may make it difficult to determine whether a candidate is an appropriate fit, or it may make the process so wide open that it is difficult to objectively assess any candidate.



*We have a job description but we have made it clear to the candidates that it is a job description that perhaps Jesus himself could not fill which is pretty typical, but we try to cover all the bases with what we think is important.(C4R2BP1:11-13)*

*The job description ... I believe it was a combination of getting a few job descriptions from other churches as well as the advice of our interim pastor again, who has been helping us. And then kind of taking the general outline from those things and then specifically tailoring it to our Church and the key areas that we felt we needed to be strong in, in order to be growing as a church. (C4R2SP2:100-105)*

This first quote, from a rural church board person is important to note as it seems to reflect an issue of a lack of clarity in the job description as they indicate that it encompasses everything, allowing for all bases to be covered and may represent something that is excessive. An exhaustive list may cover everything, but it could be a challenge to determine, should it be necessary, what is truly important when assessing potential candidates, and which elements may be left out. This seems to indicate that the church may not be clear about their hiring criteria, which is a key principle of hiring (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 173).

It would seem from the second quote that the search committee participant's perspective is that their church requires the input from other churches and an interim pastor in developing the pastoral job description. It appears that the job description may be more of a cut and paste – to address areas that they felt were necessary in order to grow, rather than specifically identifying a role based upon what the church knows of itself and the role and ministry that they believe God has set for them.

*we are calling it the lead pastor, we have changed it from senior pastor. I think that is the latest trend... We had a lot of papers and job descriptions from other churches that we used to put ours together.(C3R1BP2:153-159)*

Having had previous pastors and serving as a church in their community, it would seem from this quote from a rural board participant that the input from other churches and even the latest trend was significant for the church in establishing their job description and profile for their pastoral search. It would seem to indicate a lack of clarity around the expectations for the role and may impact the screening and later, the functioning of the pastor.

### 3.12.3.3 Theme 3: Growth and Success Emphasis

Many of the elements of the job description and criteria for a pastor reflected more of a growth and success motif. There is a significant emphasis placed upon growth as a key indicator of success within the data obtained. While a desired outcome would be growth, the major emphasis was upon success (measured by growth) with little emphasis placed upon spiritual priorities for candidates.

*in our pastoral search, we considered if there was growth in his former congregations, spiritual and /or numerical. We feel we need a church builder, not just a maintainer. (C4R2SP1A&B:105-107)*

*The job description ... tailoring it to our Church and the key areas that we felt we needed to be strong in, in order to be growing as a church. (C4R2SP2:100-105)*

It would seem from these quotes that the participants (and possibly the tradition) interprets the role and responsibility of the pastor as a church builder and that evidence of growth in their former congregations is transferable. Depending upon the role and responsibilities, a significant emphasis in hiring is placed upon past achievements (Olian & Rynes, 1984). It appears that the expectation of this candidate criteria is that it is an indicator of future growth and success. It would seem that the issue here is an emphasis upon growth and success as a significant criteria in the development of a pastoral candidate's profile. While it is important to assess a pastoral candidate's competencies and reviewing previous achievements can offer some insight, this can be a challenge if there is an accompanying expectation that such growth and success is easily transferred to a new church congregation and context. The second quote seems to emphasize a priority for the pastoral candidate criteria to address key areas that the church believes they should be strong in, in order to be growing. From these quotations, it appears that the issue of expecting church building and growth are a priority in establishing the candidate criteria and as a key element for hiring considerations.

*I would define a successful pastor as churches that have grown (C3R1BP1:45)*

It would seem that the issue that the participant expresses here is the emphasis on church growth and its recognition as key in the definition of success for a pastor and as a significant element in the criteria for pastoral hiring.

*I do not think we would have had a process without him (transitional pastor). He really helped us navigate some of those – like what do we do now - we have picked what our perfect church will look like – now what?? (CIUISP1:97-98)*

It would seem from this quote, that the participant's perspective in establishing the church's pastoral criteria is based upon their ideal of what their perfect church would look like. This appears to set some significant expectations and seems to embrace success, if that is what perfect looks like. This notion of success carries forward into other aspects of the hiring process. It is important also to note that the transitional pastor was noted as having had significant influence as the church shaped their process as someone from outside of the particular church's culture.

#### ***3.12.3.4 Develop Profile and Criteria for Candidate: Evaluation***

Establishing an accurate profile and candidate criteria is critical to the hiring process. It shapes the subsequent decisions of the process, from the soliciting of candidates to the screening and assessment process, and the final outcome. It reflects the learnings and outcomes from the earlier church reflection and assessment. It should be 'aligned with the job requirements... and reflect the long-term goals, strategies, policies and procedures appropriate for accomplishing the organization's goals' (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 173). It was notable from the evidence that there was a lack of clarity around the desired criteria for a candidate and the role expectations for a pastor. The typical hiring elements of 'immediate job requirements, skills, aptitudes and behavioral styles' (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 170) help inform the pastoral hiring practice and suggest certain criteria for organizational hiring, but they do not fully inform church practice and pastoral candidate criteria. The emphasis demonstrated in the evidence of preferred candidate criteria was directed towards candidate performance, meeting congregational expectations and needs, and desired outcomes – particularly growth and success. Other than a list of expectations for performance and desired competencies, there were no clearly defined indicators of what they would look like or how they would be measured and assessed.

Clearly defined job descriptions, key performance areas and key performance indicators would assist in defining appropriate reporting practices and responsibilities as well as contribute to reducing misunderstanding regarding job roles and reporting lines (Joynt, 2018, p. 6).

Other than a singularly expressed assumption that a pastoral candidate should fulfil the scriptural qualifications given, any biblical element remained an implicit assumption as the criteria were not explicitly expressed as expected candidate qualifications. There was an apparent lack of reflection and

explicitness for scriptural criteria, particularly for a pastoral search. Samples of job descriptions and a checklist for desired candidate qualifications may be found in Appendices E, F and G. The template supplied by the denominational office to select candidate qualifications for a profile match is included within the search committee presentation materials in Appendix I. The emphasis given for determinative factors for pastoral hiring criteria were primarily directed towards, experience, theological positions and functions within the church. While there are practical and functional requirements for the pastoral role, ‘What most often distinguishes Christian from non-Christian leaders is character’ (Malphurs, 2006, p. 51). In any sector of hiring, whether business, education or the church, character and integrity should not to be compromised for the sake of achievement or its pursuit.

Of note is the consistent emphasis expressed of the need for a leader. There are many different leadership styles (Salehzadeh, 2017, pp. 865-867). It is important to identify key elements when determining criteria, and to define what is meant by these terms in order to add clarity for the purposes of soliciting and screening candidates in later stages of the hiring process. The implications of not having clear criteria may be a more confused and difficult process and an inability to adequately assess and evaluate candidates. The process would become more subjective as each search committee member would be influenced more by their own perspectives or decision bias (Huber, et al., 1987) in areas where the criteria are not clearly and objectively identified.

#### 3.12.4 Process 4: Solicit Candidates

Once the criteria and candidate profile are established, the search committee moves to reach out through various means to solicit potential candidates to match their desired criteria.

##### ***3.12.4.1 Theme 1: Challenges of the Process***

It can be a challenge to find the right person for any position. Being able to make the opportunity known to or to connect with the right person at the right time for a pastoral role can often be a test of faith, and patience. The responses below highlight some of the process challenges and changes that were evidenced by the participants as they attempted to solicit candidates.

*Another challenge that I feel is that there are not as many pastors available to receive a call. There are no pastors out there who are desperate for a job. I do not like that word desperate but I think that is in all church organizations. There are just not as many coming out of seminary wanting to*

*be pastors. There is a shortage of pastors. I know within our region because there are a lot of churches in our area who are looking, whose pulpits are empty. (C4R2SP1A&B:201-206)*

In the above quotation it appears that the participant identifies the challenge of soliciting candidates due to the perception of a shortage of pastors. The comment that there are no pastors desperate for a job, although it is acknowledged that they do not like the word, desperate, but what about the idea of a job? The concept of pastoral ministry as a job in the same context as a shortage of pastors to receive a call, potentially mixes two significant perceptions of what the pastoral role actually is.

*the majority, I would say probably 85% - 90% found their new pastor as a result of using the regional office, the profiles we sent them. Larger churches not so much. They usually had to look elsewhere and I understand that. (RL1:351-353)*

The above response seems to emphasize the use of the candidate profiles that are on file at the regional office of potential pastoral candidates as a significant source for finding a pastor. It is important to note that the perception of this regional leader is that the majority of pastors for smaller churches were found through this means and that larger churches typically had to look outside of the regional pool of candidates to find their next pastor.

*We have given the profile to the regional office and said 'weed out the ones that do not fit' kind of thing and send us the others. We are getting very few. So either our profile is too strong type of thing or maybe the regional office is culling too tight, I do not know. (C3R1BP1:298-301)*

*I do think possibly our region could be a little more helpful in saying "ok, you have hit a dry patch. Maybe look here or look there." ...I mean I know they are filtering through some of the ones that have come in because they know the criteria we have and they know some of the history that has gone on in our church. So they are filtering through but maybe they should not be filtering so much. (C3R1SP1:356-360)*

It is also important to note the role of the regional office in filtering potential candidates prior to sending profiles to the churches and the additional decision-making aspect of that by the regional staff in respect to the church's process. These quotations seem to indicate that a perceived, potential challenge in their efforts to solicit pastoral candidates may practically be that the region is filtering too restrictively in their role. It is also interesting to note the comment by the participant regarding the potential challenge that the criteria the church has established as being too stringent. This may speak to the earlier process of the

development of the criteria for potential candidates. The mention of the region knowing the church's history appears to be perceived by the one participant as a potential challenge to solicit candidates. These concerns were most widely held across the rural portion of the samples as the larger urban churches do not rely upon the same pool of candidates to draw from.

*I will send churches maybe five or six profiles. In my mind I have a group of guys who I know in our profile system are stronger candidates so they are often going. I will not say no matter what the selection guide says because we do care what the selection guide says but the five or six strong candidates, the churches tend to pick things in their guide that they should be anyways which is what I pick the candidates to be. (RL2:157-161)*

It would seem, from the above quote from a regional leader that their perception is that the region has a group of stronger candidates that they would typically be ready to send. That these candidates are readily available and have not been chosen to serve in a church or else they are waiting and ready to move from their existing church could be a significant challenge depending upon the circumstances of these candidates.

*We had lost some confidence, the elders at our church had, in our regional leadership because we felt that in the past couple of pastors, we had been misled that they were only concerned with relocating a pastor rather than trying to give us all of the information. So, some previous pastors were ones that they had recommended and sent our way. (CIUIBP2:44-47)*

In the above quote seems to allude to some historical perceptions of how the denomination had handled their responsibilities in screening and forwarding potential pastoral candidates due to some potentially poor hiring experiences. This is important to note because, without going back to any specific incidents, it does point to potential challenges in the soliciting of candidates and the necessity of trust within the practice. This could be evident within the broader scope of the responsibilities in screening and assessing those candidates by the church and even within the information supplied by potential candidates and the denomination.

#### **3.12.4.2 Theme 2: Soliciting Pastors from Other Churches**

What appeared within the data, tied to the soliciting of candidates, but seemed unusual enough to warrant a separate theme, was the practice of attempting to recruit pastors from other churches. The idea of identifying a desired pastor at another church and pursuing him - essentially taking a senior pastor from

another church, thus leaving that church in need of a pastor appears problematic. This means of soliciting a new pastor is important to note.

*What I really like about what we are doing on the search committee, and this is... we are not just looking at those that are applying. We are looking at who are successful pastors in the region and that are similar to ours and listening to them online ... What we have done is we have gotten some names of some very good pastors that have been there for a while ...and if we are all in consensus, we would approach that person and see if they are even interested in leaving or talking or moving or that type of thing. So, we have done that now with two or three people that we have approached and asked. (C3R1BP1:32-40)*

*a lot of the pastors I have been talking to said that you will not find a pastor that will be leading your church that way. Most of the time you will have to go into the church and really woo that Pastor over and place that seed of questioning in their minds and prompt them and say “Don’t you think you should be moving already”?... So pastors were advising us to get pastors from other churches... That was how our old Pastor left to go somewhere else. For two years that church went after him feverishly, so he believed that was the way that we would get our pastor...It is funny but it actually happens more often than not. That was how our former Pastor moved over and our other pastor too - they went after him and then he moved. (C2U2SP1:90-103)*

*I know of churches that have settled on a candidate and they would not give up until they get him. I know, for example, one Pastor that a church had decided - they settled on him and it took them two years but they finally got him. They were not taking anybody but him. (C2U2SP2:160-162 )*

It would seem from these quotes that the participants and the tradition affirm the practice of soliciting pastors from other churches. Whether in a rural or urban context, the practice of taking ‘successful’ pastors from other churches might address the immediate need of one church, but creates another set of challenges in another church. It appears from the data that it is practiced and promoted by other spiritual leaders within the denomination as a practical and often necessary approach to soliciting pastoral candidates. This will be addressed more fully within chapter four.

*Christian Leadership Placement ...They do an assessment, figure out where the church is, what healing needs to take place and then they find you the man that fits in your classification what you are looking for, you know these three things or whatever else you are looking for, and they guarantee him for a year and then come and do the handoff where you meet the guy and they say*

*this is your guy and they actually come to your church but it comes with a price... So, I brought it to the team - their marketing is unbelievable. (CIUIBP1:361-367)*

The above response from one of the urban participants appears to highlight an issue and something of a newer means of soliciting pastoral candidates within Canada - the hiring of an outside placement agency. It is important to note this newer trend as well as the comment related to a one-year guarantee and the reaction to the marketing of the agency itself to the church. It is a paid service that will use a church's criteria to find and recruit their next pastor, thus removing many of the elements of the church's process, discernment and responsibility. The removal of this process from the church to an outside agency is outside of a typical, normative pastoral hiring practice and worth examining more closely. It appeared to be an attractive option to the one urban board member.

### **3.12.4.3 *Solicit Candidates: Evaluation***

The general means of soliciting pastoral candidates followed what is characterized as a traditional method of recruiting, utilizing such means as advertisements in local publications, Christian job sites, internal candidate considerations and public and private agencies (Villeda & McCamey, 2019, pp. 67-68). It provides the necessary pool of candidates which may then be screened and assessed within the process towards identifying a preferred candidate and a possible fit for the pastoral role. Within some church environments, the denominational office maintains a collection of profiles of pastors who are seeking new pastoral positions for the purposes of clergy-congregational matching (Mueller & McDuff, 2004, p. 264). The denominational office was identified within the evidence as a significant source for soliciting pastoral candidates, particularly for smaller congregations, while larger churches typically had to look outside of the regional pool of candidates to find their next pastor. The regional office served a dual purpose in that they will initially screen available profiles according to the submitted preferences of a church. In this way, the church has a reasonable group of candidates from which to begin their search. The use of the regional office or other agencies outside of the church may introduce a challenge when soliciting candidates, particularly if the profile of desired qualifications sent by the church is too stringent, the pre-screening done on prospective candidates by the regional office is too restrictive, or due to the regional office's previous relationship with a church. It may introduce a certain bias into the process as they determined which profiles to send to a congregation's search committee.

The introduction of external hiring agencies to the hiring process and the soliciting of candidates brings about a potentially broader pool of people to consider, but requires that the church has completed a



thorough evaluation and assessment, and can articulate their candidate criteria and needs very clearly. ‘Such agencies are also referred to as executive search firm or ‘headhunters’ because they concentrate on finding currently employed individuals a better-suited job with higher pay’ (Villeda & McCamey, 2019, p. 68). This is a fee for service arrangement, so it introduces other factors to the hiring mix regarding objectivity in the process, depending upon the financial payment requirements of the service (Villeda & McCamey, 2019, p. 68).

A final method for soliciting pastoral candidates that was introduced through the evidence was the recommendation by other pastors and leaders that a church attempt to recruit active pastors away from their current churches. While this is another method of soliciting pastoral candidates, it could potentially leave another church without a pastor and the need to engage in a hiring process as well.

The ability to solicit pastoral candidates is important to the hiring process. The implications of a poor execution at this step may result in an inadequate supply of candidates and the need to invest further time and effort in improving the candidate pool. It may also mean, depending upon which means of soliciting candidates is used, a strong candidate may be identified, but the impact of minimal involvement by the church through the potential use of an agency, or actively soliciting and taking a pastor from another church may have further negative impact for the church – its integrity and reputation within the broader community.

### 3.12.5 Process 5: Screening/Interview/Decision Process

A significant element to the pastoral search is the screening/interview/ decision process. It is through this process that candidate assessment and selection take place. Within this process, the selection committee will ultimately make their recommendation decision to the church board, who will validate the selection decision and move towards the next step in the process. Within the interviews, it was unusual to note several assumptions that were made as the committee engaged in this stage of the process.

#### ***3.12.5.1 Theme 1: Assumptions in the Process***

As difficult as a thorough screening may be, data from the cases appears to indicate that there were assumptions made about candidates, without corroborating evidence to support these assumptions. Particularly within a pastoral hiring scenario, this could be problematic.

*And, he is definitely discipleship... evangelism is not something he has been doing as much of but, the rest of the search committee all agreed that he could reach people. (CIUI SP2: 110-112)*

It would seem from this quote that the participant is overlooking that a candidate has not demonstrated particular competencies in significant areas of ministry in their criteria. The issue appears to be a willingness to overlook criteria or to assume competencies that cannot be verified or assessed. It appears that there is a perceived assumption of competency based upon the agreement, belief and assessment of the search committee in the potential of the candidate.

*Well, part of what we did was we evaluated what did not go right with our last pastor. There were some questions about honesty. There were some other questions as well and in talking with our candidate you could tell, it was just in his nature, that those were not going to be issues. So, that was a really big thing. (C1U1SP2:130-133)*

*We did it through basically all of the questions that we asked him and his response. Again, it was just how we felt he answered the questions. He just answered them in such a way that we feel he would be an excellent fit (C2U2SP2:132-134)*

The above quotations from urban church participants seem to indicate that there were significant assumptions made about the candidates - their capabilities, competencies and character, by the search committee. Agreement by the search committee or their feelings about someone do not objectively translate into a reality for a candidate or confirm a desired outcome. The expectation appears to be expressed that an interview would allow the search committee to assess a person's nature and determine that the problems experienced with a previous pastor would not be an issue. This seems to reveal that churches may often be making assumption based upon how they feel about a candidate, thus potentially limiting their capacity for thorough screening, which is a key principle of hiring (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 179) and is worth further discussion.

### **3.12.5.2 Theme 2: Emphasis on Experience**

Within the pastoral hiring process, experience is important. The challenges found within the data though present specific experience as a unique requirement and it seems to be emphasized as the solution to what a church needs, or wants.

*If I send it, they are going to think "He is not doing his job. Do not waste our time." I am not taking anything away from the guy. It is just that he does not have the experience they are looking for. (RL1:210-212)*

Earlier, in process #1, theme 1, it was noted that the churches are often unclear about their needs. No one individual would possess all of the cumulative experience needed to fulfill a pastoral role. This points to several assumptions about the importance of experience in a role that has typically been one reliant upon faith, character, competencies and an obedience to and reliance upon the Bible as the benchmark for faith and practice. This quotation by a regional leader seems to indicate an issue of the primary emphasis and priority placed upon comparable experience by a pastoral candidate above any other considerations.

*It is hard to find the really young ones that have had enough experience especially from what we have been through. We want a man that is strong and can stand up because yeah, we have had some issues, terrible, terrible issues that just cannot happen again. We cannot go there again. (C3RISP1:370-372)*

It is important to note the emphasis and priority of experience that is perceived by the churches in the above participant's quote. It seems to comment on the capabilities of a person's competence to be a spiritual leader on the basis of their own skills, lived experience and strengths obtained through age. It would seem from this quote that the issue here is one of an emphasis on experience within the pastoral hiring process as an expectation and criteria for avoiding what appears to have been a recurring challenge.

### **3.12.5.3 Theme 3: Pragmatic/Legal Nature of the Process**

The need for a pastor when a church is without one is a very practical need for the church. How they respond often demonstrates a pragmatic orientation that may overlook spiritual practices and principles within their screening, interviewing and decision process as they pursue their desire outcome – hiring a pastor.

*The frustration point came when churches did not follow the process... They would sometimes bypass some of the steps. Or you know, “we kind of want to move this along quicker so we will skip some steps”. We found that did not work so well. (RL1:230-235)*

*One of the biggest challenges though was our own congregation and their desire to have this process over and done with quickly and for you to give them all kinds of information about what is going on. You know, why is it taking so long? What is going on? Just trying to give regular updates and their responses... That was not really a surprise, I guess. I think that there is a mindset amongst many of our congregation that we are this great church and people would be flocking here to be the pastor and we should have a guy in a few months. (C2U2SP2:184-191)*

The responses of the regional leader and urban congregation to the search process as expressed in the above quotations are significant to note because they seem to offer a glimpse into the practical and pragmatic nature of the church and their expectations. In a desire to replace their pastor and in order to move more quickly through the process, the regional leader perceives that within the church's process, steps may be skipped. Or, the perception by an urban church participant that their church expects that they should have many qualified candidates and it should be easy to complete the process quickly due to their status, reveals some elements of a practical emphasis and an impatience to get the task completed quickly and move forward.

*So sometimes churches get profiles directly from a candidate or get resumes and that is fine, but we think there is a degree of protection in this that if they waive the right to see these things or signed off on our statement of faith or our code of ethics, then whenever a guy gets out of line, we can say well you have actually submitted to this and you have signed off on this. And so, we encourage churches to use the profile even if they do not get them from us ... We see it as a key piece. (RL2: 109-116)*

*So before we ever sent that out to the church, I would want to know they are in tune, they are on line with our denomination. And not only that with the statement of faith there is also a code of ethics. And I just think that is absolutely vital as well. I know a pastor's answer yes should be yes and you would hope for that but sadly that has not always happened. Believe it or not. That way at least the church has something in writing so that if they end up choosing a guy, they will have a copy of his profile as well as it would give the regional director peace that if a guy suddenly, it says clearly in the code of ethics that if my doctrinal convictions change while I am pastoring my church, I will notify my board by way of resignation. That is it. No questions just you are done. (RL1:21-29)*

The two quotes above, from regional leaders, appear to emphasize the role and perceived importance of the candidate profile as a tool in protecting the church in their hiring process. It is important to note the primary emphasis upon the signing of the core documents contained within the profile. It is also of note that in the second quote, the regional leader identifies that pastoral candidates have not always lived up to the commitment that is verbally made – their yes is not always acted upon as a yes implies. This appears to reveal the participant's perception of issues related to character, which is a significant element of the pastoral role. It is worth further discussion.

*...anyone applying had to complete a profile. It is something that is very exhaustive but to their credit they are very thorough... We were not as concerned about all the details of the profile as we were just concerned with them signing it. That was it. Because we believed in the totality of our doctrines that any deviation from that really would be not what the church doctrine is beholding to. (C2U2SP1:251-256)*

The above quote, from an urban church search committee participant seems to indicate a pragmatic issue with regard to the screening of pastoral candidates. First, it acknowledges the exhaustive nature and thoroughness of the profile. Secondly, it is important to note that in the same quotation they acknowledge that they were not as concerned about all of the candidate information within the profile as they were with them signing it. Having a thorough document, but not being concerned with the details, other than the signature, does raise an issue about the basis for the assessment and screening that takes place. This response to the profile system enables a very pragmatic approach to the pastoral screening process – potentially removing many of the screening elements involved, as much of this becomes assumed due to the presence of a signature. A primary emphasis by the regional leadership and the churches is the signing of the profile documents as primarily a legal protection (the profile document is included within Appendix D). In conjunction with that is the expectation and priority of the region that the churches engaged in a search process are diligent in their process and the screening of applicants. It would seem that there is an issue related to the pragmatic/legal nature within the pastoral candidate screening process, which according to at least one participant, sees the church overlooking some aspects of the screening. Practically, a church might look at the signed documents and assume that everything is in place, and that the candidate is in agreement with all of the core doctrines and considerations for serving in a pastoral capacity. This appears to raise questions about the thoroughness of candidate screening, which is a key principle of hiring (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 179) and is worth further discussion.

*we are a small congregation and an older congregation and so who can we afford? ...So, we did come to the conclusion and we all agreed on that but if the Lord wants our man to be here then he is going to provide for that man financially and otherwise. We are all content on just letting that go. (C4R2SP1A&B:172-177)*

The quotation by a rural participant appears to reflect the spiritualization of aspects of the search process by the search committee when they recognize they are unable to adequately compensate a pastor. Rather than acknowledging the challenge and perhaps adjusting expectations or the role requirements and time,

the search committee pressed on. It appears that the issue of the pragmatic need for the church to obtain a pastor was a driving factor for pursuing the existing search process. There is room for faith, but they may have overlooked the importance of a clear and realistic recruitment message that reflects the organizational reality (Olian & Rynes, 1984, pp. 177-178).

#### **3.12.5.4 Theme 4: Challenges with Pastoral Applicants**

Whether due to the pragmatic nature of the pastoral hiring process, for the church and for potential candidates, or other factors, several challenges were identified within the screening and interview process.

*it says clearly on the profile you know even though we have done some initial vetting, it is still up to the church to do their homework... this is part of the vetting, but we could not even guarantee accuracy of all their answers on the profile. We would hope they are saying what they meant but I remember one profile...So, you know it is pretty misleading right? So we would just have to say to a church, we cannot sign off on the accuracy of every statement or everything that has been recorded on this profile. We will do our best but that is just the way it is (RL1:36-48)*

As the church proceeds with their screening process of potential pastoral candidates, it appears that the regional leadership have had issues related to inaccurate or misleading information being supplied through the pastoral profile system. This issue appears to be emphasized by the above quotation by regional leadership where they cannot guarantee what is written in a candidate profile is inaccurate. That this has occurred with sufficient frequency that the denomination includes a disclaimer about the contents of the profile and emphasizes the priority for the church to be thorough in their screening process is worth noting and considering the implications for pastoral hiring further.

*...the individual approached us, submitted the profile to us, told us that they believe God was moving them on from their current ministry so that they were ready and willing to make a move...They said the church was going in a good direction and then they told us that they felt God was now telling them to stay. (C4R2SP2:178-184)*

The above quote from a rural participant is important to note because they seem to indicate an issue of the spiritualization of aspects of the process. Trusting God in a spiritual process would be expected. The quote appears to demonstrate the search person's perception of the use of spiritual language by the candidate to imply interest and conviction that they should leave their church and that the church seeking a new pastor should hire them. Invoking God's implied direction into their application and appeal to the

search committee and then using the same in a contradictory manner to inform the church that they were no longer interested in the position because they felt God told them to stay where they were is an apparent contradiction of God's direction.

*We found this a bit difficult but we were trying to sell your church, your community, your people to make it – it is still a calling for people to come, but we get more of the job aspect I think coming through, like ok, what is the salary? What are the benefits? What is the cost of living? All of these questions are being asked. Some of those are more to the front instead of further down the list, so using that information too... So, not to be unkind, but we just realized that it is a different situation now and we just have to be prepared to sell.. (C4R2BP1:293-309)*

It would seem from the above quotation from a rural church board participant that they perceive that changes are taking place within the pastoral hiring process as they attempt to engage potential candidates. The language of job, selling your church and community to entice someone to come during your interview process and the recognition that it is a different situation now is worth further discussion.

#### **3.12.5.5 Theme 5: Role of Religious Institutions**

There was some acknowledgement of the role of biblical institutions in preparing pastoral candidates to navigate these times in the area of pursuing vocational ministry. This one quotation seemed worthy to note.

*I gave them probably some wrong advice, that I am still not sure that it was wrong advice it is just how the game is being played now and this is why I think what we talked about here needs to mesh with somehow how pastors are taught to look for churches. I was taught and the analogy may have been wrong, but once you go steady you go steady. Now it seems to be you can date 5 and 6 churches until somebody calls you. (C4R2BP2:57-61)*

The above quotation from a rural context appears to make a couple of comments and raise issues that are of particular interest to note. The idea of a pastoral search process being a game highlights the perspective that processes may have changed and potential pastors and churches approach it differently. The participant appears to highlight the importance of churches and pastoral candidates being in sync with how they approach pastoral selection and hiring. It references the ways that pastors are being taught to look for churches, possibly shining a brief light upon the theological institutions and the manner and priorities of instruction for pastoral candidates in seeking a church to serve. This is worthy of further

discussion as it has implications for churches and the bible college and seminaries who are preparing pastoral candidates.

### ***3.12.5.6 Theme 6: Discernment Versus Decision Making***

Throughout the pastoral hiring process, those involved are tasked with making decisions. In wrestling through various issues in screening and interviewing, inevitably decisions have to be made as the search progresses. Whether in the initial development of a profile, the soliciting of candidates, initial screening or final recommendations, the search committee is tasked with making a series of decisions that lead towards a successful hiring outcome.

*If anyone had a strong reason that they did not agree with an individual that was good enough. If anyone was opposed then it was not an option to continue with that candidate.(CIUISP1:48-49)*

This quotation appears to highlight the importance of spiritual maturity and discernment in a search process from a participant's perspective, as a single search committee member may shut down a process or eliminate a potentially strong candidate if they did not agree with something about a candidate. It would seem from this quote that the issue is one of discernment rather than simply decision-making, although the participant may have also viewed this issue as one of unity or consensus, requiring that the whole search committee must agree. Rather than the group deciding about a possible candidate, apparently individual decisions could greatly affect the process. So many of the themes are intertwined as the process flows and involves people in more than a simple decision-making task.

*...we ran into that problem in the past where we had strong disagreement by one of our members. She ended up being the right one. But because the majority of the search committee felt this was the ideal candidate what do you do? (CIUIBP2:192-194)*

This quotation appears to highlight the challenge of a search committee where the majority of people may have a differing opinion and may drive the decision, perhaps in the wrong direction. From this quote, it appears that the issues being raised are those of discernment, spiritual maturity and decision-making, particularly in a context where a majority of committee members may determine the outcome of a selection decision. Ultimately, the final candidate selection decision is vital to the hiring process. This emphasizes the possibility of a wrong decision and highlights the reality that the pastoral hiring process entails more than a typical hiring process decision might and considers the question – how do you decide or know if the majority is wrong?



*So, aside from the message portion, for us as a group we really wanted to see what his personality was like as well as his preaching - what he was like as much as we could ascertain. Apart from interviewing every single person one-on-one there would be no other way of doing it. (C2U2SP1:115-117)*

It would seem from this quote, that the participant interprets the issue as a challenge to be able to discern a candidate's character and personality without adequate time, proximity and relationship. This was a challenge noted by most of the participants. It was apparently perceived as not possible to adequately screen all of the applicants, or to know them sufficiently to discerning a candidate's character and other qualities to affirm their selection or make a decision. There was an apparent gap within the process when dealing with candidates, particularly around the ability to actually know a candidate and discerning whether they were suitable, even to consider as the next pastor. This warrants further discussion.

#### ***3.12.5.7 Theme 7: A Spiritual Process as Well***

It is important to note that there is a perception and understanding that the pastoral hiring process is a spiritual one as well. It is a spiritual role the church is looking to fill and it seems to require a level of insight and discernment more than what may simply be done through a typical process.

*one of the hardest things to do is probably discerning a calling because the Bible does not really give you five points for discerning. (C2U2SP1:169-170)*

The above quote from an urban church participant seems to capture a significant consideration and issue as the ability to discern a calling is not something that can be easily, or necessarily – objectively assessed. As the Bible does not clearly give five points for discerning, then there appears to be a significant aspect and importance to spiritual wisdom, discernment and the use of available resources as a search committee works towards identifying and selecting a spiritual leader – their next pastor.

*we are asking beyond what a secular boss would ask of himself to determine whether or not an employee is a fit for his company. We are asking for discernment that goes beyond what we could ever ascertain from a simple interview or several simple interviews. We really need to be led in a supernatural way and how you assess that, I do not know. But that would essentially kind of take us and separate us from okay this is not a secular process to interview for a job. This is now something that is in the spiritual realm and needs and depends heavily on prayerful consideration and being led by the Spirit. So, what that looks like is just time. (C3R1SP2:187-193)*

*there can be a challenge in determining whether or not a candidate is a good fit beyond just the paper and all the qualifications. Whether he is a good fit without actually getting to an interview and spending significant time talking in a setting and manner where you do get a better feel for someone other than just looking at a paper with all their qualifications listed...we can look at a paper and we can all see on the paper there are qualifications that are being met there, but for us to really get a good sense as to whether or not we should be taking the next step, we actually have to take the next step. So, it sometimes feels like it is a little bit backward... the process is. (C3RISP2:257-267)*

It is important to note within the quotations from rural and urban participants above, that there appears to be a perception that the pastoral hiring process is different from a secular one. There is a spiritual aspect to it, a mystery, that does not offer a solution solely based upon qualifications on paper and interviews. It seems that these participants believe that to hire a pastor takes more than what is captured within the typical hiring process and this is expressed in terms of prayer, being led by the Holy Spirit and time. Within the second quotation, the participant seems to identify that the current process as it exists, seems backwards. The issue expressed seems to be the difficulty in adequately knowing a candidate to be able to determine if they would be an appropriate fit for their church and the pastoral position to even be considered. Papers and qualifications are not sufficient to adequately know a candidate. This seems to highlight some of the challenges within the pastoral hiring process and a sense that it is somehow not fully what it should be. Although they are navigating their process and working towards a hiring conclusion, there appears to be an acknowledgement of the issue that at times their current process does not seem adequate or a correct way of identifying the best fit in their next pastor. There is something more, yet beyond the ability to fully comprehend or express in tangible ways.

*As we look for a pastor, we want to affirm that he is called to the ministry. Secondly, we want to affirm that he is called to this ministry. Just because he is a called minister does not mean he is our called minister...I want to, in some way, allow in the next year or two after somebody comes, to somehow reaffirm their calling...That is what I am striving for. And the reason because I think it is a biblical process... And pastors are people too with normal human emotions and attachments. But they are to be separated for the work of the Lord, for the calling of the Lord wherever God should go and if God plants them, they should bloom (C2U2BP1A&B:113-123).*

This response by an urban church board participant, seems to emphasize a couple of key perspectives to take note of. The issues raised appear to be related to the spiritual aspect of the hiring process. First, while the participant affirms the notion of calling, they also identify the necessity of affirming the candidate's calling to their specific church and ministry after a period of time to allow for such discernment. This seems to suggest that the hiring process is not a final practice, but one with a decision that is further validated and affirmed after additional time to know a candidate, work with them and observe their ministry among them. This is unusual to the typical pastoral hiring process because if things do not seem to work out, the pastor is often replaced and a new one sought. The language surrounding this is not typically that of affirming a calling to a church and its ministry. It was unique to this particular response from all of the participants. It also is important to note the apparent expectation that if God plants them, or establishes them in a particular ministry, there should be evidence of that within their context. This appears to be different from the success and growth emphasis demonstrated earlier by placing God into the mix. This is worth further discussion.

#### ***3.12.5.8 Screening/Interview/Decision Process: Evaluation***

The screening/interviewing and decision step of the pastoral hiring process is perhaps the most involved element and heavily influenced by all of the preceding steps. It is during this stage of the hiring process that the search committee works through screening and assessing candidates towards the final decision for a potential hire. A successful navigation of this stage would ultimately result in a candidate recommendation to the church board for final approval and agreement before plans are made for the final two elements of the hiring process.

The pastor's profile (see Appendix D) was a primary screening tool for pastoral candidates as well as requiring signatures for the Statement of Faith, Code of Ethics and a personal release form. Some churches used it in preliminary screening, while the most consistent expectation for the profile was that it was signed, thus affording a degree of protection to the church and denomination should things not work out as hoped with a candidate. There is a disclaimer on the first page, identifying that the contents could not be verified as accurate, and that the churches must conduct their own diligent efforts to verify any contents. The evidence demonstrated that there appeared to be issues of integrity with some ordained pastoral candidates, not accurately representing themselves and their ministry experience. Issues related to character and integrity, biblical qualities for leadership were not reflected within the materials of the

profile or the screening and interview process. Character and integrity are significant elements of the pastoral role (Malphurs, 2006, p. 52; Thoman, 2009, pp. 287-288) and hiring process.

It appears that there were significant and varied assumptions made during this stage of the hiring process. Firstly, within the evidence of this study, there were significant assumptions and subjective assessments made about the abilities, character, fit, and competencies of candidates based upon feelings, subjective assessments and committee agreement.

If interviewers rely on their fit perceptions when making hiring recommendations and these perceptions are based primarily on misinterpreted values, the function of the interview as a means to assess and establish values congruence is called into question (Cable & Judge, 1997, p. 558).

Various studies have been conducted on the elements of hiring, particularly regarding the interview process. 'Interviewers seem to be using the interview method to infer applicant personality characteristics' (Macan, 2009, p. 208). Macan noted that while there did not appear to be any correlation between the interview and the revealing of personality characteristics, interview teams made conclusions about personality without sufficient corroborating evidence. 'The extent to which interviews inadvertently measure an applicant's personality seems to depend on the extent to which interpersonal skill is muted or allowed to play a role through the interview process' (Macan, 2009, p. 208). This challenge was apparent as most of the interviews were conducted through online platforms with a very limited timeframe to be able to get to know an individual. 'Like many continue to do today, interviewers relied primarily on their gut instinct to make selection decisions and then rationalized what went wrong if the chosen candidate failed to perform to par after being hired' (Blackman, 2017, p. 182). This 'gut instinct' was evidenced within this study.

Secondly, there were also assumptions made about the necessity of human resources skills and experience to successfully engage in this stage of the process. While an HR professional would bring certain skillsets to aid the process, it does not guarantee a successful outcome. In a recent Canadian article it was identified that:

Nearly six in 10 (58 per cent) HR managers have misjudged a candidate's fit with their company's work environment while nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) have lost employees because they were not suited to the work environment, according to an OfficeTeam survey of more than 300 Canadians (Fink, 2011, pp. 12-13).

Candidates try to present their best face, and a search committee does their best to search, discern and accomplish the task they have been assigned. There is evidence within this study to indicate that there can be a tendency to spiritualize aspects of the process, yet little evidence of a screening process that is spiritual and critically reflective was present.

Intuitive skills are inevitably inadequate, because they are subjective and unique to each person's experience. The problem is not just that candidates present their best face and attempt to create a good impression by responding, deliberately or unintentionally, to interview questions by trying to please rather than to be honest. The real issue is the interviewer's skill limitations in accurately measuring the most important factors that account for success in the workplace (Fink, 2011, pp. 12-13).

Thirdly, the church has been given other criteria, means and priorities to navigate in their search for and identification of spiritual leadership, yet there appears to be no demonstrated reflection or priority for biblical character qualities or their explicit inclusion within the screening and interview process. These spiritual qualities may have been assumed as a result of the signed profile and the ordained status of candidates. Also, a sense of calling was identified as significant, yet although the nature of a pastor's calling was historically viewed in the context of a calling to ministry and a calling to a particular church at a particular time, very little of the screening process sought to examine these spiritual attributes.

Ordination is a public recognition that a person is gifted and called by God for pastoral ministry...It normally occurs after a few years of pastoral service, not at its inception. It is an act of the congregation which the person is serving (Fowler, 1992, p. 33).

The notion of calling was tied to the practice of ordination – where a person's calling was formally affirmed by the congregation where they are serving. It appears that the concept of affirming a calling has seemingly lost significance within the practicalities of the pastoral hiring process. There was one exception within the evidence, and that participant acknowledged that it would take a year or two to be able to affirm a pastor's calling to serve their specific church. This ties in with evidence that recognizes the spiritual nature of the hiring process and the role of the search committee as beyond the secular, yet there was minimal evidence of taking the time to critically reflect upon or engage in a spiritual assessment and reorientation of elements of the process. Within the evidence, although the search committee was navigating the process and working towards a hiring conclusion, there was an acknowledgement that at times the current process does not seem adequate or a correct way of identifying the best fit in their next pastor.

Things like education, credentials, work history, skills even, are the weakest predictor of fit. And so even though we have relied heavily on the stuff that is in the resume to decide who it is we are going to speak to, almost 90 per cent of the time the reason people fail has nothing to do with any of those things. It is almost always about fit in some way or form (Dobson, 2015).

The concept of 'fit' within a church context involves the various components that Dobson identifies. It typically also includes theological convictions, spiritual gifts, leadership style, and personality (Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, 2016, p. 7). There are aspects that are more practical to the role and job expectations, and there are core elements identified to be considered, which include a sense of calling, character and a connection to Christ (Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, 2016, p. 9). These core elements are a significant and fundamental base upon which fit is established, yet they seldom appear as values within assessment or evaluative criteria within the screening process, other than perhaps a brief summary. It is therefore very difficult to assess these core elements as they are often taken for granted or implicit within any hiring considerations. In this way, they may easily be overlooked, or overshadowed by the desired tasks or role functions emphasized in the pastoral search, particularly if the search committee is unaware of their importance and significance, or they are inadequately equipped to assess them and are focused on the more pragmatic aspects of their task. Completion of this stage results in a candidate being recommended to the congregation in the subsequent steps of the process. The implications of not thoroughly and critically attending to all of the elements of this stage may result in a candidate that has the necessary skills and competencies, but is not the right fit for the ministry and actual needs of the congregation, which may hinder their spiritual growth and development.

### 3.12.6 Process 6: Candidate Meets and Interacts with Congregation

As the search committee moves through their process, they inevitably make a candidate selection and present the candidate to the congregation. After the search committee and the board reach an agreement on a candidate, plans are made to have the man and his family (if applicable) visit the church to meet and interact with the congregation. The process is a typical one for the churches, however the following quotations are important to note.

#### ***3.12.6.1 Theme 1: Limited Interaction Between Candidate and Congregation***

Throughout the interviews, one aspect that consistently presented in the data was that of the limited interaction between the candidate and the congregation before the final step in the process, the congregational vote.

*So, if we have a candidate who is going to come to preach for a call, the congregation would hear three or four weeks before to set this weekend aside. The weekend before they would be told that a candidate is coming to preach for a call. They would be told who was coming and this is how the weekend will play out...This person would already have met with the full search committee. Probably they will be exposed to as many different groups as possible and probably another meal meeting with, if not the whole search committee, then at least the elders and their wives. There would probably also be a couple of in-home things with various groups and then Sunday morning preaching, meeting with a congregation after a meal and as they walk away, there would be a vote. (C4R2BP2:207-215 )*

The above quotation from a rural board participant seems to identify that the communication to the congregation will give them a week's notice of any specific information regarding the candidate and the candidating weekend schedule. During the weekend itself, the candidate will meet with various groups, preach a sermon and enjoy a meal after the service. It is important to also note that after the various interactions of the weekend and the first opportunity the congregation has to meet and hear the candidate, the congregation conducts their vote to accept or reject the candidate as their next pastor. It would seem that the issue presented here is one of limited interaction with the congregation, who are asked to vote to accept a pastoral candidate as their next pastor on the basis of that interaction and a single sermon preached. It appears that the church chooses this way of practice within their pastoral hiring process.

*That will be when we get to the candidating process. Depending on how far away this person is coming, and whether that will involve a full weekend or if it would just be a Sunday. So, at the very minimum the candidate would preach on the Sunday morning. We would have a fellowship time afterward where we would have an informal interaction where they can talk a bit about themselves and ask questions about the church and the church maybe can ask some questions, but not trying to get into things which we should have asked as a search committee and then there has to be a vote. (C4R2BP1:234-239)*

It is important to note from the above quotation, that it appears the candidating process - when the candidate comes to meet and interact with the congregation, may be over a weekend or just one day. It is also significant that an informal interaction is mentioned, with the emphasis that it is not a question-and-answer time, and the desire to avoid questions that the search committee should have already asked in the effort to screen, interview and select the final candidate. It would seem that the issue is a limited interaction

between the candidate and the congregation, with limited questions allowed prior to the congregation having to vote.

*Then when he came to our church, I do not think that he expected it but our church also got to do a little bit of an interview with him. They had a Q&A time and our church was a little bit more demanding in their questions than I think any of us expected but it was really good because there had been so much mistrust in the church previously. And they asked everything. (C1UI5P1:186 - 189)*

From this quote, from an urban search committee person, it appears that during the candidating weekend a fairly demanding interview process took place by the congregation. The participant appears to attribute this to a significant mistrust within the church of their leaders previously. It may also be an indication of the desire of the congregation for more engagement of involvement with the candidate and the process.

*The one thing that we are going to try to institute this time is to see if we can get the pastor, whoever that new pastor would be, to come for two weekends in a row. So one weekend he would preach for the call and just get to meet everybody and talk to people. And then the next weekend he would come again and preach again and then we would vote. So, we are just trying to...the last one we had basically it was...I mean the congregation had no idea who it was until it was announced that next Sunday this guy, somebody (Somebody! They did not even know who) is coming, you are going to meet him before church, he is going to preach and you vote. And people did not really like that process because it was just “snap” all in one day you had to kind of make up your mind and make a decision and yeah. (C3R1BP1:109-117)*

It appears that this quote emphasizes the lack of congregational interaction and the perception of the participant of the discomfort of the congregation towards their lack of engagement and participation as everything seemed rushed in the process at this stage. Across all of the cases there was a similar pattern of limited congregational interaction and yet the final responsibility to affirm a candidate rests with the congregation, even with limited interaction.

### ***3.12.6.2 Candidate Meets and Interacts with Congregation: Evaluation***

After all of the screening and interviewing is completed, the next step in the hiring process is often known as a candidating weekend, when the candidate has the opportunity to meet the broader church community and preach a sermon so that the church becomes aware of the candidate that is being presented to them to



be ratified by a vote in the final step of the process. Often referred to as ‘preaching for a call’, the evidence from this study notes that this could take place on a single Sunday, over a weekend, or perhaps a longer period extending over two weekends. To this point, the church had been updated about the progress and asked to pray, but knows very little about the actual candidate. Typically, over the course of a weekend, the candidate would meet with as many groups as were scheduled by the church board, preach on the Sunday morning, enjoy a church luncheon and perhaps participate in a brief question-and-answer time.

Historically this has often been referred to as ‘preaching for a call’, a term that suggests that the result depends solely on one sermon! While one hopes that much more will be assessed than merely that one sermon, it is true that this is a vital part of the process (Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, 2016, p. 19).

When raising the matter of hoping that the congregational assessment is based upon more than one sermon, as they are tasked with casting a final, deciding vote, they have very little else upon which to base their decision other than appearance, what brief history or interaction they may have had during the weekend’s events, and hearing one or two sermons. While the evidence in the previous screening/interviewing and decision process section highlighted the difficulty to know a candidate adequately within the brief interactions of the main process, the meeting between the congregation and candidate is even more truncated as the evidence identifies this aspect of the process as rushed.

If everything goes well during this step, the implications from this will mean that the congregation will typically be more prepared to engage in the next step of the process – the congregational vote, during which time a positive outcome and result would be an expected outcome.

### 3.12.7 Process 7: Congregational Vote

After the search is completed, the final step from the church’s perspective is the congregational vote – their decision to accept a candidate as their next pastor, or not. The vote and some of the perspectives of the participants were worth noting.

#### **3.12.7.1 Theme 1: Dimension of Trust**

There were two primary perspectives in evidence through the perspectives of the study participants.

*So we are trusting the process now that God will, even beforehand we already told the church that you guys need to pray because ultimately you guys will be the ones deciding if this guy is the one. So, you guys need to pray. You cannot be like oh yeah, you guys selected him so... Just at our last*

*prayer meeting we reminded them to pray fervently because the future of our church is in Christ's hands... The future of our church is dependent upon whether you are searching and seeking his face so I encouraged the team to just really pray and emphasized how important this is. Your spiritual growth and welfare is in the balance and whether or not our church will be here is in the balance (C2U2SP1:196-204)*

*You know when the vote comes, I think that it is going to be a reflection of “we trust our leaders who have brought this person to us”. And I think you would find that differently for different churches or even seasons of a church because I think it has a lot to do with the trust that the congregation has in the board. And there are seasons where we have had less trust and more trust. So by and large the people here largely trust the leadership and something would have to go very wrong for that person not to be affirmed. There would have to be a pretty significant disconnect. (C2U2BP1 &BP2:258-263)*

The two quotations above came from the same urban case – one from a board member and one from a search committee member. What is important to note is the differing perspectives on what the vote signifies. For the search committee member, the final vote appears to be an issue and the spiritual responsibility of the congregation to have been in prayer and seeking God as they are tasked with casting the final decision about a candidate. The congregation’s vote is to affirm the proposed choice for their next pastor – trusting that God will direct the congregation’s vote. The perceived and expressed implications for the vote presented are significant.

The second quotation is from a board member from the same case. Their perspective of the issue appears to indicate that the final congregational vote is seen more as an expression of confidence and trust in the search committee and board – that they have done their due diligence in searching and selecting the candidate they are presenting. The expectation of a successful outcome in the congregational vote is tied to the trust and confidence that the congregation has in its leadership and the church’s perceptions of the competencies of their leadership.

*So the congregation would be voting to affirm the recommendation of the search committee and board. So they put their trust in us to do the searching and if we recommended somebody and they turned it down that is probably the end of the committee. (C4R2BP1: 244-246)*

Similarly, within the rural context, the perspective of the board participant appears to view the issue of the final congregational vote as one where the vote reflects the trust of the congregation in the search

committee and leadership recommending a candidate. This is important to note as the expectation is that if the congregation rejects a candidate, a new search committee may need to be established to start the process again.

*if the two of us, the board and the search committee felt confident and took it to the membership and they expressed, "well, we have hesitation", I would say those are warning signs, red flags for us that ok, maybe we got something wrong here as a search committee. Maybe we were all unanimous but maybe we were unanimously wrong or kind of sidetracked or confused or whatever. So, I would say that is maybe, the biggest consideration if there is not this consistency of agreement and confirming or affirming what the search committee felt right from the beginning. So, it is affirmed by the board and affirmed by the membership. (C3RISP2:144-151)*

It appears that the above quote, from a rural search participant, expresses that the congregational vote is viewed as an affirmation of the selection process and candidate, or else it is viewed as a final red flag, that indicates that perhaps the search committee and board got it wrong somewhere along the way and they need to re-evaluate and re-engage in the process. This is important to note and worth further discussion.

*So, our congregation eventually votes and they will vote the guy in... They will hear him and after we recommend people to the congregation they will vote to accept the person or not to accept the person. It is a yay or nay. It is a hard position for a pastor to be in but I do not know what else you would do. I believe that it is a ballot vote and it requires 75%. (C3RIBP2:179-183)*

The above quote from a rural board participant appears to identify the congregational vote as a simple yes or no matter with a minimum percentage of the votes needed to reflect the decision. It is interesting to note that it is a ballot vote, meaning no one knows how others are voting and therefore there is minimal influence from others. It is also important to realize that process and structure and perhaps other factors have established a pattern for the pastoral hiring process within each church's tradition. The vote and the required percentage is stipulated within the church's governing documents. It would seem from this quote that the participant acknowledges that it is a hard position for a pastor to be in, and not knowing what else could be done in making a final decision in selecting a pastor. In this there appears to be a sense from the participant that the process could be improved upon.

### ***3.12.7.2 Congregational Vote: Evaluation***

The concept of the congregational vote is the final step in the pastoral hiring process as far as the identification and selection of a pastoral candidate. The church congregation is ultimately responsible for accepting the candidate as their pastor. Their constitution or governing documents typically indicate that the membership votes and a minimum percentage is required to accept the candidate. After the candidate leaves following the candidating weekend, the church would either vote right away or within a week, to accept the candidate or reject him as their pastor. ‘Usually, the vote is perfunctory and follows the recommendation of the board’ (Weese & Crabtree, 2004, p. 47). While this is the typical perception of the congregational vote, within the evidence, there were varied perspectives on the congregational vote and its significance. One perspective was that the vote and pastoral selection decision ultimately rests with the congregation and that the congregation must be aware of the significance of the vote because of its spiritual significance and influence upon their spiritual welfare.

When a candidate is finally invited to preach a trial sermon, the vote of the congregation is taken as the will of God in the matter. If the vote is favorable, and a localized version of the call is issued, the church then vests the prospective pastor with its endorsement of their leadership ability (Ingram, 1981, p. 121).

This places a significant responsibility upon the congregation, especially given their limited interactions with the candidate.

The second perspective that was presented identified that the vote by the congregation was a demonstration of the level of trust in the search committee and leaders (the board) who brought the candidate to the congregation for affirmation. If the congregation does not have all of the information to make an informed decision about the candidate after their brief interaction – they do have knowledge and some sort of relationship with the people who have selected and recommended the candidate. Unless the candidate’s brief interactions with the congregation and their sermon fail to connect or suitably impress, the congregation will vote in a manner that reflects their level of trust in their leadership. Regardless of the perspective of the vote, it is a significant element in the hiring process and one that requires intentional engagement of the congregation and a willingness to accept the outcome. Once the vote is completed, there is a further opportunity for critical reflection and learning through the results and the chance to learn and further improve in the hiring process and similar processes within the church. While the vote of the congregation to affirm a candidate is viewed as determinative for the hiring process, within a church, a

congregation may vote or demonstrate their agreement or disagreement in a number of ways and it is important to note a broader congregational reality.

...pastors lead in contexts where followers 'vote'. Sometimes this phenomenon involves formal counting-of-ballots, such as congregational meetings. In other instances, congregants will 'vote with their feet', meaning that they will leave the church if they are unhappy with the pastoral ministry. In yet other situations, congregants may choose to vote with their pocketbooks. That is, they may remain in the church but exercise power by giving or refusing to give toward specific projects or toward weekly ministry needs. Regardless of the particular means, pastors possess an added leadership dynamic that is unique from other types of leaders, since the congregants whom they lead cast tangible and tacit votes on regular bases (Young & Firmin , 2014, p. 2).

The nature of the congregational vote may not be a true indication of an informed decision by the congregation or a definitive response of the congregation to a pastoral candidate, as over time they may demonstrate their 'vote' by other means related to their participation and support of a pastor and their ministry. Perhaps the vote is indeed more perfunctory and reflective of simply addressing a practical need. The evidence of the actual perspectives of the congregation's decision may not be evidenced for weeks or months later. The actions of the congregation over time and the tenure of the pastor may be a better indication of the significance of congregational involvement in the pastoral search process and the reality of the voting step in that process.

### **3.13 Research Objective 2**

Within the previous section, I have dealt with research objective 1. The following section is closely linked through the raw data to address research objective 2: To understand the various scriptural, cultural and contextual factors that shape the way hiring practices are carried out, which allude to underlying values. Research objective 2 attempted to look at the influences that shaped the pastoral hiring process. In this section, the themes will be unpacked that attend to this objective. It is conceptualized according to the following outline:

#### **1. Scriptural Influences upon Pastoral Hiring**

#### **2. Cultural and Contextual Influences**

1. Impact of Secular Forces on Hiring
2. Canadian Evangelical Context

### 3. Urban/Rural Dynamics

The chapter concludes its treatment of research objective 2 with a description of the urban/rural dynamics that presented from the coding of the data. The code list from the data is found within Appendix B.

#### 3.13.1 Scriptural Influences upon Pastoral Hiring

Biblical paradigms and scriptural values are a significant aspect to the focus of this study and responds to the second research objective. It captures aspects of practices and priorities that are integral to the search process and have some rootedness within Biblical principles. While explicit references to the scriptural context are minimal, several quotations allude to the influence of biblical values. The quotations taken from interview participants' responses give some insight into the scope of the inclusion or consideration of a biblical paradigm or any scriptural precepts utilized in the pastoral search process.

*... we are relying on something beyond our own assessment and so we are all committed to prayerful consideration over every profile and every potential candidate. We are expecting and hoping that the Holy Spirit works in us in a unanimous way to confirm that otherwise. (C3R1SP2:252-255)*

It would seem that this quotation from a rural search participant's perspective, in response to a question regarding challenges or issues as they worked to identify and select their next pastor, alludes to an emphasis upon prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit in their decision making and throughout the process. These are both reflection of scriptural elements. Prayer is an element of church life, encouraged as a necessary practice within scripture. The expectation of the Holy Spirit working within the process and participants reflects a scriptural and doctrinal expectation. One of the primary values expressed was the recognition that this selection process and ultimately a decision needs to be directed in a way that relies upon more than the committee's own assessment. It is a recognition and expectation that somehow God would play a role in their process and confirmation of their next pastor. A primary emphasis therefore, throughout the process, was a dependence upon prayer and being willing to consider and ask for divine help and unity when dealing with each profile and candidate

*spend a lot of time in prayer that the Lord would just walk you through the process - to not run ahead but to wait for the Lord and on the Lord and to trust that He already has this guy picked before our last Pastor left us. He knows who it is going to be. We pray that God would lead them*

*to the man of his choosing. We do our best with the profiles and do our part and to listen. (C4R2SP1A&B:187-190)*

Prayer again is a factor in this quotation, but beyond that, it emphasizes a trust and dependence upon God to lead them to the right person. It emphasizes a willingness to wait on God, even as they do their part in their process - for Him to be at work to reveal the man that He has for their church. It also emphasizes a priority for listening – ultimately trying to listen for God and discern what He might be directing, which can happen as the committee listens to one another and processes the materials they have. It was shared in response to the question asking what advice they might share with other churches. Prayer is seen to undergird the entire process with an expectation that God will guide and direct them, ultimately to the right candidate.

*As we look for a pastor, we want to affirm that he is called to the ministry. Secondly, we want to affirm that he is called to this ministry. Just because he is a called minister does not mean he is our called minister... I want to, in some way, allow in the next year or two after somebody comes, to somehow reaffirm their calling. Even though they have been here maybe ten or fifteen years some of our people. Reaffirm their calling that they are here for such a time as this to serve under this leader. That is what I am after. That is what I am striving for. And the reason because I think it is a biblical process. (C2U2BP1A&B:113-120)*

The concept of calling and the recognition that though someone may feel called to pastoral ministry, still requires an affirmation that they are called to serve as the pastor for that particular church is an important one. It alludes to the understanding of the church that the pastoral role is more than a simple job or career position and that God is involved – which is difficult to quantify or measure. There is a perception expressed that the process of searching for a pastor and the elements that go into it, particularly an affirmation of calling, should be a biblical process. This quotation came in response to the considerations used when developing the job description for the pastoral role.

*Just because I assume it is taken for granted, which I probably should not do, there is obviously the scriptural requirements and qualifications from 1 Timothy and Titus, maybe even 1 Peter that clearly described what God's word lays out for consideration and meeting the standard of a pastor and so, that obviously would be foremost and foundational... I think a lot of that is measured in character and attitude so, there would have to be some degree of examination of past ministry. So, experience and history in other churches, references. (C3R1SP2:168-174)*

Whether taken for granted or not, this reference by a search committee member to the scriptural criteria and qualifications of a pastor emphasizes the biblical rootedness of the standards and character expected for a spiritual leader. The participant also mentions character and attitude, the implications of which reinforce the importance of a thorough examination of a candidate within the pastoral hiring process and being able to know them sufficiently to assess character and attitude as reflective of these scriptural parameters. This was shared in response to the question as to how they will make their final selection decision.

From within the job postings or job descriptions from the participant churches, there were other references to scriptural values or desired pastoral qualities expressed. While some referenced a personal conversion experience or suitable spiritual gifts for the expectations of the role, one referenced that the candidate be a ‘family man’ as noted in 1 Timothy 3:4,5 and only one church referenced ‘godly character – elder qualified (1 Timothy 3)’ as a requirement. These job descriptions or postings may be seen in Appendix E.

*if you are looking to grow your church family you have got to have people on your search committee that are filled with the Spirit, who want to serve the Lord, they want to outreach, their heart is full of the Lord. And that is the kind of people I think that you need on the search committee. Not someone who is just going through the process but has an excitement for the Lord and who wants to see, not just the church grows, but people coming to know the Lord. (C1U1BP2:179-183)*

This quotation from an urban board participant, alludes to several scriptural principles or values that align with the evangelical tradition – a follower of Jesus, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and a desire to serve the Lord and share His good news with others through outreach. This quote was shared in response to the final question as to whether there was anything the participant wanted to share that might benefit other churches and points to preferred criteria for search committee members.

*Everything that we did, had to be prayed through before and after and so on. Recognizing that this is not our work. The Lord has already chosen this person we just have to find him. So that was a significant aspect or core value for us (C2U2SP2:117-119)*

This final quote, from an urban search committee participant, again alludes to biblical values, in reference to what the participant viewed as a significant aspect to their hiring process. It references the belief that God has a role in the search process and in the identification and calling, or choosing a person to serve within a particular church context.



This gives a glimpse into the scriptural influences upon the pastoral hiring process as expressed through the differing participant perspectives. It would seem that interviews and candidate screenings are done in a manner that makes assumptions about candidates actually meeting traditional scriptural criteria as there is little explicit mention of any scriptural candidate character qualities or identified means to measure or assess them.

### 3.13.2 Cultural and Contextual Influences

The church is, in many ways, a product of the culture. There are many influences that act upon the church, some of which the church has benefitted from in its development of administrative and management practices. The challenge may be found in the overarching pragmatic nature of the church, or its rush to get things done so that there is very little critical reflection or a consideration of normative, biblical values that should be in evidence.

#### ***3.13.2.1 Impact of Secular Forces on Hiring***

Secular influences, while not directly referenced within the various interviews, seemed apparent through many of the interactions that took place.

*Let us set a new direction, be more, (this word came out in the last 6 months) let us be more attractional. We had not used that word in the past. It is kind of a buzzword they are using now in some of these new generation churches. (CIUIBP1:34-36)*

This was shared by an urban board participant as they described their search process and the appeal of newer churches and the priority of attracting people as the latest, relevant thing for churches. There appears to be an emphasis upon pursuing the latest thing as the source for a new direction for the church.

*... a Christian leadership placement organization out of the States ...They do an assessment, figure out where the church is, what healing needs to take place and then they find you the man that fits in your classification what you are looking for, you know these three things or whatever else you are looking for, and they guarantee him for a year and then come and do the handoff where you meet the guy and they say this is your guy and they actually come to your church but it comes with a price... So, I brought it to the team - their marketing is unbelievable. (CIUIBP1:361-367)*

It appears that there are many cultural issues at play as the above quotation speaks of expediency in the process by hiring it out; the marketing of the agency that provides the service; the church being handed

their pastor with a one-year guarantee and the attractiveness of this as an option. This was shared as final advice and something to benefit other churches.

*We did it through basically all of the questions that we asked him and his response. Again, it was just how we felt he answered the questions. He just answered them in such a way that we feel he would be an excellent fit (C2U2SP2:132-134).*

This quotation, in response to how the search committee would evaluate the fit of a candidate for their role and church, reveals a common element of how they feel as an important criteria. This criteria of how people feel as being a determinative factor in hiring decisions was noted in chapter two.

*We found this a bit difficult but we were trying to sell your church, your community, your people to make it – it is still a calling for people to come, but we get more of the job aspect I think coming through, like ok, what is the salary? What are the benefits? What is the cost of living? All of these questions are being asked. Some of those are more to the front instead of further down the list, so using that information too.(C4R2BP1:293-297)*

This idea of having to sell your church, community and pastoral position introduces elements of competition and secularism as the participant identifies that there is much more a a job emphasis on the part of potential pastors.

It would seem that there are many cultural issues at play within the pastoral hiring process as the quotations reflect a sense of expediency and characteristics of a hiring practice that is found within a typical industry or organization for hiring. These and other cultural influences that are alluded to within the evidence will be discussed more fully in chapter four.

### **3.13.2.2 Canadian Evangelical Context**

In the midst of the pressures exerted upon the church from secular influences, the evangelical church context in Canada has seen a shift due to a number of factors, like increased pluralism, aging pastors, lack of clarity around and the apparent lack of young people responding to the need or being trained for a pastoral vocation.

*We went to churches we respected and asked if we could view their job description. We went to the internet. We went to our denomination. We went to the handbook and looked at all those things and tried to come up with what we felt was important to us. (C4R2BP1:225-228)*

This quotation from a board member, came in response to a question about considerations of how they developed their job description. This was not unique to this one church, but was reflected in other's responses as well. It seems as though there is a lack of clarity within the evangelical church about the pastoral role so that significant input and external resources are needed to help a church determine and articulate what their pastor's role should be.

*A lot of our churches need to be what we call revitalized. So that is a tougher work, almost tougher than planting a new church. At least with a new church there are no preconceived notions or traditions. You can do whatever you want, whereas you go into an established church whether it is little or big, is like an ocean tanker and it takes a lot to turn one of those ocean tankers right. 18 miles it has got to travel to turn 180 degrees. (RL1:358-363)*

This quotation, from a regional leader was included in their response to a question regarding the length of tenure of senior pastors within their denomination. It alludes to the fact that many churches are struggling with aspects of their ministry such that they require something to restore them to health and vitality.

*As Christians we tend to rely upon our own strength and our own abilities to be able to guide a church and lose sight of that it is God who is building His church and His kingdom. That is the biggest takeaway for me is that prayer is very, very important and the most essential aspect of the entire process. Just as the spirit guided the early church it is the same spirit that guides the church now. I just believe that sometimes there is a disconnect between the church and how the spirit moves, depending on your theology of the Holy Spirit and how He moves, it sometimes hampers that process. Does he still speak? I still think so. (C2U2SP1:283-289)*

This quotation from an urban church search participant in partial response to a question regarding things learned that they would want to share with other churches, appears to emphasize the pragmatics and human efforts to be the church, while acknowledging that we often lose sight of God in the process. They also appear to comment that there is often a disconnect between the church and its process and the involvement and engagement of God and His spirit in it, which disrupts or impedes God's ability to work.

*In our church we have several different denominations. We have people that have come to our church from ... I think that kind of gets most of them. But we have quite a mix so all those people that have come in, it is almost like they all have their ideas of what they wanted and some of that has flared up (C3R1SP1:82-86)*

This comment from a rural search participant, in the description of their hiring process, captures the diverse nature of the evangelical church in many locations as people migrate from one church to another, from one denomination to another. It would seem that the issues here are religious pluralism and individualism and that the church noted this as a challenge within their process but was unsure how to address it. This is worth noting and something that will be considered more fully within the discussion in chapter four.

*Also, the situation that we are at right now is there is a lot of doctrinal consideration for us. We as a church have kind of, over the last several years, struggled to come to terms with what exactly do we believe in some doctrinal areas and make that clear. There has been pushback from different people, different members who have attended the church for a long time saying, “are we sure that is what we believe in and teach”?... So that has been a consideration too. (C3R1SP2:114-119)*

This final quotation came from a rural search participant in response to the question regarding what they believe have been significant elements for their hiring process and their selection decision. It appears that there is a lack of clarity around certain doctrinal areas for the evangelical church, not only for newer people, but for those who have been in attendance longer. This is worth examining more closely as it potentially points to the religious pluralism and post-secularization within Canada and impacts several areas of the hiring process – the development of leaders; uncertainty about church needs; a lack of clarity about various criteria; the pragmatic nature of the hiring process and various assumptions that are made. This will be discussed more fully within chapter four.

### 3.13.3 Urban/Rural Dynamics

In working through the data and the four cases, both the rural and urban churches generally followed the typical process. Some of the unique or unusual realities faced by both demographics were similar, and some were expected, particularly the challenges faced by smaller, rural communities to attract pastoral candidates willing to relocate. Perhaps due to the challenges of the rural congregation being in a smaller community, with fewer potential resources, they were more impacted by the shifting culture related to the pastoral job search amongst younger pastors. They expressed the need to work with the bible colleges and seminaries to examine this for the purposes of a greater understanding and appropriate responsiveness by the church and pastoral candidates in identifying a call to serve in a rural context.

Both groups had demonstrated or experienced attempts to obtain a new pastor by luring a successful one away from their current church and emphasized experience as a key desirable criterion for their new pastor. With the rural and urban contexts there was limited interaction between the desired candidate and the congregation, prior to the congregational vote. One urban church did broaden the interactions more with certain leaders and church groups, but the congregations generally did not have the scope of interaction necessary to assume responsibility to make a decision on the merits of a proposed candidate.

The urban context demonstrated a greater need for training and orientation for their search committee, perhaps due to the scope of their task. They also were more prone to making assumptions and subjective assessments on the merits of a candidate. In part this might have been due to their greater emphasis upon the pragmatic and legal aspects of the assessment stage, prioritizing the signatures on the profile and reviewing a smaller number of criteria. The rural churches demonstrated a significantly higher number of biblically rooted criteria, desired candidate qualities and expectations for a pastor, so this may have contributed to their greater scrutiny of the elements of the profile and assessment materials. The rural churches demonstrated a greater dependence upon the candidate profiles, as well as enlisting denominational support in the candidate soliciting and screening process. Interestingly, the urban churches indicated a greater number of congregational expectations related to the search process to be attended to.

The rural context struggled with a lack of clarity around their job description, again, potentially due to their significant number of criteria and expectations for a new pastor. They also struggled with polarizing viewpoints within their search committee, perhaps due to the smaller community and fewer options as far as churches to attend, so a diverse demographic within the church might be a possible consideration. The smaller congregations within the rural context result in fewer people to draw on to serve on additional committees within the church. The identification of the need for spiritual maturity on a search committee was directed toward the rural context and it may be that the familial nature of the rural church impacts the engagement of the committee members in their prescribed task as relational lines are impacted.

Aside from some of the unique differences displayed, both the rural and urban churches demonstrated an awareness or recognized that the task of pastoral selection is a spiritual one, yet much of their hiring practice reflected common, organizational hiring practices.

The findings within this chapter address research objectives 1 and 2. The key issues identified will be discussed more fully in chapter 4, which is an analysis of the entire pastoral hiring process.

### **3.14 Summary of Findings**

#### **3.14.1 Research Objective 1**

This objective was to explore the practical process of the pastoral hiring task in churches. The findings from research objective 1 revealed that both the rural and urban contexts went through a similar, common hiring process. While each case followed a typical hiring process as identified by Olian and Rynes (Olian & Rynes, 1984), they struggled to clearly identify or thoroughly develop some of those elements. Aspects such as having clarity around their purpose and selection criteria, a realistic understanding of their organization and having adequate screening measures in place seemed to be a struggle to varying degrees. While some of the specific examples varied, both contexts demonstrated an emphasis upon the pragmatic nature of pastoral hiring, were impacted by the suggested practice of recruiting their new pastor from another church, and expected the congregation to vote to affirm a pastoral candidate after only a brief interaction and one or two sermons. It was more apparent that urban churches made assumptions and subjective assessments about pastoral candidates in their process and that the rural church struggled more with a lack of clarity around their job description and church purpose.

#### **3.14.2 Research Objective 2**

This objective was to understand the various scriptural, cultural and contextual factors that shape the way hiring practices are carried out, which allude to underlying values. In considering research objective 2, it appeared that there are biblical, cultural and contextual influences acting upon the hiring process. It would seem that any scriptural criteria may be more implicit or assumed however, as there is little explicit mention of any scriptural candidate character qualities or means to assess or validate them. While Ramunddal and Barbosa da Silva suggest there is a need for awareness of theological normativity for differing levels of church practice as such clarity and decisiveness can serve as a corrective mechanism for church practice (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, pp. 18-19), there appeared to be a general lack of awareness or use of biblical values within the elements of the process. There was an overwhelming sense that the majority of the hiring process focused primarily upon the pragmatic nature of the hiring need, the practical tasks of the pastor and the congregational expectations for the pastoral role, more than specific candidate criteria of character, competencies and a sense of clear calling to pastoral ministry in a particular church.

## **Chapter 4: Discussion**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This study sought to understand the current pastoral hiring process of the evangelical church in the Canadian context so as to understand the various influences on hiring and the implications for church practice. In examining and seeking to understand and reflect upon the pastoral hiring process, it afforded insight into the values and principles that grounded the actions of the church within this significant practice. This may allow insight into the grounding of other aspects of church life and practice, thus allowing for further reflection and action within the church praxis cycle in order to reflect those values which should characterize the evangelical church. It is with this in view that the analysis within this chapter is conducted.

This chapter considers the entire study and addresses research objective 3, which was to reflect on the current pastoral hiring process and its implication for church practices. In answering this objective, it fits within Osmer's 'interpretive task' (Osmer, 2008, p. 4) for practical theology in an effort to reflect upon 'why is this going on' (Osmer, 2008, p. 4). 'Practices, then, contain values, beliefs, theologies and other assumptions which, for the most part, go unnoticed until they are complexified and brought to our notice through the process of theological reflection' (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 20).

This chapter makes an analysis of the hiring process and the themes found within this study. It is divided into two sections – Internal Factors that Shape Church Hiring, and External Factors from the Broader Societal Context. The first section discusses critical issues around pastoral hiring directly related to the church. These issues ask questions of the process - issues like expediency, pragmatism and success, which are so endemic in this tradition and that point to underlying values that impact on the process. The second section involves the broader context in which the church is located involving the pluralistic, secularized, consumer-driven society that externally shapes the church's values towards hiring. There is a significant overlap and integration of many of these factors throughout the hiring process. While some of the issues could be identified as both internal and external factors, the perception of their primary impact upon the pastoral hiring process led to their assignment within their respective headings.

### **4.2 Analysis of the Pastoral Hiring Process**

The role of the pastor is significant to the church and the identification and search for a person to fulfill that role is equally, if not more so. It sets expectations, reflects practices and identifies needs and

opportunities within the church itself. It establishes or maintains a foundation that shapes the ministry of a new pastor and church moving forward. Olian and Rynes, from a social sciences and organizational management perspective identify five criteria that are consistent within a typical hiring process. They include: ‘determination of selection criteria; choice of recruitment methods; development of a marketing strategy (job description, means of attracting applicants); selection and assessment methods; and final decision making’ (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 171). When this is applied to a religious context, additional dimensions to this model to involve the appropriate denominational or congregational context must be applied. The work of Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, particularly their proposed method for theological reflection and biblical application (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021) was helpful in critically reflecting upon the pastoral hiring process. In recognizing that the Bible as a standard does not always have a direct impact upon practice or specifically state what each of the church practices should look like (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, p. 19), critical reflection of church practice and intentional engagement with the praxis cycle would benefit the pastoral hiring process to also consider that the practices are not contradicting Christian values. This became more evident as there were significant factors, both internal and external that influenced the pastoral hiring process.

### **4.3 Internal Factors that Shape Church Hiring**

There are a number of issues that were revealed within this study, four specifically that are directly related to the church within the context of pastoral hiring.

#### **4.3.1 Pragmatic Nature of Evangelical Pastoral Hiring**

There is an obvious, practical side to aspects of pastoral hiring. A church without a pastor would have a pastoral search as a priority and depending upon the nature of the leadership within their church, the church’s ability to attend to practical, pastoral functions and roles within the church, would increase their sense of urgency. The priority and emphasis to hire a new pastor, at times making assumptions about the character, competencies and capabilities of the candidate, while overlooking or not dealing with congregational hurt or dysfunction demonstrates the pragmatic nature of the process. There is further evidence of the impact of secularization upon the church, and the pragmatic nature of the pastoral hiring practice that has impacted the congregation and its leaders. When a church has its own challenges and internal issues to be dealt with, perhaps as a result of the circumstances surrounding a pastor’s departure or other congregational matters – the culture and environment of the church may be dysfunctional to the point where it will negatively impact the church and any new pastor coming in. This dysfunctional culture



typically develops over time, but it does contribute to negative consequences for any organization and the shaping of new people joining (Van Fleet & Griffin, 2006, pp. 701-703). As noted by one of the regional leaders in this study (RL1:388-406), not dealing with those internal matters has led to a cyclical pattern of ill-health, characterized by pastoral turnover in some churches - which impacts both the pastors and the congregation. The inability to deal with challenges within the church, choosing to press on to hire a pastor as the possible solution to a difficulty that may span several pastors, reflects a pragmatic attitude since that solution has not apparently been successful to date. It also impedes the faithful, redemptive witness of the relationship of God and His church to the surrounding community.

As the work of the pastor has grown and developed in the twentieth century, the execution of the responsibilities and the direction of the church members have not proceeded without being influenced by the practice of leadership in industry, business, and government (Nauss, 1995, p. 115).

Through the history of the church there have been shifts in practice and responses to culture and economic realities for both the church and pastors. There is more of a call for practical responsibilities and tasks to be performed by the pastor without critical and theological reflection. This impacts the hiring process, and the criteria established demonstrates a priority for a more practical and task oriented role, rather than an emphasis upon character, integrity and a spiritual role. Much of the criteria and job descriptions established by the four cases, reflected a pragmatic orientation to pastoral ministry. This in turn, had some impact upon the development and the execution of the hiring process. This has also had an impact upon the other side of the hiring equation – that of the pastoral candidates. ‘To earn enough money to pay back educational debt, and save for college and retirement, clergy must seek to serve large churches or place their calls second to spouse’s careers’ (McMillan & Price, 2003, p. 19).

Pragmatism has crept into the functions of the church and the role expectations from the pastor as a result. Bills have to be paid, there is a reasonable expectation to provide for one’s family, save for retirement and pay off any accumulated debt. The candidates therefore also engage in a practical evaluation of the hiring process. As they interview, they consider the financial remuneration, benefits and retirement contributions and everything related to caring for their family. This is most reasonable, but within the hiring process, this element has often been left to the end as the pragmatic pursuit of a candidate has not reflected a holistic process that cares for the candidate as well. If a pastor is truly called to a specific ministry, but feels they must reject that calling due to pragmatic considerations, whatever they may be, then perhaps both the church and the candidate might have to wrestle more fully with the concept of calling and the implications for their specific ministry in this time and space. The evangelical church is faced with a financial

challenge, as levels of participation and therefore financial giving has decreased. In part, this is attributed to:

a decline in confidence in religious leaders and institutions... 37% of Canadians did not give more because they “did not think the money would be used efficiently” by the organization... consumerism, individualism and other factors seem to make people less generous (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 189).

The influences of consumerism and individualism have shifted many congregant’s perspectives of giving and generosity to become less embracing of the concept of stewardship and all things belonging to God and more demonstrative of the notion of individual, personal ownership or money and resources and any that giving is a private, not a corporate matter (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 188). This produces changing financial realities that the church and a pastoral candidate must contend with. In part, the church has responded out of necessity by reducing staff, and moving towards and increasing number of part-time and lay pastors to address this practical reality (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 143-144). Being in a position of limited finances, requires a church to either consider a newer, younger pastor with less experience and perhaps fewer dependants so that any salary being offered may suffice, or someone perhaps closer to retirement with fewer additional expenses to consider. Or, it may require that the church consider moving towards a part-time or lay pastor arrangement. For a church to move from what perhaps had been a full-time ministerial role to a different pastoral arrangement would be a further challenge to contend with and would require significant reflection and time to assess the church and consider the way forward. This would significantly impact upon a hiring process because of the need to clearly understand and articulate the church’s pastoral role needs and job description based upon their financial reality. There would be a tension as the church seeks to balance the pragmatic with an element of faith. The pastoral candidate would have to assess those same considerations. The most pragmatic solution for any candidate would be to decline such a position and to look for a pastoral role within a church that is perceived to be financially healthy and that would offer a degree of security. A pragmatic response by a pastoral candidate to this scenario would make it difficult for a church engaged in a successful pastoral hiring process. Ideally, the hiring process should be spiritual, transparent, reflective and should support both the church and the candidate. This is challenging in a world that is often looking for easy answers or just wants to get the job done and does not really want to do the work of investing in a candidate – whatever that might look like. There are many factors at play here that touch on culture and influences – both internal and external to the church and how the church responds to such influences and pressures. As Percy, in his article, *Consecrated Pragmatism*, identifies:

many religious responses to pluralism and secularization are in fact quite pragmatic, (... few are genuinely theological; most are ideological, with theology added for legitimisation.) Of course, it is necessary to consecrate this pragmatism so the church can adopt it, but this often amounts to little more than the sacralisation of marketing, management or communicative techniques. Critically, the supporting philosophy of the agency or tool being used is left unaddressed (Percy, 1997, p. 22).

Ultimately the practices of the church are in view. However, rather than simply adjusting practice in response to other pressures that may conflict with or attempt to correct existing practices, it would serve the church well to more critically reflect upon its practices and the underlying perspectives, assumptions and convictions that are the basis for the choices inherent within them. Often, the things that are to undergird the church and its practices are not considered or reflected upon in the church's efforts to address practical needs. Those needs and perceptions of needs may drive the decisions from a pragmatic standpoint in its efforts to respond.

The fast pace of modern ministry often leaves little time or space to plan or assess strategies already in motion or stop long enough to consider the implications of our pastoral actions. These demands work against the thoughtful integration of context, theology, and practice in ministry... We often find ourselves defaulting to a pragmatism that reflects neither our values nor our beliefs (Sims, 2011, p. 166).

The identified pace of modern ministry suggests that the church and its leadership does not have the time to do anything other than default to a pragmatic approach to get things done. The church does not thoughtfully reflect upon principles and practices from broader society and integrate these into their practices. Instead, it appears that church leadership grasps whatever practices and values that would serve as a solution to the issue at hand. This suggests that there is no structure or leadership available to critically reflect upon what is actually being done, how things are being done or whether the church's practice aligns with the scriptural values that the church expresses they uphold. The practices that serve to meet the practical need of the church in the most expedient manner are often uncritically adopted, yet other practices or tools that might enhance the church are not considered unless they are perceived as necessary to meet the need of the moment in the most efficient manner, and then they too may be adopted without critical reflection. An example of this for the pastoral hiring process would be considering the use of external assessment tools and testing as an evaluative tool in candidate screening. While recommended, they add additional time and expense to the process and are not apparently considered or utilized.

"Too many demands on their time". This was by far the most significant stressor in pastors' lives... the pastors in the focus group told us that they felt incompetent in determining priorities among the competing

values and ideals that guided their ministries...they simply did not know how to critically assess the essential values that might guide them in their investment of limited time and energy. Many of them reported that they are “flying by the seat of their pants”, with little organizational consensus in their congregations (or comprehension in their own minds) as to how they should sort through the variety of issues, concerns, and crises that cry out for their attention (Jenkins, 2002, p. 13).

With the demands placed upon the pastoral role, and the acknowledgement that there is little organizational consensus within the congregation, it becomes more evident as to why there is a default to the pragmatic in terms of activities and decisions. The felt need and pressure is to attend to those things that appear to be most pressing. In a pastoral hiring process therefore, it may be even more difficult to move beyond the pragmatic if the congregation is challenged to be able to critically reflect upon practices or to find agreement in addressing organizational issues and concerns that may exist.

Professionalization dominates the approach to leadership... Leaders in this paradigm are predominantly managers responsible for sustaining the established life of the congregation. They are hired by and accountable to a captive audience of existing members who expect them to maintain inherited structures and patterns of congregational life...growth must not require significant renegotiation of the congregation's established culture or it will be resisted. That culture is tailored around meeting the spiritual and religious needs of those who are already part of the congregation... Their work is often predominantly administrative and managerial in nature as they seek to sustain a programmatic form of ministry and congregational life that is increasingly at odds with trends in the larger culture (Zscheile, 2015, pp. 19-20).

In a culture that reflects a consumeristic and individualistic mindset, trying to navigate the expectations of an existing congregational group when trying to hire a pastor, brings many challenges as those expectations may express more of individual perspectives and wants, coupled with a desire to maintain certain programs or structures. The emphasis then is upon what the pastor will do, or is equipped to do to serve the needs of the church, with little intentional thought about the ongoing spiritual and skill development of the pastoral candidate that the search committee has identified as the person God has set apart for them. The pastoral hiring process appears to be based upon characteristics that are external or pragmatic. Bonis distinguished this as ‘calling the equipped – where the church is looking primarily at skills, experience, references and reputation, while neglecting to invest the time to test, know and affirm the character and calling of someone to a role within a specific and unique church’ (Bonis, 2015, p. 155). What is reflected is more about hiring the skills and experience for meeting the perceived immediate needs and wants of the church with little anticipation or expectation for spiritual growth and development. The

potential for critical reflection or for introducing significant organizational change or any hiring criteria through the hiring process that moves beyond the current church culture or expressed congregational wants, would likely be minimal. The tendency within such an environment would likely to be to follow the path of least resistance and pursue a process that is both pragmatic and expedient to obtain a new pastor to assume those leadership responsibilities.

A further example of the professionalization within the church, and the opportunity to engage in a pragmatic solution for the pastoral hiring process was evidenced by the consideration to enlist a Christian leadership placement organization to find and recruit a pastor for the church (CIU1BP1: 362-380). This consumeristic solution removes many responsibilities and much of the required effort on the part of the church for the search process. It removes the need to discern fit before hiring the pastor as, with a one-year guarantee, it allows the church to simply declare that the pastor is not a fit and go through the process again. Such a pragmatic hiring solution though, if things do not work out with the guaranteed pastor, could have significant, negative implications for the church.

‘Most religious organizations are oriented around faithfulness to tradition rather than innovation’ (Zscheile, 2015, p. 25). This tendency would lend itself to default to a pragmatic response within the pastoral hiring process as any innovation or change considerations would likely be set aside until a new pastor was hired who could then be a part of any considerations of that sort. As noted by several participants, C4R2BP1 (11-15, 253-256) and C3R1BP1 (283-288) C4R2SP2 (96-109) C1U1BP2 (159-173) there were several challenges in developing role expectations and job descriptions – often due to previous history, congregational expectations or the need for changes to be implemented. The committee therefore, often defaulted to focus on the pragmatics of pastoral hiring specifically, while allowing the additional elements to be presumably attended to by others at a later date. This highlights the pragmatic nature that was defaulted to within the process, but also identifies potential challenges in areas of critical reflection, organizational management and culture, and the need for leadership development within the church.

There was little evidence of a priority for Christian character within the pastoral hiring practice. Assumptions for Christian character and competency were often made as educational qualifications became an objective criterion to be used for measuring abilities (Malphurs, 2006, p. 52; Perl & Chang, 2000, p. 172). By virtue of a seminary education, various credentials, a signed candidate profile or a positive interview, the element of a candidate’s character, calling and suitability to a particular church and

effective and successful ministry was assumed. Perceived time restrictions and other realities in dealing with external candidates made it difficult to intentionally and adequately assess the vitally important, but internal, spiritual elements within the current pastoral hiring process as the emphasis and priority of hiring a new pastor took precedence. At times, there was more of an indication of a pragmatic, consumer mentality of what people wanted, reflected within the church hiring process than for any biblical priorities for a pastoral leader. While recognizing that the role of a pastor is not a job, much of the attitudes, expectations, framing of the role, responsibilities, accountabilities and hiring process reflected more of the secular notion of one. This reflects a strong pragmatic element within the pastoral search process that often overlooks the need for critical reflection within the hiring process and potentially other practices within the church as well.

#### 4.3.2 Lack of Critical Reflection in the Hiring Process

Throughout the hiring processes examined, there were many instances where a lack of critical reflection of the practices from a spiritual perspective was evident. This critical reflection is not to be directed towards the practical nature of the elements of the pastoral hiring process and ways to streamline or make it more effective, although there can be a benefit to this. It is to be informed by the scriptures so that the practices of the church 'reflect faithful participation in the Trinitarian actions of God in the world. When a practice loses this dynamic and becomes 'merely technique', it ceases to be faithful' (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 24).

If the Church's praxis just reflects the views of culture, then we will have no message. This is a response which uncritically buys into popular culture and offers a simplistic Christian message...we must ensure that ecclesial practice is to be rooted in the social and cultural life of people and in the message of the gospel and the truths of faith (Bate, 2005, pp. 31-32).

Greater critical reflection at the outset of the hiring process, as the church conducted a self-assessment and an evaluation of the church and its needs, may have established the foundation for a very different search process and resulting church ministry. The need to hire a pastor and the limited orientation and development of people serving on a search committee led to some confusion about the process and its elements, which could contribute to a default position to embrace a pragmatic solution with uncritically adopted practices to expedite the process (C1U1BP1: 118-119).

Further evidence of the distance separating reflection from action is the fact that many pastors seem to have problems in maintaining a Christ-centred base for their ministry as they draw more and more on insights

offered by secular disciplines and less and less from theology. Drawing on these disciplines is not a bad thing but moral philosophy, psychotherapy, sociology and education, to name but a few, have begun to take precedence over theology as a source of insight, reflection and action (Duncan, 1985, p. 48).

If this presents a challenge for pastors, then it may pose an even greater challenge for lay persons tasked with a pastoral search process to be able to critically reflect upon the elements of that process, when much of their context for such reflection is often significantly influenced by and rooted within their own culture, experience and perspectives – and not necessarily a biblical or theological framework. Wilks notes, that within evangelical churches, ‘there is a tendency towards an authoritarian leadership style that expected leaders to lead and tended to give their congregations little say in decision making’ (Wilks, 2008, p. 76). Therefore, those responsible for a pastoral hiring process in such a context may not have the skills, or confidence to engage in any critical reflection of the practice or its elements. So, the default for such reflection under those circumstances may default to business management and success principles and the pragmatics of hiring a new pastor.

Ideal reflection for ministers asks questions of their current practice in order to inform and enhance their future ministry...Ministers who continue to practice this reflection for the sake of their future ministry enhance the quality of their future service. Reflective practice for professionals includes knowing-in-action, reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, and reflection-for-action... However, there is a danger if we rely too heavily on our knowing -in-action and we spend much time ministering on auto-pilot (Sims, 2011, p. 168).

There can be a tendency to overlook the need for critical reflection as previous hiring experiences or the insights gained from organizational and management practices may overshadow the spiritual elements of a pastoral hiring process. This may reflect the influences of culture and it may also speak to the nature of the practices of the church, where the expectation is that the paid professional – the pastor, is the one responsible for any theological reflection regarding church praxis. Much of the literature is directed towards the pastoral role in critically reflecting upon ecclesial practices and not upon the lay person and leaders within the church.

The relationship between theological reflection and theological action has been aggravated by the low regard in which Practical Theology is often held as a component of ministerial training...The result is that when men and women come to out their theory into practice they are often unaware of the context in which this has to be done and they have been given no tools or methods which can assist them (Duncan, 1985, p. 48).

This is a challenge for those within the pastoral role to be able to critically reflect upon the practices of the church and to then model or develop this within their congregation. A significant challenge that became evident within this study was that there does not appear to be any clear or intentional pathway for any such critical reflection to take place. From the lack of such preparation in ministerial training, this appears to flow into the church context and into the denominational leadership as well, where no one is equipped or engaged in the critical reflection of pastoral hiring practices, instead emphasizing the practical aspects of the hiring process. Whether each party – the church, the denominational leadership or the training institution assumes that one of the other parties is responsible for such critical reflection and reorientation of practice, or cultural conditioning and competing influences overshadow any thought of critical reflecting upon the elements of hiring practices, it is not occurring. Or, it may be that the church assumes that in any of its practices, simply engaging in the hiring process and respective elements with prayer sanctifies the process if they achieve their desired outcomes, regardless of how the elements align or represent biblical values. While the pastoral role in ministry is a significant and probably the most obvious aspect of critical reflection, it would serve the church at large if lay persons were more engaged in the process and equipped to critically reflect upon their involvements and practices within the church and ministry. When a church is searching for a pastor, the ministry of the church continues and its practices, particularly when hiring a pastor, would benefit from an ongoing ministry praxis cycle even in the absence of a pastoral leader. Sims highlights Wolfe and Kolb's experiential model of adult learning as a suitable description of the reflective practice that is in view within practical theology. He suggests a cycle that:

Firstly, involves engagement within the actual ministry practice, followed by an analysis and reflection of that ministry practice. The third step involves engaging one's theology with an understanding of what happened and then finally, allowing that learning and any new insights or implications to be integrated into decision-making and further ministry (Sims, 2011, pp. 170-171).

Within this framework, the task of critical reflection of the pastoral hiring process is more available to the non-professional and invites the participation of lay leaders and volunteers to engage in a reflective process as adult learners in order to continue their learning process and benefit their ongoing ministry participation and service within the church.

'Ambiguity is likely to further increase the complexity of any decision task... In organizations, ambiguity in objectives, fueled by competing individual or group interests, compounds ambiguity of information' (Ramsay & Scholarios, 1999, p. 68). There was evidence of a lack of clarity, uncertainty and confusion



about what the church actually needed and their mission and purpose (C1U1BP1: 311-313, C1U1BP2: 78-86). This fed into a similar lack of clarity around a job description and criteria for potential candidates (C3R1SP1:192-194, C3R1BP2:144, C4R2BP2: 240-243). This made the process more complex as the committees were faced with conflicting criteria, input from outside sources to be processed and even challenges internal to the committee as differing theologies were voiced. The evidence would suggest that there is a lack of applied spirituality to church practices and that critical reflection would benefit the church in this practice of pastoral hiring. ‘The real crisis of the church is its inability to ‘be church’ – sometimes not even conscious of what the church is or should be’ (Dreyer, 2015, p. 4). Taking the time to critically reflect upon, in advance of or during, the various stages of the hiring process, including any assumptions, personal or corporate values or beliefs could alleviate much of the confusion and added complexity of the search process. It may be that some had reflected upon these practices more broadly, but as a smaller group or a singular voice, they may have been drowned out by the increased number of urgent, pragmatic tasks, clamoring for attention in the church. To be unaware or uncertain of what the church is to be creates a significant problem for the church, particularly as it focuses upon the task of hiring a pastor. The expression of the purpose of the church will find its unique application through the nature of each individual church, but the overarching mission for the evangelical church is consistent. If the churches themselves are not clear about their own values, goals and practices, it will be very difficult to be effective in the hiring process and a challenging environment for any new pastor to come into. Further critical reflection upon the purpose of the church, and even the context, culture and practices of any particular church may be helpful in realigning its practices. ‘To ‘be the church’ requires a clear understanding of the essential nature, identity, calling and mission of the church’ (Dreyer, 2015, p. 5).

The church is not simply a gathering of well-meaning individuals who have entered into a social contract to meet their privately defined self-interests – it is instead an intentional and disciplined community, witnessing to the power and presence of God’s reign (Guder, (Ed.), et al., 1998, p. 159).

Unfortunately, due to the cultural influences of individualism, consumerism and relativism, the church often resembles the encroaching culture, and that becomes the framework for any reflection.

The confusion evidenced by the various churches and the different elements of their search processes could also be reflective of the organizational culture within the church and the broader evangelical community. Kwantes points out that ‘organizational culture has its starting point in the values of an organization’s founder’ (Kwantes, 2015, p. 1). Organizational culture may be impacted and shaped by a number of factors, particularly challenges that an organization may encounter and other pressures or

influences from society, government and from constituencies within the organization itself (Kwantes, 2015, pp. 1-2). Typically within the church, there is a strong organizational culture that reflects shared values, perspectives, behavioural expectations and practice (Kwantes, 2015, p. 3). This informs how things are done and establishes a framework and understanding for how things are to be done (Kwantes, 2015, p. 3). The evidence of confusion, a lack of clarity and challenges within the pastoral hiring process may be indicative of an organizational culture that has been diluted from what the norms and expectations are to be for the church as it has been changed from what it was intended to be. Perhaps other accommodations and changes have been made by the church to its organizational culture as it may have experienced what it perceives as success in its history and this success has driven the organization more than the biblical values, norms and historical expectations of the church.

The existing relationship between theological reflection and theological action in the Church is in a sorry state. What the Church thinks and what is formulated in its theology, confessions and statements of belief is often unrelated to what is actually going on in the Church (Duncan, 1985, p. 47).

A critical reflection of the various stages and elements of the pastoral hiring processes observed, brought to light several areas where the practices employed might be adjusted to more fully reflect the mission and character of God. This reflection raises questions regarding the integration of the values, beliefs, theologies and assumptions that may be ingrained within the evangelical church's pastoral hiring practice. The traditions and practices that have been developed or inherited by the evangelical church may be a part of the problem. This may be made worse by the period and current culture to the point that what a church's doctrines and statement of faith may profess, is not in evidence within the practices of the church. This highlights the importance of critically reflecting upon church practices and may raise significant issues that engage areas beyond the pastoral hiring process. This can also speak to the spiritual formation of prospective pastors and the church as it wrestles with ministry within the context and culture that it is called to serve in. Ongoing reflection is needed as the church must wrestle regularly with their values and practices, and in particular, with the emphasis of the next section – the growth and success metaphor.

#### 4.3.3 The Growth and Success Metaphor

A significant influence has permeated the evangelical church. Formerly, the notions of growth and success were understood and measured by relevant indicators of faithfulness to God's kingdom and mission purposes. 'What is remarkable in American Protestantism today is the crossover between the mentality of success represented by large enterprises in the commercial world and the measures of leadership in the

churches' (Frank, 2006, p. 118). Today, success in church ministry is more of a reflection of numbers of people and the size of church budgets. 'A successful career means a larger congregation, a growing budget, an enhanced personal reputation' (Christopherson, 1994, p. 229). For some this may also mean published books, and other market-driven indicators (Wood, 2002, p. 19). There are many consultants and books that promote greater productivity and success, without any critical reflection or understanding of the assumptions or actual principles being presented. 'Many attempt to adapt fads (like "total quality management") to the churches, just at the time when the corporations that originally tried them have moved on to keep up with the next trend' (Frank, 2006, p. 116). Chasing the latest trend does not seem to last and may not produce the ultimate effect that the church is designed for. It seems to embrace more of the consumeristic marketing and promotion of success idea than reflect a strategy for faithfulness to God's mission and purposes.

If you look at the numbers and the money, American churches in some ways are the most successful churches ever. And yet, I think it could be argued, we are at probably one of the low points because of the silliness and triviality that characterize so much of church life these days (Wood, 2002, p. 19).

This idea of growth and success was particularly evident within a significant movement within the evangelical church in the last few decades - the church growth movement. Not all did it well and many churches grew, but it was discovered that much of the growth experienced was through a movement of people from smaller churches. Churches would celebrate their growth in numbers and their budget, oblivious to the fact that many of those extra people had come from other churches. There was not always evidence of any kingdom growth – but congregational numbers and budget had swelled and that counted as growth and success. This impacted the smaller churches and many closed. This emphasis upon growth generated a lot of excitement and many of the Christian magazines of the time highlighted many successful, large church pastors on their covers. Churches that had faithfully served over generations and sustained worship, spiritual formation and care for their communities with a healthy succession of pastors and leaders have not been similarly featured or engaged to understand their success (Frank, 2006, p. 118).

At the outset it was recognized by the church growth pundits that not all growth was healthy; churches may simply be growing fat rather than growing in stature... Furthermore, while they sought to contextualize the gospel, they have run the risk of becoming so culturally attuned that they lose their distinctive challenge and witness to the radical, self-denying message of the gospel of the reign of God as declared and demonstrated by Jesus. Consumerism exerts and insidious influence within Western cultures (Gibbs, 2007, p. 161).

Like a plane off course by just a few degrees – unchecked, results in a significantly different destination than what was anticipated, none of these identified influences represent a sudden shift in course, impacting the church and hiring practice. Each reflects the accumulation of years of shifting within church and culture – the sacred and the secular, which has perhaps gone unchecked due to the inability to reflect upon practices and implement any necessary adjustments to be able to ‘call the Church back to the theological significance of its practices and to be able to engage faithfully with the mission of God’ (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 24-25). The church growth movement spurred a significant emphasis upon growth. Unfortunately, in the pursuit and emphasis on growth, the culture of the church changed and things became increasingly measured by numbers and the identity and character of the church began to change and pastoral burnout became more evident (Gibbs, 2007, p. 162).

In the midst of these priorities for growth and success by the church, the expectations and challenges presented in the form of the pastoral role are significant. ‘Many pastors face such strong pressure for professional achievement that they cannot distinguish between who they are as Christians and what they do as pastors’ (Anderson, 1994a, p. 263). There is significant pressure for such achievement and it is revealed in the various criteria, job descriptions and expectations that are put together by a searching church. One possible reason for this is that there is now little differentiation between the criteria developed for assessing a pastoral candidate and the job description or expectations for the role and often these do not reflect a critical, biblical orientation. The priority placed upon growth and success outcomes causes additional pressures upon a pastor to perform and achieve certain goals, which further confuses and reorients the priorities of the pastoral role. This was very much in evidence in this study.

When clergy speak about career growth their language changes. The rhetoric of achievement is more objective, calculating and often qualitative... *‘There is the multi-staff track and there is the church size track...church property is a stage property and by that it means it matters not how it got there, what matters is that if it is that big you have succeeded’... ‘The first question they always ask, ‘How Big?’... That is always the measure of your success’...As careerists, clergy know where they stand on the status ladder...* (Christopherson, 1994, pp. 229-230)

The emphasis upon growth and success and its measurement is a significant identifier for pastors. This is a pressure and reality that reflects more of culture’s influences, both within church and denominational circles, but it also may be an indication of the impact of culture upon the training institutions and their ability to address this perception in light of any sense of ministerial call that is not necessarily to a larger church.

The realities of financial pressures put a strain on a pastor and his family, but it also impacts the smaller churches, driving a need for pastoral performance towards church growth for more economic than gospel-centric motivations (McMillan & Price, 2003, p. 19). Growth and success have therefore moved beyond the realm of church ministry outcomes and God's kingdom growth to the pragmatic. The church needs enough people in the seats and giving regularly to meet their budgetary demands. Some churches regularly publish their weekly giving and budget numbers as an incentive for congregant to give and ensure that the ministry continues. The researcher is aware of a church that put flyers on congregant's cars while they were in the service, reminding them of the church's needs financially and asking for a commitment to help pay for the new large building addition that was being planned and constructed. McMillan and Price go on in their conclusion to state that the results of their study on clergy salaries 'reveals how much the mission of faith communities had been distorted by the free market forces of individualism and competition' (McMillan & Price, 2003, p. 20).

The church, adopting more of a free-market economy for attracting and recruiting their pastors, has created more of a financially competitive market, which has impacted the ability of a church to find a pastor at times, because a church could outbid another or offer additional benefits to entice a pastor to come. Smaller market churches would not have the capacity to compete at this level. The materialistic and secularizing influences that are pressing in on the church have significantly altered much of pastoral ministry. This was in evidence with the study. McMillan and Price suggest that if the church is to regain its rightful mission, then there is a need for appropriate reflection and response to address the issues related to pastor's salaries. These impact a church's ability to hire a pastor, and for the pastor to identify and respond to a vocational calling in a smaller church setting when they are unable to afford the kind of salary that the candidate may need. These conditions have appeared to lead to a commodification of pastors, where pastors are recruited, hired and changed in response to church needs and perceived benefits towards meeting the church's needs, which minimizes the sacred nature of a calling. 'It is amazing how quickly church leadership parallels business and secular models. It seems that cultural conditioning is more determinative than scriptural directives' (Schmidt, 1979, p. 4). This is something that has happened over time and it continues to. The encouragement of other pastoral leaders and willingness to try to take a pastor from his present church and ministry as a practice does not reflect God's values but secular hiring and head-hunting practices in pursuit of desired success. Much of the church's practice also reflected more of meeting the expressed needs and expectations of the congregation.

One other aspect that was in evidence, in part due to pragmatic considerations, but also perhaps a reflection of the secular influences and examples of the church regarding the commodification of clergy, has been the response of pastoral candidates within the hiring process.

Although faith-based criteria undoubtedly play a major role in the decision to become a minister, clergy base their decisions to search for other pastoral positions primarily on consideration of key job characteristic. Although many ministers become members of the clergy in order to fulfill their devotion to their religion, most ministers apparently are not driven by this same religious devotion in making decisions about employment at individual churches. Like other kinds of employees, clergy assess economic benefits, workplace justice, job satisfaction, and work expectations... (Wildhagen, et al., 2005, p. 396).

Pastoral candidates are more often considering a pastoral position on the basis of these job-related factors and may entertain multiple options as a means of securing what they perceive as the best position. The commodification of clergy has therefore impacted both sides and their approach to the hiring practice – the hiring church and the pastoral candidate. Growth and success, bigger is better – tends to lead the way for the church and the pastoral candidate. There may be an urgency about hiring a new pastor for fear of losing status, or numbers and filling a need or a gap. Perhaps these feed into why a church may look at hiring a pastor away from another church, so they do not lose too much ground and the new pastor can continue the momentum towards growth and success. This can contribute to a church rushing or not being thorough in their process as they may focus on just one person. The church may think that it is keeping up with what everyone else is doing – but the focus of the majority appears to be on success. In response to the need for growth in a changing culture, the church has responded in a number of ways over the decades. Most recently, evangelicalism in Canada has moved to accommodate an ‘affluent, self-actualized, individualistic ethos of modern society’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 54). Reimer and Wilkinson note: ‘evangelical sub-cultures are porous, and their congregations absorb cultural influences’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 55). The result of this sees ‘congregations rarely speak against wealth and pleasure; religion is now fun and entertaining; individual choice, self-expression, and therapeutic relationships are promoted, and congregations accept, or support an individualism that has replaced the authority of the group’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 54). The church, in its effort to grow and be successful by the standards that secular organizations establish as desirable, has seen a significant shift in its role and practices.

Religious institutions have taken on new roles as marketing agencies, pursuing new marketing strategies and target demographic subgroups with growing discretionary incomes. Long-standing religious traditions

quickly and routinely become consumer commodities in this market-driven environment. This new social reality creates fertile ground for the adoption of new organizational models of religious practice (Watson, Jr. & Scalen, Jr., 2008, p. 175).

There has been a targeted shift noticed that seeks to market the church, particularly to those who can afford to support it, with appeals to meet the individualistic and consumeristic demands that society requires. This individualism has resulted in a much more, consumer-oriented evangelicalism and to a degree, entertainment and performance in its activities. ‘There is evidence that an emphasis on the teaching of doctrine is disappearing, replaced by elements of popular culture and revised codes of personal morality’ (Watson, Jr. & Scalen, Jr., 2008, p. 174). The desire for and pursuit of growth has led to significant changes in ministry, often not reflecting the priorities and character of God or involving the broader church membership and volunteers but relying upon specialists and trained employees. There is less of an emphasis on being the church, and more emphasis placed upon identifying and meeting all of the perceived needs or wants of those the church is trying to attract and maintain as consumers or adherents of the church and its programs. This has fed into other challenges in congregational ministry and has not resulted in the intended growth. There may be numerical growth within the church, but confessions of faith and Christian practice reveals a lack of depth, conviction and understanding. There may also be more transience in membership within churches. The Bible or theology is seldom taught or emphasized as the authority for faith and practice. In a recent article, Boehme identifies that:

Religion today is primarily concerned with the realm of ethics... or emotion and feelings... the majority of believers do not disagree about theology, because theology is no longer taught or emphasized. The majority of religious battles today are argued on the basis of ethics or feelings (Boehme, 2013, p. 99).

The church has responded in a variety of ways as it has sought to navigate the changing realities within society and culture. Unfortunately, much of the emphasis has still been upon growth and success and very little has been done to help people deepen in their faith. It has remained at a more superficial level, with how someone feels being the means of measurement. With a new generation developing, concern has been expressed that because the church has not been focused on the core elements and priorities of the faith – the current conservative teen is ignorant of and unable to grasp matters like grace or justification. Their primary concern is how they feel about their faith and being a good person. Citing an interview with Michael Spencer, Boehme writes:

‘Our young people have deep beliefs about the culture war, but do not know why they should obey scripture, the essentials of theology, or the experience of spiritual discipline and community. Coming generations of

Christians are going to be monumentally ignorant and unprepared for culture-wide pressures' (Boehme, 2013, p. 100).

The emphasis upon growth and success have not resulted in the desired outcomes as even the ideals of these concepts have shifted to reflect more of a consumeristic, individualistic and organizational culture. A challenge with the needs of a changing culture and the new generation developing for the church has been that the models of pastoral training and selection have not kept pace with what is needed in churches today (Gibbs, 2007, p. 164). This comment regarding pastoral training appropriately sets the stage for the next discussion within this chapter under the heading of leadership development.

#### 4.3.4 Need for Leadership Development

Leaders and their development are significant elements in the discussion about pastoral hiring. From those involved in overseeing and guiding a church and its ministry after their senior pastor is gone to those who serve on a search committee and in various ministries within the church, leadership and its qualities can impact many aspects of church life, and the pastoral search process in particular. Leadership, with its component parts has been defined: 'Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal' (Northouse, 2010, p. 3). People may be identified as leaders through a specific role or position that they occupy, as in the case of a senior pastor, board member, or ministry leader, or they may be leaders due to the manner in which others respond and relate to them without any formal title of position. Northouse identifies communication behaviors, personality and gender-bias as some of the factors that contribute to the emergence of leaders (Northouse, 2010, p. 6). Within the church, these emerging leaders develop, often through their involvement in ministry areas and the ongoing management of elements of the church. The role of the pastor, while that of a leader with tasks and expectations assigned by the congregation (through the board), is thrust into the position after a search process and often unaware of the perceptions of that role due to the historical experience of the church from previous pastors or other factors and influences. The new pastor has been shaped and developed as a leader, by their previous church experience as a leader or congregant and by their experience and training at a Bible College or Seminary. It is into this context of a potential new church environment, with various leaders, personalities and history that a pastoral candidate steps as they embark on the search process. There are probably no two churches alike.



Flexibility and adaptability are called for. No longer is it possible to learn a single approach to ministry and leadership and expect it to fit in different churches, or even in the same church at different times and stages of growth (Anderson, 1994a, p. 265).

‘But the question arises whether a minister can be trained to be flexible enough to employ the several types of skills in different situations’ (Nauss, 1995, p. 126). While within a denomination with common points of theology and practice - the individual cultures, demographics, physical church location and many other factors create a unique group and context to be learned, navigated and embraced as a new pastor. Adequate leadership training for the pastor and the development of leaders within the congregation would aid in effectively ministering in this context. There was little evidence of any consideration of intentional, ongoing training or development for a new pastor (other than a budget line item for the pastor to take personal initiative to develop), or of adequate orientation to the new church context. Often the personal development received or emphasized is that of various skills. A challenge to this is reflected in seminary training and the implications of its perceived value by the church.

Traditional seminary training focuses on the theological roles that pastors must perform, which may in some cases cause a distancing of pastors from the people to whom they minister. Exalting the theological ministry of pastors makes it more difficult for them to give leadership to others (Irwin & Roller, 2000, p. 54).

If the role of the pastor is somehow elevated due to their theological training, then perhaps people feel that without similar training they are not qualified to critically reflect upon their hiring practices or to effectively engage in leadership activities – it is the responsibility of pastors, denominational leaders and theological institutions.

Identified within the evidence of this study, the pastoral search process has changed from what it historically once had been. The language of job, selling your church and community to entice someone to come and the recognition that it is a different situation now and more like a game, captures some of the frustration. It was acknowledged that the pastoral role is still perceived to be a calling, but more of the job aspect comes through within the pastoral hiring process at this point in time. Ultimately the churches and pastoral candidates should be in sync with how they understand and approach this. It references the ways that pastors are being taught to look for churches, shining a brief light upon the bible colleges and seminaries and the manner and priorities of instruction for pastoral candidates in seeking a church to serve. There is a disconnect developing between pastoral candidates and churches that needs to be reflected upon in order to bring clarity, understanding and unity to this process.

The problem is not just that candidates present their best face and attempt to create a good impression by responding, deliberately or unintentionally, to interview questions by trying to please rather than to be honest. The real issue is the interviewer's skill limitations in accurately measuring the most important factors that account for success in the workplace (Fink, 2011, p. 13).

The candidate must navigate the selection process, and then present themselves and their sermon (and family if applicable) to the congregation. The challenge of this process is that it does not promote authenticity or vulnerability for either the candidate or the congregation. Rather than moving towards such authenticity, the church redirects that aspect of leadership to the pragmatic, role-based expectations, responsibilities and proficiencies that the pastoral office entails. 'Since part of the definition of the job in role-based positions comes from the expectations of others, effectiveness depends in part on how accurately the pastor perceives these expectations' (DeLuca, 1980, p. 234). It can be exhausting to keep up the expected appearances. It is also detrimental to the overall health of the congregation, since what results is a lack of transparency and authenticity and the opportunity to take steps of faith towards what God desires is hindered. This results in people leaving the church because people feel like the evangelical church is 'stifling their spiritual development' (Wilks, 2008, p. 72). It was identified that a high percentage of mature leaders and believers who are leaving evangelical churches do so because they feel they could not progress in their faith and seek answers to questions and theology that they had concerns over (Wilks, 2008, pp. 72-74). Wilks, citing Alan Jamieson's book, *A Churchless Faith: Faith journeys beyond the churches*, identifies that in Evangelical churches, 'the teaching, worshipping patterns, styles of governance and esteemed role models are predominantly pitched at Fowler's third stage of faith development' (Wilks, 2008, p. 75). This is the stage characterized by a commitment to values, self-identity and faith that is closely connected to significant persons and a sense of community and where critical reflection or questioning aspects of faith or practice are not asked or entertained (Parker, 2006, p. 339; Wilks, 2008, pp. 73-74). Within this context, there has been a shift within some aspects of evangelicalism that recognizes an evangelical more by an adherence to a number of key policies, beliefs or values that are to be accepted (Wilks, 2008, p. 75), rather than displaying the qualities identified within the accepted definition of an evangelical (see chapter 1). There is less critical engagement with the Bible and matters of spirituality and faith within some religious institutions. Those who may pursue a deeper spirituality and ask questions could be seen as divisive and cause levels of discomfort for leaders and congregations.

...mature disciples and church leaders are leaving Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. They do so because they feel that they are unable to continue to develop their faith...In today's consumer minded

society, spirituality is increasingly seen as a personal choice, and where the practice of the church precludes that very thing most essential to a faith journey – a period of instability and uncertainty – it is far easier now to decide to leave the church and continue one’s journey without it (Wilks, 2008, pp. 73,77).

The thought that in order to better grow in one’s faith, or due to the inability to grow in faith, it is of benefit to leave the evangelical church, seems like such a contradiction. This would present a challenge to the development of leaders within the church and is worth significant reflection. One of the regional leaders noted that there may at times be the potential for an internal candidate (RL2: 46-51). Initial consideration of this would be welcomed as that candidate would be known by the congregation and would have established relationships as an emerging leader. It would be easier for the congregation to identify and accept such a candidate, unless there were obvious challenges or areas that needed to be developed. This could give a framework for some intentionality on the part of the church and potential leader in their development. Skills and competencies could be learned and developed, but the congregation should have a clear sense of the character and gifts of the person. However, the intentional identification and development of leaders does not appear to be a common priority or focus of the church. Over the years, several Christian leaders:

Sanders (1967), Clinton (1988), Piper (2002), Malphurs (2003), and Pue (2005) acknowledge the perceived leadership vacuum and believe there is an urgent need for the cultivation of godly leaders who will provide spiritual leadership to the church. Despite the apparent need, “most churches have no apparent strategy for developing leaders” (Thoman, 2009, p. 283).

If the church does not intentionally recruit, encourage or develop people with demonstrated giftedness, character and potential, to consider leadership and pastoral ministry, then a shortage will likely continue. It may be a window into the impact of culture upon the perceptions, language and expectations of the church as to why they are not more engaged in leadership development because they view or treat it as a job, rather than a calling. Mayhue recounts the story of a pastor, who, ‘when asked to define “spiritual leadership”, focused exclusively on “leadership” and ignored any aspect of “spiritual”’ (Mayhue, 2011, p. 215). This may be a simple oversight, or it may be a comment of the changed dynamic, role and expectations of the pastor and the current reality and perspective of what it is to be a spiritual leader. The expectations of a church vary, but with the increased secularization and consumer mindsets in evidence, the expectations around the role of the pastor have changed. ‘During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, North American churches have sought leaders in more of a ‘superman’ model. Pastors are expected to know and do everything’ (Anderson, 1994b, p. 390). Culture influences the church’s concept of leadership and therefore

allows these expectations to develop (Schmidt, 1979, p. 8), often unchecked. More and more, churches look for a pastor and create a job description or have expectations that includes almost every need that the church has, or ministry outcomes that the congregation desires. Not only is this not rooted in a biblical perspective, it is unreasonable for the church to expect or for a seminary to establish a program or curriculum to develop such a myriad of competencies in one individual. Such expectations are unreasonable and yet educational credentials have typically been looked upon as a verification of the qualifications, skills, character and capabilities of a pastor. The more credentials they have, the more skills, competencies, and character a candidate is assumed to possess. ‘The problem in theological education is that character development is often assumed. Educators stress the importance of character development but only assume students are working in this area’ (Malphurs, 2006, p. 52). Just as character may be assumed through the evidence of completion of a seminary training program, completion of various courses may be assumed to translate into necessary abilities and skills and be an objective indication of the potential for successful ministry (Perl & Chang, 2000, p. 172).

‘Changing norms about clergy qualification may lead denominations to place more emphasis on this seminary education than on the initial religious call or other factors intrinsic to individuals’ (Perl & Chang, 2000, p. 172). With theological training institutions assuming character development through an individual’s personal efforts outside of any intentional training focus or effort on the part of the institution, then the observation and verification of an individual’s calling to pastoral ministry may also be assumed rather than verified in some manner. Leadership, spiritual and character development do not occur in isolation, as has been assumed, perhaps in part by the individualistic and pragmatic nature of the church and theological institutions. Such development occurs within the crucible of intentional community. Citing Ted Ward, in Cannell’s 2006 work and Forman et al., 2002, Thoman states:

‘The church has not been served well by the schools and school-like institutions to which it has delegated the responsibility to prepare its own leaders’... ‘The church has a God given capacity to engage in whole life leadership development. It can develop godly character, forge a strong theological worldview and build strong relational and leadership skills. The local church is by design the most effective incubator of spiritual leaders on the planet’ (Thoman, 2009, p. 284).

It would serve the church’s pastoral hiring needs by intentionally attending to the development of persons within the church to be able to discern candidate fit as they serve on a pastoral hiring committee. Formerly, ‘the local congregation was involved in both the calling and the affirmation of persons for pastoral leadership. Today, the church is involved only in the affirmation’ (Holm, 2003, p. 204). Individuals who

feel called to ministry and complete a seminary degree to prepare them, are often recruited to pastoral vacancies within other churches. This removes the element of their local congregation knowing them and being able to “call” them and affirm a pastoral ministry, when they are removed from their local context. This creates a difficulty too for another congregation when tasked with affirming a calling for someone that they do not know and have not seen engaged in ministry within their context. This may point to the need of the theological institution to somehow be engaged in the process of validating a calling through the student’s seminary training.

The idea of significant educational credentials being a primary and positive indicator was dismissed by a search committee due to a previous experience. They had hired a pastor with significant educational credentials but the resulting ministry experienced from the pastor did not reflect the kind of character or outcomes anticipated and a transition was the result (*C3RISP1:147-151*). There was a realization that credentials themselves do not guarantee a desired pastoral outcome and that there are issues related to character and other factors that would be desired criteria. Aside from possible character, calling and fit considerations, this also raises the need for more reflection within educational settings that are situated to primarily prepare people for ministry regarding their training, and the ministerial assessment and credentialing process that takes place.

Unfortunately, church leaders were still being selected and trained for the old paradigm. The assumption was that they had to be trained primarily, if not exclusively, as pastors and teachers... it is deficient in equipping students to critically engage their culture, and to exercise the risk-taking, entrepreneurial leadership that many will have to provide in leading their churches through a time of transition and revisioning. We have too quickly claimed that while methods may change, the message remains the same. Such an attitude indicates a lack of awareness of the extent to which our cultural biases and theological blinders cause us to overlook important truths in Scripture. We cannot simply assume we have got it right without re-examining the texts in the light of fresh questions and with the intellectual prodding of Christians from other traditions and cultures (Gibbs, 2007, p. 164).

That old paradigm of the church leader as pastor as a teacher has been challenged by other elements within the culture and Christian structures. ‘Much of pastoral training has been devoted to the practice rather than the theology of ministry, The focus is on administration, preaching, leadership skills, small group dynamics, and other related duties’ (Johnson, 1995, pp. 182-183). That focus and emphasis in preparing pastors for ministry has seemed to become more narrowed over the years. The church seems to have

embraced the more modern, corporate paradigm of leadership with necessary competencies and specialist skills, while minimizing the scriptural priorities of character, integrity and service.

In the past, the theologians of the church at large were pastors. They wrote books, defended the faith and taught the next generation of pastors. Today, that task has been relegated to the seminaries, and pastors have become managers, administrators, vision-casters and therapists. Pastor's seminars and conferences wrap themselves around the practicalities of ministry. Serious theological questions at ordinations are viewed as invasive and unnecessary (Barker, 2006, p. 12).

There are several examples of the traditional emphasis of leadership training within theological institutions. The difficulty, as expressed by the above quotations is that the education appears to be deficient in some areas. It does not seem to prepare students to critically engage with their culture and theology in a manner that allows them to creatively engage in ministry and address relevant cultural issues.

It is unclear whether clergy who minister to believing business executives can offer anything to them that is fundamentally helpful and whether they can offer a theological and ethical framework of understanding that will convince unbelievers that faith has anything basic to offer their world (Stackhouse, 2003, p. 383).

Being able to engage current and relevant issues is a necessity for pastors, however, with a more traditional emphasis in their training – focusing on the practice of ministry to serve within a church context – isolates the pastor from the culture and the community from meaningful engagement. As Barker noted, the emphasis of pastor's seminars and conferences do not engage or stretch pastors beyond their limited sphere of influence within their churches. He raises another interesting point when he comments that the role of the seminary has become one of teaching the next generation, defending the faith and addressing the theological issues of the day. With the challenges and demands facing theological institutions due to declining student enrolments (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 137-139) and with a limited public voice, the seminary does not appear to be the most effective means for critical reflection to address the theological challenges and needs of today's churches.

Another challenge that appears within seminaries, possibly due to the shifting culture and the impact of individualism and a consumeristic mindset involves the attitudes and perspectives of those being trained. At a seminary, where students formerly accepted the training requirements for ministry as established in the curriculum:

Some evangelical seminary students really believe that they can minister the riches of the faith for years without having to think hard about the doctrine of the Trinity, or the meaning of providence...they object

to the whole project of learning the doctrine of God. They really see no link between thinking about its topics, on the one hand, and readiness for ministry, on the other. Surely, they can think of no reason why any layperson would need a deeply formed view of God (Noll, et al., 1995, pp. 502-503).

Faced with the impact of culture that potentially produces an evangelical pastor with this mindset, it is not surprising that spiritual formation and leadership development within churches may be struggling. In the face of the influences upon the church and pastoral leadership by culture and society, industry and business models and a consumeristic and often materialistic congregation, the development of a pastor or leader is significant as is clarity around the role and function of the pastor. Irwin and Roller found that a majority of pastors from their study suggested that their ministerial training did not prepare them for ‘knowing the direction of the church or how to help the church achieve its goals’ (Irwin & Roller, 2000, p. 63). This seems to point to a shift within the church’s purpose if it has somehow become unclear or difficult to know. It was also noted that some of the spiritual and management challenges that pastors face are felt to be rooted in the ‘substantial influences being exerted upon the church by society’ (Irwin & Roller, 2000, p. 65). There are many things that a church and its leadership must navigate, however it seems that there is some confusion or a lack of clarity regarding the purpose and direction of the church and for the role and function of the pastor. This adds additional challenges in the development of pastoral leaders, particularly if there is no clarity around the role, function or expectations in their development. Bromley and Meyer note that there is an increased blurring between traditional sectors because of ‘global cultural shifts characterized by a growing emphasis on science’ (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 939). This is transforming things such as religious groups into a new, blended construct they call an “organization” (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 940), which is bearing increasing similarities to all other sectors, business and government, within their form and structure (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 941). This introduces more scientific and formal management approaches to the charitable sector and impacts the older or more traditional sectors, such as the church (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, pp. 954-956).

Professionalism dominates the approach to leadership... Leaders in this paradigm are predominantly managers responsible for sustaining the established life of the congregation. They are hired by and accountable to a captive audience of existing members who expect them to maintain inherited structures and patterns of congregational life...growth must not require significant renegotiation of the congregation’s established culture or it will be resisted. That culture is tailored around meeting the spiritual and religious needs of those who are already part of the congregation (Zscheile, 2015, p. 19).

The manager described within this context does not inspire images of a role engaged in growing and expanding God's kingdom or of critical, theological engagement. The leadership role identified here is more someone merely hired to maintain a congregation and its desired practices and structures, rather than actually nurturing and leading them forward, seeing new members added and inspiring new leaders to develop, change and grow. Organizational culture however is a salient consideration when introducing and implementing change (Naidoo, 2017, p. 543). The development of leaders who are aware of these dynamics, the culture and context both inside and outside of the church and have the wisdom, discernment and skills needed to introduce and navigate necessary and needed newness and change is critical. Predominantly, the role of developing leaders rather than managers falls to the religious training institutions. In a review of the course requirements at several of the theological institutions in Ontario, the primary emphasis is upon the practical requirements of pastoral ministry, including: biblical languages, preaching, pastoral and leadership courses, theology, church history, ministry formation and a ministry practicum (Heritage Theological Seminary, 2022 - 2023, p. 25; McMaster Divinity College, 2022). There is also room for a cultural course, although depending upon the school the emphasis is on missions or intercultural studies. Not all schools have course syllabi online, so it was difficult to determine or assess the course content. The accrediting body for these schools requires courses directed toward cultural context and personal and spiritual formation:

to develop a critical understanding of and creative engagement with the cultural realities and structures within which the church lives and carries out its mission... The program shall provide opportunities through which the student may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness. Ministerial preparation includes concern with the development of capacities—intellectual and affective, individual and corporate, ecclesial and public—that are requisite to a life of pastoral leadership (The Association of Theological Schools, The Commission on Accrediting, n.d., pp. 4-5).

Each of the theological schools has the freedom and responsibility to develop their programs within the framework of their accreditation and, likely with accountability to their primary constituent populations. While many schools offer workshops and special event days for pastors and other leaders to enhance their ministry and offer ongoing forms of education, there is a need for a fresh, critical reflection upon aspects of pastoral leadership training in light of the changing cultural reality and a new generation. While emphasizing core materials, there may be a necessity to strengthen aspects of training for future leaders to be able to adapt and adjust to what they will encounter, while strengthening them for the task. There is a need for visionary leadership to be continually raised up, developed and affirmed, within the church and



religious institutions as they have a significant role in the development of new leaders, to minister in the church and society. Training institutions, pastoral leaders, congregations and future leaders – all are a part of the same mandate as they are to be faithfully engaged in the various roles that God calls them to.

As Dietterich noted:

Even the most familiar form of the church – the congregation – needs to be transformed. Just as new wine bursts old wineskin (Luke 5:37-38), so the ever-new Gospel of Jesus Christ continually disrupts the established shape – traditions, structures, patterns – of Church life and ministry (Dietterich, 2005, p. 95).

A regional leader affirmed the priority for churches to identify leadership in their pastoral hiring (RL2: 317-325). A leader was characterized as having Godly character as understood, but also being a wise, capable, doctrinally sound, strategic and gifted leader, able to lead the organization called the church forward in a post-Christian world. ‘The church needs to purge strong, natural leadership from her ranks and pursue strong, spiritual leadership’ (Mayhue, 1995, p. 213). Within Mayhue’s description of a natural leader, he equates that with the business world and success ultimately, contrasting the characteristics between natural and spiritual leadership from a biblical perspective (Mayhue, 1995). It may be that the church has adopted more of a societal leadership perspective when developing leaders and thus contributed to the promotion of the growth and success emphasis discussed earlier. This emphasizes the importance of clearly reflecting upon and defining what is understood as leadership development for the church in order to rightly move towards developing leaders that reflect God, His character, priorities and mission to the church and the world. ‘Christian praxis needs to reflect more deeply both on the cultural dimensions of human needs in a particular context in order to develop an effective, culturally significant pastoral response’ (Bate, 2005, p. 33). It is therefore of significant importance that theological institutions include a practical theological component to equip pastors with the needed tools to critically reflect upon their practices with an awareness of the culture and context that they are ministering to.

The evangelical church, says that they are not like the rest, that they are distinct from the culture and yet in practice they often reflect exactly like the rest. A significant contributor and influence upon the hiring practice today, is the cumulative effect of decades of evangelical leadership that perhaps has not taken the time to critically reflect upon practices and re-examine them in light of the biblical texts and the shifting culture. This is an oversimplification in many ways, but there are practices that would benefit from critical reflection and leadership, including: the various responses and restructuring of the church in light of a changing culture; the training of pastors at bible colleges and seminaries; the teaching, instruction and

engagement of pastors to a congregation – passing on what they have been taught and exposed to and encouraging spiritual growth and development of new leaders; and the growing lack of familiarity with and reliance upon scriptural values and principles for the conduct and mission of the church and its practices. More than ever, intentional, leadership development is critical for the church. The responsibility for which, rests upon the theological institutions, the church and current pastors, and those individuals that God may be calling to serve in a leadership capacity.

#### **4.4 External Factors from the Broader Societal Context**

There is a complexity and integration of many issues related to the pastoral hiring process – those specific to the church and those contextual elements that are external to the church, yet each have significant impact upon the process.

##### **4.4.1 Values Inherent within the Church Today**

Typical values that are expressed within the church today would often include: ‘truth, fellowship, worship, compassion, unity, love, acceptance, fruitfulness, holiness, prayer, excellence, integrity, discipleship and empowerment’ (Irwin, 2016). There is a significant overlap within the various influences and challenges facing the evangelical church and the values that are in evidence within the pastoral hiring process. There is a tension with what may be upheld as Christian values and what may be demonstrated within the church’s practices. Many of the values as identified within the definition of an evangelical would be upheld as standards for the church. The acknowledgement that an organization’s culture and behavioral norms and values begin with the organization’s founder and that these ‘norms are then taught to subsequent newcomers as the “right” way to behave in that particular organization’ (Kwantes, 2015, p. 1) speaks very clearly to the evangelical church and their statement of faith, which identifies the ‘Bible as the final authority in all matters of faith and practice’ (Stackhouse, Jr., 2007, p. 3; Barrett, 2016, pp. 298-299; Crossley, 2016, pp. 122-123). This is a significant, identified value for the evangelical church. The core or foundational values for the church - its purposes and practices, are established through the founder and passed on. Within the evangelical church, God is identified as the founder, and whose values and priorities are found within the Bible. Therefore, the evangelical church when considering or evaluating its organizational culture and practices, expresses the desire to reflect those same values and priorities and utilize the Bible as the means to establish behavioral norms when measuring, assessing or informing their practices. This aligns well with the task of practical theology, which is to interrogate the practices of the

church so that we can reflect upon the actions taken and if need be, some new action or some improvement can be made ‘to ensure that its practices remain faithful to the script of the gospel’ (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 9).

One struggle for the church today appears to be its ability to clearly identify, articulate and demonstrate its purpose and values. This may be a reflection of the impact of secular influences upon the church, and the lack of adequate, critical reflection taking place. It may also speak to the individual and personal nature of faith today and the need for training if people within the church are unable to identify or consider biblical values in the development and execution of their practices. To affirm the bible as the final authority in all matters of faith and practice and then to not rely upon it or refer to it in the development or reflection of practices is problematic. As was noted earlier, these shifts within the evangelical church have occurred over a long period of time as the church has been impacted by cultural influences (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 957).

Ramunddal and Barbosa da Silva, in their work, suggest a method of biblical application and reflection in developing church practice (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, p. 18). They affirm that it is in biblical values that a church may truly understand its identity and purpose (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, p. 18). They strongly advocate for the church to remain rooted in the biblical texts or risk ‘developing into something other than a Christian congregation’ (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, p. 18). A biblical foundation gives shape to the overall purpose of the church and establishes the framework of the ministry efforts that any pastor would typically be called to characterize and uphold in their service. Ramunddal and Barbosa da Silva suggest that such biblical values may be reflected in denominational belief statements or other forms of confessions or creeds which may be foundational for a church’s practices (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, p. 18). Such doctrinal statements would reflect a denominational and biblical theology, intended to guide the direction or form that a church may take in its various practices and ministries. Such values and doctrine may then be reflected in the pastoral hiring process. The job description and priorities established for a prospective pastor would embrace the church’s purpose and mission and be aligned with scriptural values. This would allow for a more theologically reflexive practice if it was explicitly rooted in the scriptural values for the church, rather than the expressed needs, wants and expectations of the church, which are subject to change and influence by the pressing culture.

The challenge appears to be that while the church may affirm the authority of scripture for faith and practice, it struggles to critically reflect upon its practices and thus allow scripture to inform them. As has

been noted in several instances, there is an interconnectedness to many of these elements. In part, due to the needs of the church, the pressure exerted from congregational expectations and the priority to get someone hired - taking the time to adequately reflect upon the elements of the hiring process becomes secondary to the practical needs and the pragmatic solution that the church has in view. What was evidenced within this study therefore may be a reflection of the cumulative effects of many pressures, choices and responses of the evangelical church over the years as it has not maintained the functional priority of the bible as its final authority for faith and practice. The values espoused by 'the church' are not necessarily the values practiced. This reinforces the need for critical reflection of the church and its practices and the need to intentionally return to its confession of the bible as the authority and values found within it to inform their practice. This is not, as Bromley and Meyers suggest, a return to traditions with a 'good deal of romanticism about an imagined past' (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 956), but rather a progressing forward with practices appropriately rooted in the biblical values and norms that reflect the intentions and purposes of Christianity's founder. Within all church practices, and specifically the pastoral hiring process, Ramunddal and Barbosa da Silva suggest that as the church reflects upon their practices, a primary assessment question should be considered:

Does any of the thinking that we take from secular organizations or leadership – or from contexts other than our own – break with the biblical and denominational basis of faith or with the basic values that should characterize the church (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, p. 19)?

Within the denomination that is the focus of this study, a sense of denominational identity and values were reflected in the criteria established for a pastoral candidate. There was very little mention or consideration of the biblical qualities and characteristics for church leadership in evidence within the cases examined. It appeared that these foundational qualities and values were assumed and externally applied, both in the establishment of candidate criteria and in the assessment of prospective pastoral candidates as reflected in the statement of faith and the code of ethics, which candidates were required to sign. Those signed documents highlighted additional values that are upheld by the church and denomination, and expected of pastoral candidates. In particular, the code of ethics highlighted personal devotional time and relationship with God, and integrity. Aside from signing to indicate agreement or a willingness to observe these criteria, there were no significant means to measure or assess these elements. Only the language within the signed documents around the expectations that the pastor should resign if their convictions around the identified criteria change, provided a means of comfort or assurance about these core elements. In this, values of expediency and convenience in practice seemed to overshadow the expressed values required of

the candidate. That same document, highlighting integrity, included a disclaimer that the information given must be independently verified by the church as they could not guarantee its accuracy. This is reflective of a changing culture, where background checks are often conducted on business school applicants to ensure that what has been listed is accurate as there is a recognized decline in the moral character of society (Stackhouse, 2003, pp. 380-381). To hear evidence of this within a pastoral hiring process is concerning. The values appear to be externally expressed as things to uphold, but they are less internally held and motivated. Stackhouse goes on to note that evangelical churches have shown little interest or capability in developing a theology to assist in the formation of leaders and managers within a society shaped by culture (Stackhouse, 2003, pp. 380-382).

Spiritual growth and formation are expressed values, but this is often left to the individual with the expectation that if they want to grow spiritually and in areas of character, they will spend time reading their bible and praying – there is often no reflection or intentionality about the responsibility of the church in the practice of spiritual development.

In today's consumer minded society, spirituality is increasingly seen as a personal choice, and where the practice of the church precludes that very thing most essential to a faith journey...it is far easier now to decide to leave the church and continue one's faith journey without it (Wilks, 2008, p. 77).

This may be why it is reported that as many as '81% of those who leave an evangelical church do so because they feel that they are unable to grow spiritually within an evangelical church' (Wilks, 2008, pp. 73-74,77). Ramunddal and Barbosa da Silva suggest that 'in church-developing practice, it must be said that one very much needs an awareness of the function of theological normativity when it comes to the development of new or renewed thinking and practice' (Ramunddal & Barbosa da Silva, 2016/2021, p. 18). In order for the church to critically reflect upon its practices and engage in the praxis cycle, it is necessary for there to be persons aware of the need for and capable of such reflection. This is why spiritual maturity and some theological awareness are needed within the hiring process to be able to establish, assess and reorient practices to be aligned with scriptural values even if the scriptures themselves are not prescriptive. Churches - their example and witness within their congregation and community would benefit from theological reflection, discussion and instruction about church growth and success, coupled with some intentionality and faithfulness in practice.

By its own logic, evangelicalism prioritizes the Bible as the final authority, and Jesus as the primary example – not numerical growth. Their ecclesiology suggests they first ask different questions, like “What

does it mean to be a faithful witness of the reality of Jesus?” Sometimes the answer to that question may require the church to do things that will not add to its numerical or budgetary success (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 209).

A further significant value within the church today is the value of success, which is often measured based upon consumer-oriented values such as church size, financial giving levels and individual commitment, measured by volunteer participation in church programs (Elkington, 2013, p. 9). That the secular society has influenced or impacted the evangelical church has been identified for decades (Hunter, 1985, pp. 150,160). Often difficult to assess, Mills points to areas related to changing personal preferences and values that are rooted more in the individual – their rights, personal choice and gratification within the broader society as impacting the church as well (Mills, 1985, pp. 170-171). Mills suggests that this is true of individuals within the church, as well as within the leadership of the church, which impacts traditional church authority structures and reflects a deepening individualism where the needs and preferences of the individual are held as more central than what had formerly been the priorities for evangelical ministry (Mills, 1985, p. 171). The evidence within this study demonstrates the individualistic nature of the culture and the church. While allowing for the church to be self-governing and autonomous in its functioning, the outcome of this appears to be the embracing of greater individualism, where churches protect their individualistic nature and thereby limit their capacity or willingness for the support, collaboration and accountability that might serve to improve their hiring process and contribute to a reflective practice. That the regional office acknowledges the apparent health needs of some churches, yet appears reluctant to engage with the church to address those needs, effectively prioritizing church autonomy over church health. This highlights a growing isolation and individualism amongst churches and regional leadership, or potentially any voice that might serve to critically reflect or attempt to evaluate and realign church practices to reflect scriptural values and priorities.

A challenge for the church appears to be that the reality and value of individualism has shifted former church corporate values, as defined or expressed by spiritual authorities or doctrinal statements, to the values, beliefs and perceptions of right and wrong that are rooted within each individual (Dobbelaere, 2009, p. 6). The individual now defines what is right or appropriate conduct and what is accepted or embraced as a spiritual framework or beliefs are now in the realm of individual feelings or perceptions.

These secularizing tendencies that can distract the church from clearly identifying and articulating its purpose and values are typically external pressures, however secularizing tendencies and the adaptations and concessions made by the evangelical church have resulted in consequences for its theology and higher

education, weakening the evangelical worldview and filtering the effects down to the church (Hunter, 1985, p. 160).

It is clear that a gradual decline in expression of belief and religious practice characterised the past century. The normative status of Christianity that characterised earlier centuries has been lost... There are constant reciprocal influences and interactions between the secular and the sacred (Beyers, 2014, p. 1).

It appears that while there may be significant areas for the application of scriptural values within the pastoral hiring process – there were significant assumptions, or a disconnect from explicitly identifying, reflecting upon, or applying such values to the practice. There were instances where guidance, clarification of church identity and purpose, and a reorientation would have benefitted from critical reflection and a conscious appeal to the values that are available to the church within the biblical text.

#### 4.4.2 Evangelical Theology

Another significant issue within the church context is found within evangelical theology. From the earlier definition of what it is to be an evangelical in chapter one, there are some aspects that stand out. There is an expressed belief in: ‘the priority of the Bible as God’s inspired word and its status as a final authority for faith and practice; the importance of personal salvation; and the importance of Christians to personally share their faith and encourage others to trust in Jesus Christ alone for personal salvation’ (Anderson & Stetzer, 2016, p. 55). Those qualities were identified as things that ‘describe what evangelicals have believed and describe how they have acted’ (Anderson & Stetzer, 2016, p. 55). This description captures what has historically been understood to articulate some elements of evangelical theology. However,

Evangelical theology today is much weaker. Evangelical commitments to scripture have been troubled by decades of controversy – first with liberal Christians and the secular academy over the Bible’s inspiration and, then with other conservatives over the exact nature and scope of biblical authority (Noll, et al., 1995, p. 498).

These controversies have resulted in various fractures within the church, and they have also caused churches and denominations to more clearly differentiate and cling to their particular theological nuances in their practices and choices – often separating from other groups (McDermott, 2013, p. 360). As Trueman suggests, ‘there simply is no pure, platonic ideal of evangelicalism, no common identity in which all evangelicals participate’ (Trueman, 2011, p. 37). This presents a challenge when attempting to address evangelical theology, because, depending upon which group is in view and the pluralistic nature of religious beliefs, even within individual churches, they may hold to varying theological perspectives

and emphases in practice. Even within churches of the same denominational group, some pastors may recommend certain practices as expedient and pragmatic solutions to needs that other pastors would perceive as contrary to biblical values. Individual church members may embrace differing theologies or emphases, which make some practices, like a pastoral hiring process, more challenging. There is a need for greater unity, theological understanding, reflection and dialogue, especially within the same faith traditions. This may highlight the need for more intentional instruction and addressing the personal and individual emphasis of the church in order to build a greater sense of community and unity as a part of the larger Christian Church in order to focus their reflection and practices.

While typically, evangelicals would place a high value upon evangelism, not all Christian groups would place the same emphasis, or sense of urgency to it (McDermott, 2013, p. 358). Within contemporary culture though, the same lessening of evangelistic urgency can be observed within the evangelical church as a result of the secularization that exists.

Evangelical pastors promote evangelization, when most Canadians think religious views should stay private and religious groups should peaceably coexist. Discussing religion with others is awkward in such a climate, and so evangelicals show declining commitment to evangelism (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 38).

There is a disconnect at times between what is proclaimed and taught, and what is practiced. The influences of individualism, consumerism and materialism impact the responsiveness of the church to a number of what historically were considered core elements. This is true across many Christian groups. Evangelical theology therefore and the practices of the church are faced with the potential choice of maintaining a more traditional orthodoxy on issues that are now being raised within a secular culture, which may result in being further marginalized by society, or potentially aligning with or making cultural accommodations in the hope of maintaining some public credibility as an institution (Trueman, 2011, p. 38). The tension that exists here is whether the church affirms and prioritizes the authority of scripture, and what that actually means for them as far as critical reflection of practices in the face of cultural influences.

Within the core elements of evangelical theology reflecting personal salvation and the priority for evangelism, there is a theology and missiological intent expressed here with the view to the expansion and growth of God's kingdom. There is an urgency regarding evangelism and individual decisions being made to see this growth. This would also potentially encompass the desire to plant additional, successful and growing churches. A hiring process within the scope of these theological priorities would likely



demonstrate a significant, pragmatic aspect and urgency to get things done and continue to see growth and expansion. The emphasis of the theological intent is laudable within the evangelical church as it may be a factor for the growth that is demonstrated in Canadian census data (Canada, 2003). This numerical growth may be a possible outcome of their emphasis upon intentional church growth, which is motivated by their theology. However, this emphasis could stimulate a pragmatic response that could become counterproductive in some ways if, due to a lack of theological reflection, the emphasis and working out of those priorities for evangelism and growth may work against other biblical values. This could impact upon a church's witness, particularly for example, if the practice was taking a pastor from another church in an effort to grow another church. The evangelical church holds very strongly to their core principles, but at times the outworking of those priorities might benefit from slowing down to consider and reflect upon whether their practices reflect God's will and align with scriptural principles. The pragmatic needs of the church in pursuing what are held as theological priorities and the challenges the church faces when dealing with current culture, often present blind spots in other faith traditions as well. With such diversity and a sense of urgency, it may serve the evangelical church to take the time to reflect upon their beliefs and practices.

#### 4.4.3 Contextual Challenges to Pastoral Hiring within Canada

Within Canada, a significant contextual challenge faced by the evangelical church is found within the culture itself and the influences of secularism upon the perspectives and responses of the church.

Pastors and lay leaders teach nonconformity in belief and practice, but they often find their efforts undermined by the subtle influences of the broader culture...The "invisible idols" of consumerism, narcissism, secularism, and even individualism are bigger threats. As a result, those in the pew are often unaware of influences that undermine their religious distinctiveness (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 38).

Often people are unaware of the impact of culture upon their practices. This points back to the issue of a lack of critical reflection, awareness and training. The people in the pews are those who are involved in lay leadership, volunteering within the church and serving on a pastoral search committee. They may be unaware of any impact of secularizing influences upon church practices and may therefore demonstrate characteristics of those influences as they are engaged in the practices of the church. Due to the individualized nature of the church and emphasis upon the personal nature of faith, it may be that much is assumed regarding congregant's awareness and competencies navigating critical reflection and capacity in differing spiritual capacities. Without intentional training and ongoing development, such assumptions

may be harmful to individual's growth and to the outcomes of the practices they are engaged in. They will often work hard to accomplish a task, but it may not be as fruitful or fulfilling as it might be.

Most persons who hold positions as administrators, finance directors, or managers of local church congregations or church institutions do not have theological degrees...The magazines that offer resources for their work publish few articles...and rarely connect with critical theological discussion of administration as a practice of the churches...The sources for discussion of leadership and administration in religious (as in other) institutions are more likely to be found in the world of business and commerce (Frank, 2006, pp. 114-115).

Congregants are often unaware of the influences of culture, yet it may become apparent in the responses and engagement in various practices within the church. This is not to say that anyone who serves in a volunteer capacity requires a theological education, however it does point to the possibility that cultural influences may be uncritically integrated into church practices. An example of this might be found in the emphasis of the evangelical church to promote spiritual disciplines, like prayer, scripture reading and meditation, while the world emphasizes productivity and success (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 38). Such elements and emphasis do filter into the church as evidenced by the priorities of growth and success demonstrated within the church as a measurement for evaluation of pastoral candidates and ministry.

Paradigms of commercial utility and economic expediency rule the day...Administration has become synonymous with "church business". The term now refers to computer technology, financial accounting, property management, and other skills necessary for running large organizations...The church becomes less a community than a corporation, the pastor less a communal figure ordained for the sake of the good order of the community of faith and more a CEO (Frank, 2006, p. 122).

While the administrative tasks identified are necessary to the church today, the emphasis upon the administrative task for the pastor within these realities has an impact upon the perceptions and expectation for role of the pastor. The role of the pastor has become one of varied, measured expectations from congregants – often very dissimilar expectations, that require the pastor to be a manager, administrator, preacher, comforter, organizer, politician, servant, entertainer and theologian, among others (Barker, 2006, p. 12; Shelley, 1985, pp. 35-36). The pastoral role has become more synonymous with administration and leadership and has lost much of its meaning in the present culture as it is more identified by performance and productivity and any authority given is rooted in the successful and measurable results of those efforts (Frank, 2006, pp. 124-125).

There has been an increasing interest in management and leadership techniques in churches and other religious groups. This is partly due to the influence and fashionable nature of management in society as a whole. It is also the result of the need to use scarce human and financial resources effectively and properly at a time when many denominations are declining in membership (Pattison, 2000, p. 284).

Effective administration and management are necessary for the church, particularly when churches may be struggling financially and may have a limited number of volunteers available to staff church programs. Limited finances and a difficulty to find volunteers are often realities as people may be tired and struggling, particularly if their previous experiences with a pastor or volunteer role were challenging. In addressing issues related to financial challenges,

protestant churches re-oriented themselves towards the rational culture, which supports and emphasizes the attitudes necessary in the search for resources. However, even though this culture is necessary when facing a lack of finance, it causes dissatisfaction and confusion in many organizational members, because it contradicts the general culture and all other aspects of organizational life (Ershova, 2012, pp. 236-237).

This can become a significant concern for churches as they seek to hire a new pastor. The contradictory nature of the reorientation towards more secular values and priorities within the church can introduce a confusing element as people are faced with determining what the priorities of the church are. The challenge for the church is not only in establishing criteria for pastoral candidate selection, but in critically reflecting upon the management assumptions and values, and the perspective of the pastoral role that is brought to the elements of their pastoral hiring process. It also requires a thorough assessment of church health in order to rightly understand their condition and needs – apart from the very real need to hire a replacement pastor.

The secular influence of consumerism within the church has been observed as congregants go to church and judge their experience by having their felt needs met.

Canadians are more likely to leave a congregation if they do not get what they want, and ‘shop’ for religion elsewhere. They are demanding consumers of religion, evaluating the religious “products” presented by clergy to see if they suit their needs. Clergy calls for institutional commitment often falls on deaf ears. Individualism results in less deference to clergy (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 136).

This consumer mindset was evident within the evidence of this study as the pastoral criteria developed reflected much more of a focus on roles, tasks and meeting congregational expectations than it did upon Christian character, ministerial competencies and appropriate spiritual gifting. The pressure for growth

and the Canadian evangelical's response to it has often been to do more to attract and retain people, meet their felt needs and teach more self-help type of sermons. This reflects a change, even within the context of the expected ministry role of the pastor and the church. In an effort to respond to the increasingly consumeristic focus, many churches have shifted their ministry emphasis in order to appeal to what they perceive people want.

Most Christian churches have abandoned their supernatural focus, and the therapeutic benefits of faith (once firmly second place to placating God and ensuring salvation) are now advertised as the main point. The attitude of most believers has shifted: from being loyal followers to being selective consumers (Bruce, 2006, p. 36).

Individuals display less loyalty to a church, or even a denomination at times, and are willing to try different churches to get what they want, or to feel better about their experience. 'Secularization also means that people privatize their religious views (they are "spiritual", not "religious") and are less committed to organizational forms of religion (they participate selectively and "shop around")' (Reimer, 2010, p. 3). This leads to increased expectations of the pastor by a congregation, and greater mobility by congregants, seeking to have their needs met. A significant majority of the members within very large churches, with significant programming and a church experience, have come from other churches (Frank, 2006, p. 124; Gibbs, 2007, p. 161). The influence of consumerism can lead to the establishment of criteria and the evaluation of pastoral candidates based upon what individuals, or a congregation want in order to meet their desired needs. If those needs are aligned to a consumeristic framework, this could be problematic for the church and the pastoral candidate as those needs can change and therefore too, the role expectations for the pastor. If those needs are not satisfactorily met, then that could trigger a migration of congregants, or a transition within the pastoral role.

Consumerism, coupled with individualism and religious pluralism has moved the centre of authority from the church and therefore too, the pastor, to the individuals that make up the congregation, who have many options and elements from which to selectively assemble a spiritual experience that is meaningful to the individual (Beyers, 2014, p. 9). 'Evangelical congregations are supportive, or at least accepting of individualism that has replaced the authority of the group' (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 54). The influence of individualism within the church may increase the difficulty of a pastoral hiring process as so many voices and expectations may be added to what must be considered when evaluating a candidate. There may be greater pressures upon those engaged in the search as they attempt to identify and meet those expectations and establish a suitable, pastoral criteria. There may be a significant struggle to

determine preferred criteria, a job description and establish an objective process as there would be many voices and input to be sifted through. This individualism and the loss of group authority may also impact the pastoral hiring process through the implications of decline of the perceived relevance of the church within society.

While recent studies indicate that Canadians are quite spiritual, they now pursue their spirituality in personal ways outside the institutional church. Canadian churches also tended to focus too heavily on external moral behaviors in helping to shape a church culture. When the shared social norms supporting these behaviors collapsed, the church's relevance imploded (Guder, (Ed.), et al., 1998, p. 60).

With the Canadian church seen as having less of a voice and being less relevant, there is less loyalty to the institutional church and to active participation within the church generally (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 15; Guder, (Ed.), et al., 1998, p. 60). This can lead to a challenge within the pastoral hiring process as some members may seek to hire a pastor to recapture or restore a degree of relevance for their church in their community – to regain something that may have been lost due to the changing culture. Depending upon the makeup of the congregation and those more directly involved in a pastoral search, there may be competing priorities, values and expectations for a new pastor. This may be felt strongly, but could be difficult to articulate and even more difficult to establish criteria and find a pastoral candidate. The focus may then be upon someone who might recover a position of relevance for the church within an individualistic and pluralistic society, rather than being rooted within the scriptural role and priorities for the church.

A further aspect to the Canadian context, which presents a challenge to pastoral hiring, is the shortage of pastoral leaders and the difficulty to attract and recruit new young leaders (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 135). This shortage of clergy does make the pastoral hiring process more challenging. In part, this shortage may be a reflection of the aging and retirement of current pastoral leaders at a pace where there are insufficient numbers of new leaders to replace them. There has been an increase in persons pursuing ministry as a second career. Many of these persons have significant life experience, but may be lacking any formal theological education. Within several denominations, there has been an increase in the number of women pursuing pastoral training. There is also an increased diversity of ethnicities within Canada that is now being more represented within seminaries and churches. However, it was noted that many of the students enrolled in the seminaries are not training specifically for pastoral ministry. Another aspect related to the shortage of pastoral leaders is attributed to the secularization within Canada and where young people do not understand the nature of calling or even understand what ministry is all about. They may

also be disillusioned by what they have observed in the church or as they hear of young pastors leaving the ministry, burned out and disillusioned (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 134-138). There is less appeal to serve in a ministry context, particularly as the influences of the changing Canadian culture are evidenced within the church, where the role is more demanding and stressful, and expectations are higher. It should be no surprise therefore that denominational leaders have indicated that ‘talented, theologically trained youth are less interested in congregational ministry than before, and more interested in working with other non-profit or for-profit organizations’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 138-139).

The Canadian context is a challenging one for the church. In their 2020 Annual Report, Outreach Canada identified that their investment into Canadian ministry, which accounted for 8% of their expenses, resulted in 20 churches and home groups established, 20 churches assisted and 11 decisions were made for Christ. Similarly, their investment in global ministry, which accounted for 16% of their expenses, resulted in 19,560 churches and home groups established, 2189 churches assisted and 128,000 decisions were made for Christ (Outreach Canada Ministries, 2020). Even with accounting for differences in currency valuations, the reported response of Canadians and the impact of the gospel message contrasted with a global impact is a demonstration of the challenging context that the Canadian church faces and one that makes pastoral ministry and therefore pastoral hiring a challenge as well.

The impact of culture upon the evangelical church has produced significant contextual challenges to be addressed.

Today, we know a nonprofit is such because it has the appropriate legal status. It becomes harder and harder to determine an organization’s form (business, government, or charity) based upon functional activity alone...this blurring of sector boundaries stems from cultural shifts that unfold over a long period of time (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 957).

Often, these challenges and their impact are more felt, than clearly identified and articulated, which makes responding to them that much more difficult. There has been a blurring of the church’s role and form that has developed over time. Within the individual churches, they struggle to identify the root issues and to know how to respond as the influences of individualism, consumerism and pluralism add to the confusion and clouding of the issues. A further challenge is to understand who is responsible and granted the necessary authority for the critical reflection and necessary leadership required to navigate the challenges faced within the Canadian context. Efforts are made within individual churches to navigate the challenges within their communities, however on a broader scale such reflection, adaptation

and innovation is often left to a larger organizational structure, or to appropriate educational institutions – like bible colleges and seminaries. Within the broader evangelical context in Canada, there are varying styles of organizational structures – independent, autonomous congregations where leadership resides solely within each church; independent congregations who may voluntarily associate with a larger group of churches through alignment with doctrinal issues and agreed upon standards while deriving benefit through ongoing development, resources, accountability and support; more structured denominational structures where the denominational office has more direct input and oversight into the practices, doctrine and theology of the church. Many evangelical churches fall within the category of those who voluntarily associate, thus forming a larger group of churches who work independently, but cooperatively. Examples of groups within this category would include the Associated Gospel Churches and most Baptists. The task for the larger organization or educational institution is to reflect upon current cultural contexts and formulate a response. This is often framed by the pragmatic need, with churches and leaders looking for answers, directions or clear instruction for what to do or how to address current challenges. Depending upon the relationship between the larger organization and the church, the individual church may choose to adopt or to challenge any suggested change. While ‘individualism results in less deference to clergy’ (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 136), the same may be true where individual churches may show less deference to larger, associated entities or denominations and may not respond to the critical reflection or recommendations provided. This can be a significant challenge because the church may then be left in a cycle of the unknown and a lack of clarity as to how to proceed – without sufficient resources themselves and unable to develop a clear, reflective theological response to the issues they face.

This chapter addressed research objective 3, which was to reflect on the current pastoral hiring process and its implication for church practices. There were several key themes that developed through this study, which provide for several recommendations found within the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Key Learnings, Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The emphasis of this study was to explore and reflect upon the pastoral hiring process of the evangelical church in the modern Canadian context, understanding the scriptural, cultural and contextual influences that impact upon that process. This practice is located within church administration and management, which is central to the life and functioning of the church. Given the nature of this study and the data that was obtained and reflected upon, this chapter aims to emphasize key learnings and make recommendations to encourage further critical reflection and enable faithfulness within the practice of pastoral hiring.

This chapter begins with a practical theological reflection of the pastoral hiring process explored, then moves to highlight key theoretical learnings and make recommendations to the sample. The chapter also provides a reflection on the part of the researcher – identifying limitations of the study and then moves to identify future research possibilities arising from this study

### **5.2 Key Theoretical Learnings from Hiring Process**

Key theoretical learning from this study were about my critical evaluation of the pastoral hiring process and a reflection on the implications of that practice for churches in the sample community and for churches in general. It was identified that there is a significant interconnectedness to the various elements of the hiring process. The key knowledge that are brought from this study are:

#### **1. Need for a definite process of hiring**

A definite pastoral hiring process and clear steps are needed, where the rationale, implications and accountabilities of each step must be fully understood and agreed to by all those involved. The value of having such a process would be: more objectivity, clarity and intentionality in thinking through and executing each step of the process; a reflective, spiritual yet practical process that demonstrates and models Christian values throughout; greater engagement and support of the congregation through the process; more congregational ownership and support in the final decision and selection of a new pastor. Not having a definite hiring process allows for greater confusion and leads to: difficulties in effectively recruiting and screening candidates; a tendency to focus solely on the pragmatic task of hiring a pastor; rushing the process, thus missing crucial elements; not thoroughly and critically engaging in the elements of a pastoral search; a lack of confidence and support by the congregation, the search committee and prospective candidates.



## **2. Need for Clarity and Reflection of Each Step Within the Hiring Process**

There is a need for critical engagement (reflective practice) throughout the navigation of the elements of the pastoral hiring process in order to demonstrate the qualities and values that should characterize the practices of the church. Taking the time to evaluate each step of the process and to document each step, intentionally slows the process in order to take the time for reflection. Clarity and reflection on each step in the hiring process and decisions made would allow for the identification of assumptions being made and present an opportunity to reorient the hiring practice or seek to clarify or validate those things that may have been assumed so that the process maintains integrity through each step. It would also inform any necessary adjustments, should the final selection not result in a successful hiring outcome. Finally, clarity, reflection and documentation of each step would preserve the process for any future hiring needs and be a resource that could be shared.

## **3. Role of the Church as an Employer**

Within the pastoral hiring process, the role of the church as an employer can be beneficial as it elevates the role and responsibility of the search committee and encourages greater clarity, accountability and integrity in the development and execution of the elements of each of the steps of the hiring process. The pastoral profile must not simply be a check list of desired qualities or factors that are not actually aligned with the reality of a church's mission and context, as this impacts the ability to authentically and thoroughly assess character and competencies to achieve a unique and proper "fit" when hiring a pastor.

Not viewing the role of the church as an employer can lead to a more casual process with less accountability, diligence and clarity in the establishment of the role description and ministry elements being sought. The challenge that exists is to maintain the responsibility and integrity of the employer role, while honoring and integrating the primary spiritual and character elements that are unique to the pastoral hiring process. Such an integration can be of benefit to both the church and the pastoral candidates throughout the hiring process by prioritizing the scriptural values of integrity and character within the pastoral role and lessening the proclivity to reduce it to primarily a measurement of productivity, skills and achievement.

## **4. Role of the Church and Its Interaction with Society**

The church, through its hiring process, models particular Christian values. More than merely engaging practical models in order to be expedient or pragmatic to get the job done, the church needs to model intentional, spiritual engagement and biblical values characteristic of the life and faith of the church with

hiring best practices and instruction to accomplish its pastoral hiring task. While elements such as performance appraisals, personality and psychometric testing and other value-added practices may serve the hiring process, the church needs to be on guard that other practices that may prioritize success and emphasize numbers do not overwhelm the process.

The pastoral hiring process is much more than an administrative exercise. Seen through the lens of the role and responsibility of the church and its interaction with society, the goal is the successful hiring of a pastor, however, the means of accomplishing this task should demonstrate the same integrity and Christian values that the church seeks to model in any other area of ministry. The church must be reflective of all of its processes so that it carries them out with integrity and faithfulness in its actions and for its overall witness as the church.

### **5.3 Practical Theological Reflection**

As a practical theologian, I intended to explore the pastoral hiring practices of the sample population in order to describe, interpret and critically reflect upon their process in an effort to understand how the church might remain faithful in its representation of and participation in the gospel in the midst of the shifting, consumeristic and secularized society that it finds itself enmeshed in. The work of Olian and Rynes (Olian & Rynes, 1984) was helpful in their theoretical notions and identification of hiring elements, which was mostly consistent with what I found, however the spiritual aspects such as examining Christian character, integrity and calling – beyond the practical skills and competencies, were not fully covered within their model, hence the inclusion of the materials from a denominational hiring manual.

My contribution to practical theology is this reflection in the subdiscipline of church management and congregational studies, specifically the pastoral hiring process. This study also adds value in developing the field of church administration. This was a rigorous study where the various elements and developments of the pastoral hiring process within the church were reflected upon. The value of this study is that this is almost a first-time accounting of what are the steps in pastoral employment and I have shown gaps and have reflected on all of the processes in the practice of pastoral hiring. This is where my study is loaded and upon the reflections that have been made generally about the process, as well as reflections upon the internal, external and denominational influences on the process as well as a deep reflection on the values within the process.

Such a study is difficult to obtain. There are very few studies in this particular field and this study has brought to light the lack of critical, spiritual reflection being done on how and why things are done within the church. It has also revealed how easily the church uncritically adopts administrative and management practices and values. This process reflects on all other processes within the church – upon the values and integrity that are demonstrated as representative of the church’s Christian witness. The hiring process should not be dismissed as purely administrative as there can be profound learnings from evaluating this ministry. Other areas of church practice would benefit from a similar process of critical reflection - asking questions and considering what values it is projecting. If we examine the practice and look at the reflection that happens in the areas of Christian education, worship, pastoral counselling or other areas of church practice, we might observe a similar divergence from Christian values to embrace more of the current cultural influences and pragmatism impacting the church.

If the church does primarily rely upon external, organizational hiring models it needs to consider how it ensures that they are grounded in and demonstrate biblical, Christian values, or at least not contradict them, otherwise the practice is not being true to a faithful, Christian witness.

The work of managing churches and church institutions races on, expanding into areas as diverse as procedures for legal incorporation of church-sponsored activities, prevention of sexual harassment and abuse, public relations, and legal liabilities in leasing church facilities to community organizations. Church consulting and fund-raising firms proliferate... The business of the church is a growth industry. Much of this continues, however, without thorough research, study, or critical theological analysis by practical theologians, and without any broadly accepted method for practitioners to assess and reflect theologically on church practices (Frank, 2006, p. 115).

The task of practical theology is to integrate practices so that we can reflect upon the actions taken and that, if need be, some new action may be taken or improvement can be made. A challenge to this is that there is no clear, reflective practitioner within the field of leadership and administration that has brought a unifying voice to practical theology in developing a cohesive framework in shaping the field and the instruction available in a theological setting, therefore practitioners are scattered (Frank, 2006, pp. 115-117) and very little work has been done to address the needs within the church’s pastoral hiring process.

This is exactly what has been done with the pastoral hiring process and after this extensive study, it has become evident that there are some peculiarities with the hiring process that need further reflection. This study worked to complexify and explore the pastoral hiring process in order to facilitate a critical reflection and enable faithful practice (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 11-12) utilizing Osmer’s core tasks of practical

theology – specifically the descriptive-empirical task, asking “what is going on” (Osmer, 2008, p. 4) and draw alongside the participants, to hear their expression of their lived experiences and understand what is actually happening within the hiring process.

This may seem like a simple question, but in reality, the “present action” of a community can sometimes be taken for granted or ignored. We live in a postmodern world continuously in economic, religious, racial, educational, and recreational flux, making it increasingly more difficult for congregational leaders to genuinely understand their community context...In accomplishing the descriptive-empirical task, one should possess a keen understanding of both the local community and the church community (Espinoza, 2017, pp. 394-395).

The present action of the church as it pertains to the practice of pastoral hiring has generally been ignored within the church and within practical theology as it typically has emphasized ‘the work of ordained ministry (spiritual leadership, conducting services, pastoral care etc.), church development and revitalization, the division of power, pastoral care and communication, and the mission of the church in witness, preaching, and education’ (Dingemans, 1996, p. 84). Very little emphasis in practical theology has been extended from these functions to the administrative functions of the church, particularly with the involvement of congregants and lay leaders in the area of pastoral hiring practices, the results of which, and even within the process itself, can have significant impact upon the church and its ministry and witness.

This study also allowed for engagement in the interpretive task in an effort to understand “why is this going on” (Osmer, 2008, p. 4). ‘If we disregard the interpretive task, we run the risk of proposing a solution without understanding the main source of the issue’ (Espinoza, 2017, p. 397). A challenge within these tasks is that they are often directed toward the examination of the issues by the congregational leader. When a church is in a pastoral hiring process, there is a congregational leadership void as they search, and often, as it appeared within this study, there is no significant intentionality towards leadership development to adequately fill this need. This therefore presents a challenge for the church to effectively engage in a praxis model of evaluation and critical reflection and reorientation of their practices and highlights a need to be addressed. ‘It is tempting for ministry leaders to respond to issues that arise from the daily work of ministry by implementing solutions that neglect to explore why certain problems continually occur’ (Espinoza, 2017, p. 398). This type of pragmatic response was in evidence within the various elements of the pastoral hiring process.

The praxis model of practical theology is key to the reflections that take place within this study and to the observations and recommendations that arise from it. Praxis involves more than the mere practices of the church – it refers to actions or practices that are intentionally reflected upon to include, demonstrate, reflect and apply the character and meaning of God to the practice so that God’s truth and presence is revealed (Anderson, 2001, pp. 48-51). Out of those practices, further reflection is stimulated, which leads to growth and a greater understanding of God and His truth, which can inform further praxis. This is to be evidenced within the whole Christian community, yet it was noticeably absent within the hiring practices studied.

The context of practical theology within this study reflects Tracy’s three publics – society, the academy and the church, which are referenced in Smit’s work as he identifies that the church is often influenced by values and influences outside of itself.

the interest of the church in public life is never completely value-free, but rather broadly motivated by some concern for quality of life, conception of the good, idea of normativity, morality or perhaps values; although, these concerns are expressed almost inevitably in varied, contradictory and often conflicting claims, precisely because they are mixed always with other social and political ideals, values and concerns (Smit, 2007, pp. 442-443).

Smit accurately captures the complex nature of the context and culture that the church must navigate as it works to be faithful to reflect God’s mission in its practices. Due to the interconnectedness of all three publics within the context of this study - clarity, objectivity and faithfulness to the tasks of practical theology while interrogating the church’s pastoral hiring process was critical to this study and the researcher was mindful of that responsibility. ‘Situations have cultures and histories, they occur within particular contexts which often have their own traditions and expectations and they contain specific forms of practice that again themselves contain history, tradition, theology and social experiences and expectations (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, pp. 15-16).

This describes accurately more of the realities that bring a fuller understanding of the context of the various internal elements and organizational culture that a church must identify and navigate. There are many elements that the church must consider as it critically reflects upon its practices. In the midst of a pastoral hiring process, the pragmatic nature of the task often overrules such critical reflection. This study provided for an opportunity as a practical theologian, to engage in critical reflection of the interchange of practical

theology, congregational studies and the pastoral hiring process to identify some key learnings and recommendations.

#### **5.4 Recommendations to the Evangelical Church**

For the evangelical church, the practice of pastoral hiring is one that is significant and necessary for the life of the church. From this study, critical reflection on practices has brought the following recommendations into view.

##### **1. The Need for Critical Reflection of Church Practices**

The evangelical church should take the time to critically reflect upon and think deeply about its practices – beyond pragmatism or beyond their activism to consider what their practices are actually modelling and achieving within the scope of God’s intended purposes. ‘Many of the religious responses to the impacts of culture – individualism, pluralism, consumerism (secularisation) and are pragmatic... Few are genuinely theological; most are ideological, with theology added for legitimisation’ (Percy, 1997, p. 22). The hiring process has highlighted the struggle of the church to critically reflect upon their hiring practices. If the church holds that biblical qualities and criteria for spiritual leadership are important to the pastoral selection process, then they should be more explicitly expressed and assessed, rather than assumed and overlooked. In order to know a candidate more fully – their character, competencies and calling, it may be worthwhile for the church to reorient their pastoral search process to address this priority. Integrity and character are central to the pastoral role and therefore too, to the hiring process. Greater emphasis and examination of character and calling is needed within the role expectations and job description, and in the consideration of candidates in order to maintain this integrity.

What they do and how they accomplish their task is to be a reflection of the character and qualities of God and scriptural values that speak to their practices.

Speaking of the church, Sims notes, ‘Unless we engage in reflective practice, we are in danger of repeating mistakes made earlier in our ministries’ (Sims, 2011, p. 168). Several study participants acknowledged previous mistakes during earlier hiring processes. That awareness and reality highlights the need for a critical, reflective process be undertaken in a pastoral hiring process, and potentially in other areas of church practice as well.

## 2. Intentionally Engage in Leadership and Spiritual Development within the Church

Defining, understanding and intentionally developing spiritual leadership would aid the hiring process through the core of people available to serve on a search committee. It would also serve to: help the church in identifying the type of leadership needed within their context; encourage potential, future pastors to respond to a call; build leadership generally within the church to sustain church ministry, community and mission during times of pastoral transition.

A characteristic of churches that train leaders is the implementation of a development process. The structures may be different, but training takes place. In training, churches have a distinct advantage over seminaries – immediate application. The problem is, few churches are intentionally training leaders (Malphurs, 2006, p. 51).

Not engaging in this type of development would: hinder the church's response, particularly during transitions and while engaged in pastoral hiring; continue to impact the availability of new pastors for the church; increase the pressure upon the church to engage in more pragmatic than spiritual efforts to accomplish the pastoral hiring process. Spiritual growth and leadership development are intentional activities within the church, which is needed more than ever it seems. The 'most significant crisis regarding leadership today is a crisis of character' (Malphurs, 2006, p. 52). The intentional development of leaders and their character is crucial for a volunteer organization like the church because it results in practices and conduct that are on display within the broader church context, within the church's local community and to a degree, society at large. 'We are facing an integrity crisis. Not only is the conduct of the church in question, but so is the very character of the church. The world is asking, if the church can be trusted' (Thoman, 2009, p. 286). More than ever, the church needs to reflect upon its leadership and spiritual development in order to demonstrate Christian character and faithfulness in every aspect of its pastoral hiring practices and to be able to recognize and discern similar qualities in their pastoral candidates.

## 3. Clarify Understanding of Vocation and Calling

A discussion should be held within this tradition about the issue of vocational ministry and calling in order to clarify whether a pastoral calling is seen as a general calling of a person to pastoral ministry – to any church within their tradition, at any time, or whether it is viewed as a specific calling of a pastor to a particular church at a particular time.

...if in fact what we are doing is granting denominational credentials, i.e., affirming in a formal way that a certain person is gifted for pastoral work and doctrinally suitable for our group of churches, it would seem reasonable to make this action a truly denominational action. This would involve the creation of denominational structures to examine candidates and give an assessment of their suitability, which would, in my opinion, be an improvement over our present system which is somewhat haphazard and not standardized (Fowler, 1992, pp. 35-36).

Lacking clarity in this core aspect of pastoral identity has significant implications for the pastoral hiring process, the candidates and for the institutions that train them. It contributes to a process that is confusing, challenging and perhaps a contributor to the assumptions that are made within the hiring process.

#### 4. Critically Reflect and Integrate Resources for Best Practice

This sample has demonstrated that there are gaps within the process of hiring. A commonly expressed concern was the lack of knowledge or perceived ability to navigate the hiring process. Assuming that a pastoral hiring process of a similar format is the best way forward, it is important that the church reflects upon the impact of societal and cultural influences - to be aware of how they may be uncritically adopting practices from organizational models that do not reflect Christian values. However, whether from areas of human development, psychology, social science or administration and management sciences, taking the time to research hiring and assessment resources from other organizations - to critically engage with them and potentially integrate some elements into pastoral hiring practices could benefit the whole process. Of interest to note was that in a book on pastoral hiring that is often used in Canada (Johnson, 2011, p. 168), and within hiring practices in many organizational frameworks, the concept of utilizing personality assessment tools is recommended. These tools may be helpful within the assessment stage, but there was no evidence of such a tool being utilized within the sample pastoral hiring context.

The church should critically reflect upon and incorporate other forms of assessment into their pastoral hiring practices, such as personality profiles and assessments, psychometric and behavioral leadership assessments and inventories (Thoman, 2009, p. 291) which can serve the church in being more thorough in pastoral candidate assessments, leading to the best fit possible.

#### 5. Enlist the Services of an Interim or Transitional Pastor

A significant resource and assistance for a church engaged in a pastoral transition would be to consider hiring an intentional transitional minister to help navigate the transition. Typically, as an objective, outside perspective, they could be invaluable during a church assessment and evaluation process and



bring objectivity to times of reflection when establishing the elements of the hiring process. They would also facilitate and support the church and its leadership through many of the steps of the hiring process and provide additional stability to the congregation and its ministry during the time. The evidence within this study and other sources advocates for engaging this type of support (Brown, 2003; Daehnert, 2003; Robinson, Jr., 2003). As with any other aspect of church practice though, this should be done with prayerful consideration and critical reflection.

#### 6. Provide Training and Orientation to Those Serving on a Search Committee

As those tasked with engaging in the pastoral hiring process, there should be adequate training and orientation for the search committee to ensure that they are all aligned with the objectives, candidate criteria, process elements and the mission and vision of the church and are suitably equipped spiritually and practically to be able to critically reflect upon those elements and ask questions throughout the process. ‘The practices of the Christian community should reflect faithful participation in the Trinitarian actions of God in the world. When a practice loses this dynamic and becomes ‘merely technique’, it ceases to be faithful’ (Swinton & Mowat, 2006, p. 25). It is important to recognize that the pastoral hiring process is not simply an administrative task, but a spiritual one with significant implications for the church and one that requires as much character, integrity and faithfulness as any ministry of the church.

#### 7. Include a Defined Period for Discernment and Affirmation

Once a church makes the best hiring decision that it can, given the limitations of time that sometimes exist, there should be a means to affirm that the pastor is indeed called to be a pastor and called to serve in that specific context, after a reasonable period of time. An appropriate length of time to commit to a new pastoral hire might initially be two years as a period of discernment, particularly if you are asking someone to relocate. The church may initially vote, as typical bylaws stipulate and current practices observe, but the church could have a more significant role in the recognition and affirmation of a pastor’s unique call to serve their church. Taking the time to more clearly understand, define and reflect upon the role of the congregation in the affirmation of their next pastor, may result in more meaningful interactions between the candidate and the congregation and elicit greater support and discernment during the orientation and transition period of a new pastor. This would allow for greater congregational involvement and a process driven by spiritual values, discernment and recognition of “fit”, rather than the pressures of role expectations, elements that are unknown due to the limits of time with a candidate and the pragmatics of making a decision to fill a role.

Getting to know a pastor, observing their character and seeing their ministry and engagement within the hiring church context over a longer period of time may be critical for adequate discernment. If either the church or the pastor recognizes that there is not a confirmation of fit, then adequate provision for a change should be provided so that everything is done in a manner that would reflect God's character and values to the church, the pastor and within the community. This is one recommendation as an example of how reflecting upon the current pastoral hiring process might result in change and a reorientation of an element of that process that may demonstrate a sensitivity to the priorities God has for the practices of His church.

## **5.5 Limitations of the Study**

1. This study proved to be very large for a solo researcher. The use of four sample churches made it more challenging as the availability of possible participants and timeframe was determined by whether a church was in an active pastoral search. There was no control over that important element and the researcher was therefore dependent upon the need of the church to have to replace a senior pastor, which is not an ideal circumstance for them. A smaller size (two or three churches) would have reduced the timeline.
2. The urban/rural distinction, while representative of the broader sample community, did not contribute significantly to unexpected distinctives within the overall results. A focused study within a singular context would have allowed for a more targeted and homogeneous study without a significant loss of data relative to the research question and objectives.

## **5.6 Future Research**

1. In light of the learnings from this study, future research into pastoral hiring processes would benefit from a longitudinal study of a hiring process that would observe the church and its process and include pastoral candidates in order to obtain the most comprehensive picture of all of the elements from the start of the process into the first years of a new pastor's ministry. This would serve to help clarify the concept of pastoral calling as either a general call to pastoral ministry - valid and effective regardless of the church context one may serve, or present possible evidence of calling as being unique to a congregation and time and context (Fowler, 1992, pp. 35-36). Such a study could provide evidence of either through the means of observing the ministry and congregational affirmation of a pastoral "calling" after a period of time and reduce the potential for pastors leaving having not been called (Joynt, 2018, p. 7) or due to a clergy mismatch. Having a focussed and lengthier study could provide additional insights and reflections

that could serve the church at large in similar processes and allow them to learn from such a broad observation of the practice. The apparent lack of critical reflection within the church may be well served by additional research to establish a model and resource for hiring.

2. As the effects of challenges and secularization upon church practices develop over a lengthy time frame and impact the organizational culture of the church, a broader study and reflection could give additional insights to benefit church hiring practices. Several interviewees within this study referenced learnings from previous experiences that they desired to implement in their current pastoral search process. ‘Unless we engage in reflective practice, we are in danger of repeating mistakes made earlier in our ministries. Without reflective practice we may overlook the huge changes happening around us and to our ministry’ (Sims, 2011, p. 168). A holistic study of the history, traditions and the culture of church samples, specifically including: previous, pastoral hiring practices; pastoral histories; and pastoral ministry outcomes may yield further insights into the culture and trends of the church and inform future hiring practices.

3. Another future area of study would be to engage in church intergenerational research and the impact of a post-modern or millennialist view versus an aging population in terms of how they see the vision and mission of the church and their use of a spiritual normative for practices. This could provide interesting information and potentially give insights into the attitudes, perspectives and priorities of the church and the upcoming generations and help the church continue to reflect upon its pastoral hiring practices in light of the changing culture and new generations.

Millennials are a group of people who are increasingly leaving religion...Millennials have grown up and lived in an era that has experienced an impassioned clash of cultures. Some have described this as a culture war in which secular values and beliefs and religious values and beliefs have struggled against one another...Some of the Millennial’s indifference to and antagonism toward religion is a result of the lack of knowledge about religion that exists in the world today...religious beliefs are increasingly less related to factual bible knowledge and doctrinal content...the majority of believers don’t disagree about theology because theology is no longer much taught or emphasized. The majority of religious battles today are argued on the basis of ethics or feelings (Boehme, 2013, pp. 95-99).

Engaging with current beliefs, assumptions and practices through the lens of the different generations in light of the various cultural influences would allow for a more critical reflection and reorientation of hiring practice to reflect faithful biblical theology and relevant responses to engage the next generation.

Leaders of established faith communities...Because they are largely listening to those who are already part of their life, established congregations tend to be disconnected relationally from neighbors who are unaffiliated with a faith community. They are not in the habit of listening to those neighbors and attempting small experiments that would offer the possibility of forming religious community with them (Zscheile, 2015, p. 20).

Failure to engage in this type of conversation with current generations and address and reorient church hiring practices, could see a further alienation and exodus of young people and others from the church.

4. Further research, in light of the number of influences within culture and society that impact the church pastoral hiring process, a focused theological study examining the pastoral hiring process, specifically considering the normative theological task, ‘what ought to be going on?’ (Osmer, 2008, p. 4), with an appropriate framework for the different process elements, could provide insights and the tools needed by the church to critically reflect upon their process and remind the church how to remain faithful, yet adaptive and inform their praxis. ‘There are constant efforts to revert to claimed traditions, with more human and communal elements. Such efforts tend to involve a good deal of romanticism about an imagined past’ (Bromley & Meyer, 2017, p. 956). A critical study attending to the normative task of pastoral hiring could inform the practice and present values to move forward and thus avoid the temptation to pragmatically revert to a traditional practice, exclusive of the contributions that could be made from other hiring processes. As the church is to be counter-cultural and as the world continues towards greater diversity and pluralism, the church could demonstrate and represent a desirable model of qualities and an example of hiring to other organizations.

5. Expanding the exploration of pastoral hiring and values with a goal of establishing a tool or process that reflects best practices and scriptural values which could serve the church as a template for the various stages of future pastoral hiring would be of benefit. As this study has demonstrated, aside from basic, practical hiring steps given, there is a lack of clear models or instruction for how the church may critically navigate the hiring process and demonstrate faithfulness to scriptural values. Moving beyond the descriptive, interpretive and normative tasks to the pragmatic task of practical theology, ‘How might we respond?’ (Osmer, 2008, p. 4) would be a beneficial next step in the study of the practice of pastoral hiring and contribute to best practices. ‘Leadership is an enormous industry’ (Frank, 2006, p. 117). Being able to critically reflect upon current practice elements, considering scriptural norms and critically engaging best practices from other organizations, could serve to bring greater focus and clarity to the church’s

pastoral hiring process in the midst of all of the literature and cultural influences that would seek to reduce it to an emphasis on productivity, behavior, effectiveness and success (Frank, 2006, pp. 126-127).

## **5.7 Conclusion**

The pastoral hiring practice within the evangelical church has been increasingly shaped by the influences of external cultural values and a shifting society so that it looks more like the practice of secular employers and organizations of today. Within what may be considered, “typical” management practices:

There exists a powerful, almost ineluctable force in management to reduce all new ideas and issues into a narrowly defined management paradigm concerned with instrumentality, efficiency, material gain, domination, individual power, resource exploitation, globalization, control, and so on... (Steingard, 2005, p. 231).

While not all of these management characteristics were reflected within this study, the core hiring elements and steps outlined by Olian and Rynes were evident within the pastoral hiring process as it was primarily reduced to a conventional, organizational hiring model. This included: determining selection criteria (education, experience, and other qualities) and recruitment methods - whether employment services, web-based job boards or word of mouth; developing a job description and a means for assessing and selecting potential candidates; and the method of making a final selection (Olian & Rynes, 1984, p. 171). Comments from some participants reflected this paradigm as they identified their need for human resources skills and the ability to interview as two examples of a conventional hiring model. As Steingard points out though,

Unlike conventional science where the nature of the process is subaltern to results, spiritually-informed management theory must consider the process before the outcome. Otherwise, the true nature of the spiritually sourced phenomenon will be overshadowed by results that could have been achieved via traditional, non-spiritual methods (Steingard, 2005, p. 233).

This has been apparent within the evidence of this study. There appears to be little to distinguish between a typical hiring process and the hiring of a spiritual leader – a pastor. The outcome of either process, if measured solely by simply having a qualified person serving in a role, is the same. Yet, accounts of poor fit and pastoral turnover seem to indicate that something is missing. If the expectation and desire is to have a person within the pastoral role that is more than the product of an organizational, management process but is uniquely and spiritually equipped for the role and task and called to a specific context and environment – there is more to consider than a conventional hiring model. Over a period of time, pastoral

hiring practices appear to have expediently and uncritically adopted more organizational practices in an effort to be responsive and pragmatically attend to church needs. Even in the development of desired pastoral criteria and role expectations, ‘Leadership is reduced to management; faith in providence is replaced with strategic planning; the gifts (charismata) are reduced to advanced skills; spontaneous koinonia is reduced to organized interactions’ (Kwantes, 2015, p. 6). These changes within the hiring practice reflect an uncritical adoption and embracing of management, leadership and administrative philosophies and practices, possibly in pursuit of growth, success, greater efficiencies and meeting the needs and expectations of the congregation rather than the faithful navigation and relevant witness of the church within an ever changing and shifting culture.

The ability to critically and spiritually reflect upon pastoral hiring practices, to listen and discern God’s voice and direction has been reduced to human activity with an acknowledgement or assumption of faith and historical traditions. This was evidenced within this study. There was a glimmer of recognition by participants within this study, of the ‘backwardness of the process’, the need to somehow ‘affirm a sense of calling, not only to ministry but to the particular church’ and the ‘inability to know a candidate’ without taking the necessary time. This is the critical element in the hiring practice – time. The need is to set aside the sense of urgency and pragmatism in order to take the necessary time to know a pastoral candidate and discern a sense of fit and calling – and to critically reflect upon and orient the elements of the pastoral hiring practices in alignment with, or at least not contradict, scriptural values as effective organizational tools are also considered and employed.

There is little material that is focussed upon a critical reflection of church practices, and specifically the pastoral hiring process, as most typically deal with the practical issues and functioning of church administration, management and leadership. It is difficult to quantify the spiritual aspects, implications and elements of pastoral hiring and therefore, to implement practices that include such elements. What became apparent however throughout this study was that a critical consideration and priority of the process and its elements could lead to a more spiritually aligned practice that demonstrates the biblical principles and priorities that are to undergird the church in its practices and witness in the world. The answer to the issues identified within this study of pastoral hiring would engage all areas of the church – from individuals, to churches, denominational leaders and academia, challenging them to critically and faithfully engage in the questions and move towards a united recovery of the ‘traditional power of the church whose basic identity is being shaped as it indwells the Christian story’ (Chan, 2011, p. 7). In this the church is reminded that it is called to demonstrate integrity, Christian character, faithfulness to God and His word and mission, as it engages

the culture through an ongoing praxis of all church practices, modelling and preparing the next generation to faithfully and uniquely do the same.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A1 Denominational Consent

Letter of Denominational Consent

# Denominational Logo and Contact Information

January 11, 2017

To Whom it May Concern;

We look forward to partnering with Christopher Richard Bonis as research participants in his thesis study: AN EVALUATION OF PASTORAL HIRING PROCESSES IN THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF ONTARIO, CANADA.

Chris has permission to conduct research within (XXX) from January 2017 until March 2018, or until such time as he completes his case studies. XXX, our Leadership Development Director will be Chris' primary contact and will help liaise with prospective participant churches.

Sincerely,

Regional Director

Regional Director —  
Leadership Development Director —  
Church Planting Director —  
XXX is a Region of XXX in Canada

## **Appendix A2 Informed Consent Form**

### **Sample of Informed Consent and Agreement**

Informed Consent and Agreement Form as required by ethical consideration (1/2)

#### **A Study of Pastoral Selection within Churches in Ontario - Consent Form**

You are being asked to participate in a study investigating the process by which pastoral leadership is selected and hired within evangelical churches in Ontario and the elements which influence and impact the church's hiring process.

We are interested in learning about the pastoral hiring process from the experiences and perspectives of church boards, search committees and denominational leadership. As one who oversees, or is engaged in a pastoral hiring process, we would like to learn from you so that you might help establish possible normative standards for the selection of future church leaders.

In order to consider this process in as much detail as possible and to represent it accurately, the concepts of: church governance and organizational structure; church expectations, candidate expectations; governmental regulatory factors; vocation or calling; remuneration and material benefits; and secularizing tendencies or pressures that may intersect the hiring process will be considered within this study. All of these concepts and the hiring processes examined will then be reflected upon in light of relevant biblical norms.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to be a part of an interview process to explore the pastoral hiring process. Some interviews may be conducted individually, or in a focus group setting. They will be recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy. To ensure anonymity, completed interviews will be assigned an identification number or pseudonym and the collected data will be maintained on an encrypted USB thumb drive in a secure location under the control of the researcher. Your name will only appear on this consent form. Only group results and anonymous data from the interviews will be utilized and reported within this study.

The interview will be scheduled at a time convenient to you and is expected to take between 60 and 90 minutes. Follow up interviews may be scheduled as appropriate as you progress through your hiring process. You will not incur any costs as a result of your participation in this study. Some questions and their answers may cause some discomfort or frustration as you reflect upon some of the occurrences of your participation in the hiring process.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If at any time during this study you wish to withdraw your participation, you are free to do so without prejudice. If you have any questions prior to your participation or at any time during the study, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at [Leadershipsurvey@execulink.com](mailto:Leadershipsurvey@execulink.com).

Thank you for your consideration to participate in this study. If you wish to participate and consent to your interview responses being used as a part of this study, please indicate this by entering your name,



the date and your email address (to ensure securing your identity and provide a means to contact you for follow up interviews if necessary) on the consent line below.

Authorization: I have read the above and understand the nature of this study. I agree to participate in this study and give permission for the researcher to use the data obtained in the manner described. I also understand that I may contact the researcher at any time (Chris Bonis at Leadershipsurvey@execulink.com). I understand that I may refuse to participate in this study or I may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice at any time.

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Role in Church Hiring/Selection Process: Choose an item.

(If "Other" selected, please identify role here: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#))

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B Code List

(1/7)

Code Categories	Codes	Code	Regional Leadership Gr=185; GS=2	Rural Church Sample Gr=713; GS=8	Urban Church Sample Gr=608; GS=7	Totals
Biblical Paradigms or Scriptural Precepts Gr= 142; GS=11	11	<b>Accountability</b> and shared responsibility by board leadership <b>Be patient</b> <b>Beyond</b> a secular fit <b>God's</b> involvement in process perceived <b>Individual</b> internal influence and leadership to direct search team's mandate <b>Personal</b> perception of what is needed or wanted <b>Priorities</b> for new pastor <b>Priority</b> of prayer <b>Reaffirm</b> calling <b>Spiritual</b> criteria for search committee appointment <b>Time</b> Crunch	13	56	73	142

Administrative Process Gr=193; GS=13	13	<b>Board</b> leadership <b>Board's</b> role <b>Conduct</b> church evaluation before decision to search <b>Controversial</b> aspects of search process for team <b>Deacon's</b> responsibility <b>Development</b> of search criteria for candidate <b>Feelings</b> as an evaluative tool (thought) <b>Learning</b> from previous search process <b>Logistics</b> of ongoing pastoral ministry during transition <b>Obtaining</b> names of prospective candidates <b>Organizational</b> change <b>Struggle</b> for Board <b>Transition</b> of new pastor	19	91	83	193
Interview/Screening Process Gr=256; GS=16	16	<b>Assumption</b> about capability of candidate <b>Candidate</b> perspectives <b>Challenging</b> perceptions <b>Church</b> and candidate prioritize relationship and discernment in process <b>Churches</b> don't follow process <b>Emphasis</b> on what is in the profile <b>Feeling</b> as a rationale for decision <b>Fit</b> perception <b>Frustration</b> <b>Initial</b> screening of applicants <b>Interview</b> process <b>Millennial</b> generation <b>Number</b> and variety of candidates to screen <b>Screening</b> by sermon assessment	32	125	99	256

		<b>Search</b> process components <b>Transparency</b>				
Search Committee Gr=223; GS=15	15	<b>Assumptions</b> about search committee <b>Change</b> in process <b>Committee</b> decision making <b>Committee</b> update congregation <b>Criteria</b> for search committee <b>Do</b> our best <b>Dynamics</b> of search team <b>Expectations</b> expressed by search committee <b>Expectations</b> for search committee members during process <b>Learning</b> as we go <b>Pressures</b> of searching for a new pastor <b>Roles</b> of committee members <b>Shift</b> in committee role <b>Spiritual</b> criteria for search committee appointment <b>Very</b> large committee	20	95	108	223

Candidate Competencies and Qualities Used as Search Criteria Gr=257; GS=6	6	<p><b>"Like"</b> as a criterion for a pastoral selection</p> <p><b>Biblically</b> rooted criteria</p> <p><b>Desired</b> candidate qualities</p> <p><b>Expectations</b> for a new pastor</p> <p><b>Needs</b> versus wants</p> <p><b>Subjective</b> criteria or assessment by committee members</p>	18	178	61	257
Internal Influences Gr=243; GS=19	19	<p><b>Annual</b> meeting implications for search committee</p> <p><b>Board</b> decision</p> <p><b>Board</b> involvement in search committee</p> <p><b>Church</b> people upset by elements</p> <p><b>Conflict</b> within church</p> <p><b>Congregational</b> expectations</p> <p><b>Congregational</b> involvement</p> <p><b>Constitutional</b> considerations and requirements</p> <p><b>Different</b></p> <p><b>Financial</b> challenge</p> <p><b>Individual</b> internal influence and leadership to direct search team's mandate</p> <p><b>Internal</b> knowledge and resource for hiring process</p> <p><b>Logistics</b> of ongoing pastoral ministry during transition</p> <p><b>No</b> clear direction</p> <p><b>Organizational</b> issues</p> <p><b>Personal</b> perception of what is needed or wanted</p> <p><b>Struggle</b> for Board</p> <p><b>Time</b></p> <p><b>Time</b> Crunch</p>	8	108	127	243

External Influences Gr=194; GS=10	10	<b>Appeal</b> of "farming out" hiring of a pastor <b>Be</b> like other, "successful" churches <b>External</b> resources or "expert" utilized <b>Input</b> from Candidate about process <b>Interim</b> Pastor <b>Outside</b> help to get church "healthy" during transition <b>Outside</b> influence or input <b>Regional</b> influence <b>Regional</b> perceptions <b>Regional</b> support and assistance	53	68	73	194
Rushed Decision Gr=50; GS=3	3	<b>Conduct</b> church evaluation before decision to search <b>Nobody</b> wants to wait <b>Took</b> time	12	22	16	50
Unclear About Church Needs Gr=73; GS=4	4	<b>Board</b> unsure of direction <b>Needs</b> versus wants <b>No</b> clear direction <b>Unclear</b> about what church needs	0	38	35	73
Spiritual Maturity Questioned Gr=13; GS=1	1	<b>Spiritual</b> criteria for search committee appointment	3	3	7	13
Polarizing Viewpoints Gr=18; GS=2	2	<b>Disagreement</b> between search committee and board <b>Pushing</b>	0	3	15	18
Need For Training Gr=53; GS=4	4	<b>Decisions</b> versus discernment <b>Do</b> our best <b>Learning</b> as we go <b>We</b> don't know	2	21	30	53
Lack of Clarity in Criteria for Candidates Gr=135; GS=4	4	<b>Biblically</b> rooted criteria <b>Needs</b> versus wants <b>Personal</b> perception of what is needed or wanted <b>Previous</b> negative pastoral experience impacted search criteria	8	89	38	135

Lack of Clarity in Job Description Gr=29; GS=3	3	<b>Job</b> description <b>Unclear</b> about job description <b>Unclear</b> about pastoral role	1	21	7	29
Growth and Success Emphasis Gr=35; GS=3	3	<b>Be</b> like other, "successful" churches <b>Emphasis</b> on experience <b>Growth</b> and success emphasis	1	26	8	35
Challenges in Recruiting Process Gr=56; GS=4	4	<b>Perception</b> of problem with search process <b>Pressures</b> of searching for a new pastor <b>Referrals</b> and recommendations for pastoral candidates <b>Struggle</b> to find candidates	8	31	17	56
Soliciting Pastors from Other Churches Gr=27; GS=2	2	<b>Longevity</b> <b>Woo</b> a pastor from another church	3	15	9	27
Assumptions in Screening and Interview Process Gr=57; GS=4	4	<b>"Like"</b> as a criterion for a pastoral selection <b>Assumption</b> about capability of candidate <b>Feelings</b> as an evaluative tool (thought) <b>Subjective</b> criteria or assessment by committee members	2	23	32	57
Emphasis on Experience Gr=27; GS=1	1	<b>Emphasis</b> on experience	0	22	5	27
Pragmatic/Legal Nature of the Process Gr=72; GS=5	5	<b>Constitutional</b> considerations and requirements <b>Legal</b> or Governmental considerations <b>Organizational</b> issues <b>Priority</b> to sign regional documents <b>Regional</b> screening and forwarding candidates	21	29	22	72

Challenges with Pastoral Applicants Gr=22; GS=3	3	<b>Candidate</b> and church orientation or training need <b>Challenges</b> with candidates <b>Transparency</b>	3	16	3	22
Role of Religious Institutions Gr=3; GS=1	1	<b>How</b> pastors are taught to look for churches	1	2	0	3
Discernment versus Decision-Making Gr=27; GS=2	2	<b>Decisions</b> versus discernment <b>Limited</b> interactions with candidate	2	10	15	27
A Spiritual Process as Well Gr=56; GS=4	4	<b>Beyond</b> a secular fit <b>God's</b> involvement in process perceived <b>Priority</b> of prayer <b>Reaffirm</b> calling	5	25	26	56
Limited Interaction Between Candidate and Congregation Gr=37; GS=2	2	<b>Candidating</b> weekend elements towards congregational decision/vote <b>Limited</b> interaction with Congregation	0	22	15	37
A Dimension of Trust Gr=12; GS=2	1	<b>Importance</b> of trust	0	2	10	12
Scriptural Influences upon Pastoral Hiring Gr=77; GS=4	4	<b>Biblically</b> rooted criteria <b>Scriptural</b> influences <b>Spiritual</b> criteria for search committee appointment <b>Spiritual</b> nature of process	10	44	23	77
			245	1185	957	2387



## Appendix C Research Questions

Primary Research Questions and Explanation According to Distinct Group

(1/3)

### **Denominational Leadership:**

1. How would you encourage a church to select their pastoral candidates?
  - a. This question will allow for a greater investigation into the priorities they prescribe for their churches in their pastoral search process, giving some insight into the process
2. How do you utilize the Pastor's Profile for pastoral selection and recruitment?
  - a. This question will allow for a closer examination of the questions and priorities of the pastoral profile and it's use and development as a part of their screening process. There are a lot of screening questions in the profile. How they are used by both the region and the individual churches and pastoral candidates will be useful in evaluating the priorities and factors for the screening process.
3. What observations have you made about how your churches hire senior pastors over the past few years? What are some of the challenges?
  - a. This question may give some insights into overall processes of churches in the region and observed outcomes, potentially linked to search process priorities and aid in the overall picture.
4. What is the typical duration of a senior pastor's tenure at a church in your association? (Do you see a lot of movement of pastors within your association?)
  - a. This question may reveal the stability or outcomes of pastoral searches, particularly if pastors remain for either a long period, or a short period.
5. What priorities do you feel a church within your group should have when they are seeking to hire a new senior pastor?
  - a. This question will allow for an examination of various factors or priorities that the region has, paying attention to scriptural, cultural or other types of factors they feel are important.
6. What kinds of support does you provide for churches or candidates seeking to fill senior pastoral ministry positions?
  - a. This question will allow greater insight into the supports available and how involved the region is and their influence in the church's search process
7. Are there any final things that you would like to share, or any advice that you would offer to other hiring committees?

## Church Board

1. What is your board's role in your pastoral hiring process?
  - a. This question will give a clearer picture of the process and an understanding of the autonomy or freedom of the search team to develop their own process, or the expectations that they follow a particular prescriptive or established path.
2. Could you describe for me your overall pastoral search process? (What factors do you view to be the most significant?)
  - a. This question helps to understand and develop a picture of the process as understood and established by the board. It also allows for an understanding of the factors and priorities of both the board Chair and Treasurer for the search process.
3. How did you identify the people and assemble your search committee?
  - a. This question will help to understand the church's process more, as well as give background on the search committee and any priorities used for their identification and selection.
4. What instructions or criteria did you give to your search committee?
  - a. This question will help to uncover the primary factors and considerations given to the search team for their process and work in the search and selection. It may reveal the extent that the church board prioritizes the various factors that could be considered during the process.
5. What were your considerations when you were developing your job description?
  - a. This question helps to reveal the various priorities considered for the pastoral role and the needs of the church. It also may reveal what the levels of importance they assign to their respective priorities (secular, scriptural etc.)
6. What role does your church community have in the hiring process?
  - a. This question explores the engagement of the whole church in the process. Are they involved and to what extent, and how? Also, how are the congregation informed or even instructed about their role and the process and the work of the search committee?
7. What priorities do you have for a new pastor?
  - a. This question explores the priorities and role that the church board has for their new pastor and allows for considering the alignment of those priorities with the priorities shared for the process and any scriptural or cultural factors.
8. Are there any final things that you would like to share, or any advice that you would offer to other hiring committees?

## Hiring/Selection Committee

1. Would you describe your hiring process for me? Reflecting upon your process to this point, has anything changed or been different from what you expected when you first started?
  - a. This question explores the actual hiring process being followed, as understood by the interviewees in their role and gives a fuller description of that process.
2. How did you develop your selection process?
  - a. This question explores the development of the process and any underlying factors or influences that might have informed the process and its development.
3. What aspects of the hiring process do you believe have been the most significant for your selection decision?
  - a. This question allows for the exploration and understanding of the elements which are the most significant from the perspective of the selection committee personnel for their hiring decision.
4. How will you ultimately make your selection decision? (What are the most important factors from your perspective?)
  - a. This question, while similar to 3, allows for an exploration of what will ultimately (and practically) guide their selection decision.
5. How have you evaluated a candidate's possible fit for the position at your church?
  - a. This question explores the hiring selection process deeper and examines the factors which guide the evaluation of the candidate and the committee member's own priorities, emphasis and perspective in the process.
6. What have been some of the challenges or issues as you have worked to identify and select your next pastor?
  - a. This question allows for the committee member to reflect on potential challenges they might envision with the process, including their "ideal" process or candidate and the reality of expectations, priorities and possible conflict between these elements and how they will rationalize or choose when faced with any conflicting priorities or opinions. What are their highest values for decision -making or what will guide their process and help them overcome any challenges? What model(s) or perspectives are influencing their process?
7. Are there any final things that you would like to share, or any advice that you would offer to other hiring committees?

# Appendix D Profile Form

Pastor's Profile Sample (1/10)

<b>Pastor's Profile Information</b>	Page 1 of 10	<input type="button" value="Submit by Email"/>	<input type="button" value="Print Form"/>			
<p style="color: red; font-size: small;">This form <b>must</b> be opened in <b>Adobe Reader</b>. If you have opened it in your browser, you may not be able to submit the form. When you have completed this form, please save it to your computer, then click Submit by Email and follow the directions. Some email programs cannot process the Submit command. Please check your Sent Items to confirm that the form has been submitted. If it has not, please email the form as an attachment</p>						
<p><b> does not verify the information set out on this form, nor does it certify the accuracy of the information set out or the qualifications of the applicant pastor for any position with a church. role is limited to the gathering of information and making such available to churches. It is the sole responsibility of the churches who use the information herein set out to verify it's accuracy and to conduct their own due diligence in determining the suitability of the candidate pastor for any position being offered to them.</b></p>						
<p>Last Name <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> Date <input style="width: 80px;" type="text"/></p> <p>First Name <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> Initial <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Address <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/></p> <p>City <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> Province <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> Postal Code <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Primary Phone <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> <input type="radio"/> Home <input type="radio"/> Cell <input type="radio"/> Work</p> <p>Secondary Phone <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> <input type="radio"/> Home <input type="radio"/> Cell <input type="radio"/> Work</p> <p>Email <input style="width: 300px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Languages Spoken <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s): <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/></p>						
<p>Present Church Attending <input style="width: 250px;" type="text"/></p> <p>City <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> Province <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> Website <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Present Church Membership <input style="width: 250px;" type="text"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Same as above</p> <p>City <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> Province <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> Website <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/></p>						
<p><b>I am interested in serving as or in:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Pastoral Roles</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Senior / Lead Pastor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Associate Pastor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Church Planter</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Associate / Staff Roles</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Children's <input type="checkbox"/> Visitation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Young Adults <input type="checkbox"/> Worship</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship / Small Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Youth</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Community Preferred</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inner Cities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Northern</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Small Town</p> </td> </tr> </table>				<p><b>Pastoral Roles</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Senior / Lead Pastor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Associate Pastor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Church Planter</p>	<p><b>Associate / Staff Roles</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Children's <input type="checkbox"/> Visitation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Young Adults <input type="checkbox"/> Worship</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship / Small Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Youth</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family</p>	<p><b>Community Preferred</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inner Cities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Northern</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Small Town</p>
<p><b>Pastoral Roles</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Senior / Lead Pastor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Associate Pastor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Church Planter</p>	<p><b>Associate / Staff Roles</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Children's <input type="checkbox"/> Visitation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Young Adults <input type="checkbox"/> Worship</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship / Small Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Youth</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family</p>	<p><b>Community Preferred</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inner Cities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Northern</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Small Town</p>				
<p><b>This is a confidential document. Do not circulate beyond the Search Committee.</b></p>						

# Pastor's Profile Information

Submit by Email

Print Form

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Date of Ordination  By which church?

List experience in churches giving length of service and position. If part-time, indicate. If you are a Seminary student, give primary experience during your field service or internship. (most recent experience first)

Church	Position	Average Sunday AM Attendance	From MM/YY	To MM/YY
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## BASIC BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Married?  Yes  No If yes, Wedding Date

Spouse's Full Name

Have you been divorced?  Yes  No Has your spouse been divorced?  Yes  No

If yes, include a brief statement here

Names and year of birth of your children:

Name	Year	Name	Year
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Your Education (from highest back):

Institution	Degree / Diploma	Graduation Date
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

This is a confidential document. Do not circulate beyond the Search Committee.

Give a *brief* summary of your conversion, believer's baptism, spiritual experience and call to the ministry:

[Empty text box for conversion summary]

**CODE OF ETHICS**

**1. RELATIONSHIP TO GOD**

I will seek to fulfill my duty to watch over my congregation as one who must give account to God (Heb. 13:17). By the power of the Holy Spirit, I will seek to be the pastor God has called me to be. I will strive faithfully to keep my personal quiet time and seek to walk closely with my God.

**2. RELATIONSHIP TO MY FAMILY**

I will seek to fulfill my duties to my family as given in 1 Tim. 3:2-5, namely: to be lovingly faithful to my wife, as a one-woman man', to be self-controlled; to pursue purity; to be gentle; to manage my family well; to discipline my children in such a way that they will respect me.

**3. RELATIONSHIP TO MY CHURCH**

I will seek to carry out my pastoral function in the light of 2 Tim. 4:1-2, namely; to preach the Word; to keep prepared in all seasons -, to correct, rebuke, and encourage - to exercise patience. If my personal convictions or practices should change in the process of time, and come to differ from my church's doctrinal statement or covenant, I will notify the church through my resignation.

I will, with my resignation, sever my pastoral relations with former parishioners, and will not make pastoral contact within the field of my successors without their knowledge and consent.

Having accepted a pastorate, I will not use my influence to alienate the church, or any portion thereof from its denominational loyalty and support. If my convictions change from those commonly held by our denomination, I will be honourable enough to withdraw.

**4. RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY**

I will seek to maintain a good reputation in the community as stated in 1 Tim. 3:7. I will fulfill all financial obligations; obey government laws and regulations not contrary to Scripture; contribute as much as possible to the life and welfare of the community. I will seek to be a man of integrity (Rom. 12:17) in all my dealings with others, and above reproach in morals and relationships with men and women.

**5. RELATIONSHIP TO [REDACTED]**

Because the church I serve is affiliated with [REDACTED] I will participate wholeheartedly in the life of [REDACTED] by: praying for God's blessing on its life, witness and ministry; and will encourage my church participate in all the missionary outreaches of [REDACTED]. If I change my doctrinal convictions so as to disagree with [REDACTED] Statement of Faith, I will notify my church Board through my resignation. Should I leave for any reason and enter another pastoral ministry, it would be viewed by regional leadership, as not being in a location that would attract those from my former congregation.

I agree with the Code of Ethics.

Comments

[Empty text box for comments]

**WHAT WE BELIEVE**  
**Statement of Faith**

1. BIBLE: We believe the Bible to be the complete Word of God; that the sixty six books, as originally written, comprising the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired by the Spirit of God and were entirely free from error; that the Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice and the true basis of Christian union.

2. GOD: We believe in one God, Creator of all, holy, sovereign, eternal, existing in three equal Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

3. CHRIST: We believe in the absolute and essential deity of Jesus Christ, in His eternal existence with the Father in pre incarnate glory, in His virgin birth, sinless life, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, triumphant ascension, mediatorial ministry and personal return.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT: We believe in the absolute and essential deity and personality of the Holy Spirit Who convices of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, Who regenerates, sanctifies, illuminates and comforts those who believe in Jesus Christ.

5. SATAN: We believe that Satan exists as an evil personality, the originator of sin, the archenemy of God and man.

6. MAN: We believe that man was divinely created in the image of God; that he sinned, becoming guilty before God, resulting in total depravity, thereby incurring physical and spiritual death.

7. SALVATION: We believe that salvation is by the sovereign, electing grace of God; that by the appointment of the Father, Christ voluntarily suffered a vicarious, expiatory and propitiatory death; that justification is by faith alone in the all sufficient sacrifice and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and that those whom God has effectually called shall be divinely preserved and finally perfected in the image of the Lord.

8. FUTURE THINGS: We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust; in the eternal blessedness of the redeemed and in the judgment and conscious, eternal punishment of the wicked.

9. THE LOCAL CHURCH: We believe that a church is a company of immersed believers, called out of the world, separated unto the Lord Jesus, voluntarily associated for the ministry of the Word, the mutual edification of its members, the propagation of the faith and the observance of the ordinances. We believe it is a sovereign, independent body, exercising its own divinely awarded gifts, precepts and privileges under the Lordship of Christ, the Great Head of the church. We believe that its officers are pastors and deacons.

10. ORDINANCES: We believe that there are only two ordinances for the church regularly observed in the New Testament in the following order:

- 1. Baptism which is the immersion of the believer in water, whereby he obeys Christ's command and set forth his identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection;
- 2. The Lord's Supper which is the memorial wherein the believer partakes of the two elements, bread and wine, which symbolize the Lord's body and shed blood, proclaiming His death until He comes.

11. CHURCH AND STATE: We believe in the entire separation of church and state.

12. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY: We believe in religious liberty, that every man has the right to practise and propagate his beliefs.

13. THE LORD'S DAY: We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's day and that, in a special sense, it is the divinely appointed day for worship and spiritual exercise.

14. CIVIL GOVERNMENT: We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of society, that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honoured and obeyed, except only in the things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience and Prince of the kings of the earth.

I agree with the Statement of Faith of [REDACTED]

Is there any wording with which you are not comfortable?

Pastor's Profile Information

Other ministry experience: missionary service, chaplaincy, etc. (Specify type of service, place and length)

[Empty text box for other ministry experience]

List and describe specialized ministries you have served in.

[Empty text box for specialized ministries]

What is your philosophy of developing leaders?

[Empty text box for philosophy of developing leaders]

Have you been with a church through a building program?

[Empty text box for building program experience]

List secular work that has helped in preparation for your ministry.

[Empty text box for secular work]

Are you interested in or open to a bi-vocational ministry?

[Empty text box for bi-vocational ministry interest]

What do you perceive your role as a pastor to be?

[Empty text box for role as a pastor]

List ministry highlights.

[Empty text box for ministry highlights]



**Pastor's Profile Information**

Describe your expectations and philosophy of team relationships within a multiple staff. Identify whether your perspective is from that of the senior pastor or one of the team members.

List your primary spiritual gifts.

Have you had experience church planting? If so, please comment.

Why do you wish to serve a church in [redacted]

Describe how you would personally support and encourage the church in which you would serve to participate in and support financially national and regional ministries of [redacted]

List denominational, missionary, community and other activities or organizations in which you have participated recently.

# Pastor's Profile Information

## INDICATION OF YOUR POSITION OR PREFERENCES

Please check the answer or answers that best describe(s) your position. In areas which you feel you need to respond more fully or where you sense that checking might cause confusion, please comment in the space provided at the end of the section.

### Personal

- Devotional Life*
- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Try to spend some time daily in the Word and prayer. | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a consistent and significant devotional life. | <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly memorize Scripture. | <input type="checkbox"/> Include readings from devotional books, etc. |
|---|---|--|---|
- Hospitality*
- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our home is where we can have our privacy. | <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally have company. | <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly have people in our home. | <input type="checkbox"/> Our home is known as a place where people can come uninvited. |
|---|---|---|--|
- Mentor*
- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have been disciplined. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have been mentored. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a mentor. | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like a mentor. |
|---|--|---|---|

Comments

### Ministry

- Missions*
- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Fellowship Home, French and Foreign missions | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote inter-denominational missions | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Fellowship & inter-denominational missions | <input type="checkbox"/> Have favourite missions I would want a church to support |
|---|--|---|---|
- Style of Worship*
- |                                      |   |  |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional | <input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary Worship Songs | <input type="checkbox"/> Variety of instruments but no drums | <input type="checkbox"/> Variety of instruments including drums |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
- Continuing Education*
- |   |   |  |                                |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have completed my training other than for personal study | <input type="checkbox"/> Am enrolled or planning to enroll in ongoing course work | <input type="checkbox"/> Need to be able to attend personal development seminars, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
- Spiritual Counselling*
- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to counsel through preaching ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Would be happy to have a qualified Christian counsellor and refer most situations | <input type="checkbox"/> Am comfortable to do most of the counselling and refer extreme cases | <input type="checkbox"/> Am desirous of passing on long-term counselling situations to a qualified counsellor |
|---|--|---|---|
- Personal Evangelism*
- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do much of my evangelism through the pulpit | <input type="checkbox"/> Am most comfortable with developing lifestyle evangelism | <input type="checkbox"/> Do door-to-door visitation with the specific goal of evangelism | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal evangelism is not my strength |
|--|---|--|---|
- Evangelism Training*
- |  |   |  |                                |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have trained others | <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to train others | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a plan to train others | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|
- Preaching*
- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to deal with themes from Scripture | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to preach some topical themes as well as working through passages | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to preach series through Bible books or lengthy passages | <input type="checkbox"/> Attempt to integrate visual media into presentation |
|--|---|--|--|
- Reading and Study*
- |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Am not a reader | <input type="checkbox"/> Read for sermon preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy reading and read widely | <input type="checkbox"/> Significant reading on theology and religion |
|--|--|--|---|
- Discipleship*
- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have disciplined a new convert | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a plan to disciple others | <input type="checkbox"/> Have trained others to make disciples | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a plan to train disciple makers |
|---|---|--|---|
- User of Computer*
- |                                     |                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient | <input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable | <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal experience | <input type="checkbox"/> No experience |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|

This is a confidential document. Do not circulate beyond the Search Committee.

## Pastor's Profile Information

*Time Management*

Operate on a flexible schedule, generally plan one week ahead

Need identified time for study that is not to be interrupted

Work on the basis of a written long term plan

Record and analyze use of time

*Visitation*

Not a high priority, others can be trained to do it

Visit the sick and elderly

Visit contacts, have a plan that includes visitation

Try to visit all the church families once a year

Comments

**Please describe in a few sentences your experience in these areas:**

*Style of Leadership*

*Experience working in a team environment*

*Experience working with a church Board*

*Developing other leaders*

**This is a confidential document. Do not circulate beyond the Search Committee.**

**PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL INTEGRITY**

To protect your privacy, you do not need to answer here but be prepared to answer in an interview. The experience of many years shows that there are pastors who fail when in the place of ministry. Some have had to resign because of an "unguarded place" in their personal life. As pastors are called to make disciples of Christ, they must be examples of personal godliness and consistent discipleship. Therefore, these questions are of a personal nature, but justifiably so:

Are there present of past issues in your life that might prohibit or inhibit a call to a local church in [redacted] If yes, explain.

[Empty text box for answer]

In your previous ministries have you had any situations that resulted in a church taking a vote of confidence? If yes, explain.

[Empty text box for answer]

Have you ever been convicted or pled guilty for any charge under the Criminal Code for which you have not been pardoned? If yes, explain.

[Empty text box for answer]

Would you consent to a criminal check if it was requested by the church or [redacted]  Yes  No

Do you or your family have any major medical needs or conditions which may affect your ability to carry out our ministry? If yes, explain.

[Empty text box for answer]

**USE AND RELEASE OF THIS PROFILE**

I would like this profile to be circulated to the [redacted] and Advisory Committees for use with local churches in the following geographical areas:

- [redacted]  [redacted]
- [redacted]  [redacted]
- [redacted]

I hereby grant permission for this profile and all related information to be released to search committees, according to the discretion of [redacted] whether elected or employed. I certify the truthfulness of all the information in this profile.

I acknowledge and accept that [redacted] is under no obligation to provide this form to a church, and that they may refuse to make this form available to any church or all churches in their sole discretion.

This is a confidential document. Do not circulate beyond the Search Committee.

**REFERENCES**

List names and addresses of four individuals - one of which served as a leader in your most recent church experience.

Name	Phone Number & Email Address

I waive my right to see any references that are collected.

Other comments or clarifications:

# Appendix E

## E1 Senior Pastor Job Description

**Description:** The Senior Pastor is to provide spiritual and pastoral leadership to the congregation of this Church, and to lead us in broad based evangelism to the surrounding community. This includes providing spiritual leadership through example, preaching/teaching; working with the board in establishing and implementing the vision of the church, equipping the congregation for the various works of ministry, and through the shepherding of the people in partnership with the Elder Board, Ministry Directors and Small Group leaders.

**Accountability:** The Senior Pastor reports directly to the Elder Board. This position will be evaluated annually under the direction of the Board in addition to informal, ongoing reflection and re-evaluation.

### Qualifications

- Professes faith in the work of Jesus Christ for salvation and has a solid personal relationship with Christ
- Demonstrates a life submitted to Christ through lifestyle choices, words, and practice
- Able to be ordained in our denomination
- Proven leadership in an outreach minded church
- Valid driver's license with access to a reliable vehicle

## I. Leadership/Leadership Development & Discipleship - (30%)

### The Senior Pastor is:

- A cooperative, self-confident motivator
- An inspirer of all with the vision of the church
- An effective team builder to bring other disciple-makers alongside
- Someone committed to developing the congregation to their highest level of spiritual maturity
- An equipper who gives ministry workers tools for their jobs

### Duties/Responsibilities:

- Works alongside the board in the maintenance of a compelling vision, and acts as the key implementation champion for the strategic plan
- Schedules and participates in the planning and leadership of an annual board retreat that educates, motivates, and supports board members
- Leads the staff/volunteer team
- Will create a leadership process that is implemented across the ministries of the congregation which strategically develops key leaders, next level leaders, and emerging leaders for the discipleship process.
- Mobilizes and equips key leaders for each of the identified programs and ministries of the church.
- Provides support/encouragement for Ministry Directors and Board
- Will train or arrange for the training of the congregation through teaching and in workshops, discipleship experiences, mentoring and coaching.
- Other duties as assigned

## **II. Preaching/Worship – (40%)**

### **The Senior Pastor is:**

- An effective communicator in accurately taking the whole word of God and providing avenues of application that the congregation understands
- Someone whose genuine spiritual life shows through in preaching
- A Spirit-led, mature believer who speaks from experience
- A disciple-maker who leads others into greater commitment
- An evangelist who speaks the message of Jesus to those who need to hear

### **Duties/Responsibilities:**

- Plan and implement a weekly teaching schedule that allows attendees to learn the whole truth of God, and to mobilize their daily walk of faith, and become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.
- Prepares preaching schedules in advance, and reviews with the Deacons quarterly
- Meets weekly with the Worship Director to evaluate and plan all regular and special services
- Ensures that worship services are effective regarding content, style, structure and design
- Creates regular opportunities for people to respond to the message of Christ through evangelistic messages with the result of growth in the Sunday service

## **Outreach/Community Engagement - (10%)**

### **The Senior Pastor is:**

- A model of interaction with the community
- A spokesperson within the wider community

### **Duties/Responsibilities:**

- Engages in the community through involvement in clubs, committees, as a speaker and/or facilitator or volunteer in key community endeavors according to passion, giftedness and interest
- Equips and mobilizes key leaders and volunteers within the church in the role of evangelism and in the development of strategic outreach ministries and initiatives.
- Represent the church to our denomination and region

## **III. Congregational Relations/Pastoral Care – (15%)**

### **The Senior Pastor is:**

- A compassionate and empathetic shepherd
- An effective team builder to bring other shepherds alongside
- A discerning peace maker

### **Duties/Responsibilities:**

- Inspires the congregation to spiritual maturity through personal example connection to other local and far-reaching examples and by acting as a connection to the wider work of God
- Provides care for spiritual, emotional and physical needs as needed in partnership with other church leaders
- Administers the Lord's Supper
- Proactively identifies problems/ challenges and offers creative solutions for resolution (conflict management)
- Hospital visits as needed
- Provides minor counseling (supportive listening), and refers to professionals for those needing more extensive counseling as needed
- Conducts baptisms and funerals, pre-marriage counseling, and \*weddings as required.

*\*Note – The pastor is paid by the couple for conducting the wedding ceremony.*

#### **IV. Professional Development/Personal Growth – (5%)**

##### **The Senior Pastor is:**

- A life-long learner

##### **Duties/Responsibilities:**

- Devotes time to spiritual, mental, physical development and well being through personal disciplines
- Attend courses/workshops as appropriate
- Attend a small group as a participant, and/or lead a small group
- Will develop an annual plan in cooperation with board. Key performance indicators will be reviewed bi-annually with the board. A full performance evaluation will be completed annually



## **E-2 Senior Pastor Job Description**

As leader of the pastoral team, the Senior Pastor is expected to lead by example with his commitment to the “Core Values of the Pastoral Team of XXX”.

### **Summary of Position:**

The Senior Pastor oversees the corporate spiritual welfare of XXX. He provides ultimate leadership in the area of preaching and teaching God’s Word and in the area of vision casting. The Senior Pastor is ultimately responsible for all public services held at XXX, and along with the Executive Pastor for the pastoral staff, for the administrative staff, for the support staff and for initiating public relations, in general, with the community.

### **Responsibilities of Position:**

The Senior Pastor:

1. Provides the principal spiritual leadership of XXX.
2. Is the primary vision caster of XXX’s corporate future.
3. Is ultimately responsible for all public services of XXX.
4. Serves as the primary preaching pastor.
5. Ensures that all of the ministry needs in XXX receive the appropriate pastoral attention.
6. Provides ultimate leadership in all matters concerning the pastoral team.
7. May be involved with the selection of the individual pastoral, administrative and support staff team members.
8. Deploys the pastoral team members in a coordinated manner according to their giftedness and strengths,
9. Takes initiative in public relations on behalf of XXX with the community and with the denomination.
10. Participates as an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of XXX.

### **Spiritual Giftedness Required for Position:**

The Senior Pastor must exhibit the spiritual gifts of prophecy (preaching), leadership and wisdom. It is desirable that he also have the gifts of creative communication, evangelism and teaching.

### **Skills Required to Fulfil Position:**

The Senior Pastor must be an effective preacher and teacher of God’s Word. He should demonstrate excellence in public communication and presentation.

The Senior Pastor requires a clear concept of XXX’s corporate vision. He motivates the congregation by showing how they can have a significant part in the fulfilment of that vision. He requires wisdom to focus on common denominators rather than divisive tangents.

As “Head Coach”, the Senior Pastor leads and motivates each pastoral team member to do their best, to be creative and to be entrepreneurial in their planning and efforts. His leading should cause each team member to willingly see their vision and goals as a significant contributing part of the corporate vision and goals of XXX.

It is imperative that the Senior Pastor work effectively and in harmony with the senior leadership of XXX.

Education and Experience Requirements of Position:

The Senior Pastor must possess an educational level of a Masters of Divinity or its equivalent. It is preferable that he have a Doctorate of Ministry or its equivalent. The Senior Pastor is encouraged to be aware of the current trends and new ideas in ministry. Therefore, with the approval of the Board of XXX, the Senior Pastor is encouraged to maintain contact with key national and international church leaders.

It is desirable that the Senior Pastor have a minimum of ten years' experience in the areas of preaching and teaching of God's Word, church leadership, administration and corporate vision casting. A multicultural, multi staff experience is preferred.

Organizational Relationships of Position:

The Senior Pastor is directly accountable to the Elder Board and through the Elder Board ultimately responsible to the church membership. This accountability with the Elder Board is to be maintained through regular personal meetings, corporate Elder Board meetings and through written reports, as necessary.

The Senior Pastor will be responsible for the Pastoral Staff, Administrative Staff and Support Staff of XXX as per the attached organizational chart.

The Senior Pastor's final responsibility is to the call of God and the Senior Pastor's interpretation of that call.

General Guideline of Work Week:

This is a full-time position.

The following guideline is to serve as a means of reference only for the position of Senior Pastor.

55% - preparing for, conducting and/or attending public services

15% - meeting with other staff members

20% - meeting with church leadership, church members and other non-church members and organization representatives

10% - church administration duties including correspondence, service scheduling, etc.

The Senior Pastor's regular days off will be determined in consultation with the Elder Board.

Future Growth and Direction of Position:

1. Developing a master plan detailing the vision and direction for the development of XXX ministries for the next 5 years.
2. Helping XXX make the necessary transitions in the methods and procedures of the church's decision-making processes.
3. Pursuing opportunities for the Senior Pastor in the areas of public speaking engagements, consulting, writing and study.

## **Appendix F Qualifications Sample**

### **Desired Pastoral Qualifications Church Sample**

#### **THE DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS FOR OUR PASTOR**

##### **PERSONAL FACTORS:**

1. Conversion experience and call to the ministry.
2. Preferably married.
3. Wife active and supportive in his ministry.
4. Family man or experienced in raising a family (1 Timothy 3:4, 5).
5. Good health.
6. Experience
  - a) At least one previous pastorate (pastoral maturity)
  - b) Secular – not essential, but valuable
  - c) Administrative skills essential
7. Educationally qualified to meet the needs of an established, growing church.
8. Sound background without experiences that could hinder the ministry.

##### **PASTORAL FACTORS:**

1. Agreement with our Constitution and Statement of Faith.
2. Actively support XXX in accord with the will of the church.
3. Emphasis in ministry:
  - a) Balanced message – teaching and evangelistic.
  - b) Age – interest in, and rapport with young people - committed supporter of the Sunday school and Christian Education ministries.
  - c) Prayer – strong emphasis in a prayer life.
4. Study Habits – student of God's Word.
5. Attitudes in the ministry towards:
  - a) Visitation – willing to visit members, sick, etc.
  - b) Administration – need for strong leadership
  - c) Counselling – some skills advisable
  - d) Charismatic orientation – unacceptable
  - e) Eschatology – preferred position?
  - f) Church growth – committed to strong outreach ministry
  - g) Lord's Table – all believers may attend (1 Cor. 11:26-29)
  - h) Missions – committed to both Home and Foreign missions
  - i) Solid Bible teacher to ground present believers
  - j) Open to the concept of "small group" ministries.

##### **PEOPLE FACTORS:**

1. Aware of the evangelical community – not isolated but interested.
2. Personality assessment – warm, sociable, humble, a love for people.
3. Has addressed and taken a biblical stand on issues such as:
  - a) Family life – strong family emphasis

- b) Separation of believers – strong positive approach necessary
  - c) Christian Schools – not opposed
  - d) Counseling ministries – strong need within our community
  - e) Satellite ministries – future potential
4. Willing to address the present issues of today's society such as:
- a) Abortion
  - b) Alternative life-styles
  - c) Pornography
  - d) Euthanasia
5. Expectations – willing to develop long range goals, visionary.

## Appendix G Desired Characteristics Sample Form

Desired Pastoral Characteristics Church Sample

Church Name

Search Committee Assignment

Date:

Pastoral Characteristics Desired	Practicals (Must Have)	Desirables (Frosting on the cake)
Relevant communicator - speaks truth in love, more than just knowledge transfer - application		
Approachable		
Humble		
Godly character		
Discipler - especially young men		
Capable leader		
Delegator		
Heart for the lost		
Theological education - masters level degree in pastoral studies		
Life experience - both in & outside of church employment		
Practical help - able to counsel others		
Interpersonal skills		
Comfortable with hospital visits		
Married		
Conflict resolution		
Servant leader		

Energetic/healthy		
Driven - goal oriented		
Global focus		
Tech savvy		
Long term ministry desired		
Other (list on backside)		

## Appendix H Bylaw Sample

### Pastoral Search Bylaw Information

#### PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

##### Senior Pastor:

- (a) When a vacancy occurs in the senior pastorate, the Elders Board shall appoint a Pastoral Search Committee of not more than five members, subject to the approval of the Church.
- (b) The Pastoral Search Committee shall thoroughly investigate and prayerfully consider all candidates and make a report to the congregation at least once a month. As the Holy Spirit leads the Pastoral Search Committee, they shall present the name of one candidate at a time for approval given to the Church at a special meeting called for that purpose. Before the candidate is presented to be voted upon, the Pastoral Search Committee must secure his permission and present to the Church at the time of voting, a signed statement by the proposed candidate signifying his unreserved acceptance of the Church's Constitution and Doctrinal Statement. A three-fourths majority of the voting active members present shall be required to call a Pastor. (A quorum of 75% of the active membership is required to call a Pastor).
- (c) The call shall be extended by the Church through the chairs of the respective elders and deacons boards. Should the candidate fail to receive the three-fourths majority, or refuse the call, the Pastoral Search Committee shall seek out another acceptable candidate.
- (d) The Pastoral Search Committee, in co-operation with the Deacons Board, shall draw up and present a contract, approved by the Church to the new Pastor, including moving expenses incumbent upon the office of the Pastor.

**Appendix I Profile Selection Checklist**  
**Profile Selection Criteria by Church**

**SENIOR PASTOR SELECTION GUIDE**

**1. AGE**

Not younger than \_\_\_\_\_ Not older than \_\_\_\_\_ Age is not a major consideration \_\_\_\_

**2. MARRIAGE**

Desirable that the individual be married \_\_\_\_\_ Not a concern \_\_\_\_\_

**3. EDUCATION**

If there is a need for a specific level of scholastic achievement, indicate your desire.

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. ORDINATION**

Must be ordained \_\_\_\_\_ Not necessary that he be ordained \_\_\_\_\_

**5. EXPERIENCE**

We are willing to consider a man undertaking his first senior pastorate role. \_\_\_\_\_

He must have previously pastored at least one church. \_\_\_\_\_

He must have pastored a church of over 200. \_\_\_\_\_

He must have multiple staff experience. \_\_\_\_\_

He must be experienced in church planting. \_\_\_\_\_

**6. BI-VOCATIONAL**

There are individuals who are willing to undertake ministries that are not able to provide full support. If that is your present circumstance, so indicate. \_\_\_\_\_

**7. FUNCTIONS OF MINISTRY**

Listed below are seven major functions of ministry. You are asked to INDICATE the level of capacity required in each and then CIRCLE the two that are of highest importance.

	Much	Some	Little
PREACHING			
TEACHING			
EVANGELISM			
LEADERSHIP			
VISITATION			
COUNSELLING			
ADMINISTRATION			



**8. SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES**

It may be that there is a specialized need or opportunity relative to your church that is beyond the primary role. Indicate those areas where it is desirable that the candidate has a significant level of experience or capacity.

- Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation
- Camping
- Chaplaincy
- Children
- Christian Education
- Counseling
- Discipleship
- Inner City Ministry
- Music
- Singles
- Youth

**9. POSITIONS OF PREFERENCE**

Circle the thoughts in each line that generally reflect the church's position and desire in a man.

<b>Eschatological Position</b>	Hold a strong position and agreement would be necessary to a call.	Hold to a position, but not a matter that would affect fellowship.	Instruction in all positions desirable to facilitate liberty of determination.	
<b>Missions</b>	Promote the denomination, French and Foreign Missions.	Promote inter-denomination Missions.	Promote the denomination and inter-denomination missions.	
<b>Style of Worship</b>	Traditional.	Contemporary Worship Songs	Variety of instruments, but no drums	Variety of instruments, including drums
<b>Translations</b>	Comfortable only with KJV.	Comfortable with other translations but generally use KJV.	Use a modern translation e.g. NIV (not a paraphrase).	Would be comfortable with a paraphrase.
<b>Present Board Structure</b>	Pastor and deacons Board with pastor as chairman.	Pastor's) and deacons with a deacon as chairman.	Pastor and deacons plus a Board of Management.	Elders and deacons.
	Pastors and elders with pastor as chairman.	Pastor and elders with pastor as teaching elder.	Other	

10. If there are matters, which by nature are of special significance to the church, then you are asked to indicate these. For example, if you have a Christian Day School, Radio Broadcast or some policy that is strongly held (i.e. a factor that would have major influence on any decision), please make that known. \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH NAME and LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON \_\_\_\_\_ DATE SUBMITTED \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to:**

## Appendix J Interview Transcripts

1           **C1U1BP1**

2   **Question: What is your Board's role in the pastoral hiring process?**

3   Once our interim pastor came on board then we just followed his recommendations as we proceeded  
4   with our process. If we didn't have him and his organization then there maybe would have been some  
5   more direction but we had our interim pastor there and that was his job to help us through that. So, our  
6   board's role was basically just oversight. When we had an elder's meeting I would obviously report to  
7   the other elder and he would sometimes have questions about where we were going. I like this, I don't  
8   believe that - sort of thing so it was just an oversight and trying to understand where we are going.  
9   Because, in the back there is always the congregation and what do they think because we have to report  
10  to them because we are congregational in our governance. Sort of an elder led, congregational approved  
11  style. Not that they rubber stamp it but for the big decisions we bring it to them and say if you agree then  
12  vote with it because your vote is your answer.

13 **Question: Would you describe for me your pastoral hiring process?**

14 So originally, I was not an elder when they formed the search committee. Our search committee began  
15 at our annual meeting. The Elder that was on board when it came together, he had one meeting with  
16 them and then I came on the board. I came on the board fresh and the other Elder was kind of worn out  
17 because our church had been through somewhat of a crisis and so I offered to take over the spot on the  
18 search committee and he was glad to have that happen. At that point I met with the committee and said  
19 we need to take a step back, let's not rush this, we need to get this right because we have been through a  
20 few pastors that have not kind of worked out if you want to say that. I said I want us to be kind of a  
21 Visionary committee to kind of cast a vision of where our church is going and then after we are done  
22 that and we report to the elders and if they're still good, the rest of the board, then we proceed. We are at  
23 a key point in our church's life and if we are going to make changes now is the time. We don't want to  
24 just maintain the status quo and get another pastor because we liked this guy and on, we go. We need to  
25 make some fundamental changes in our church. I really was, probably pushing maybe too hard. I had  
26 read Rick Warren's book, The Purpose Driven Church which to me is a fundamental document and I  
27 think a lot of the new generation of evangelical churches, the ones that are growing, seem to take a lot of  
28 the fundamentals from his book. I listened to a number of clips on YouTube and we talked about the  
29 purpose of preaching, the purpose of the church, and it all just kind of made sense. Not that we need to  
30 be a Saddleback but the fundamental, principles of the church were very key. So, I said let's each of us  
31 get a copy and we did and I said we all need to read this a chapter a week and let's meet and reflect and  
32 see where God wants us to go with this. So, the other Elder did this as well and we agreed although I  
33 don't know, looking back I wonder if some were a little reluctant. There were some questions but I was  
34 definitely pushing it pretty hard. So, that was the vision casting part. Let us set a new direction, be more,  
35 (this word came out in the last 6 months) let us be more attractional. We had not used that word in the  
36 past. It is kind of a buzzword they are using now in some of these new generation churches. So, instead  
37 of being so inward focused and all the preaching and all the focus is on the people in the church and the  
38 pattern seems to be that when you do that your church just shrinks and shrinks and shrinks and shrivels  
39 up. We wanted to be more outward-looking and attract people in. So that's the direction I felt we needed  
40 to go in. A lot of questions. It was kind of all new to their thinking but for me I had been thinking about  
41 it for years and so once we had that kind of settled, we said OKAY now we can start the process of

42 trying to find a pastor that would fit these parameters, this paradigm. At that time also, I want to get the  
43 timeline right here, because we had the burden of finding fill in for the pulpit Supply and just the basic  
44 running of the church we brought in an intentional interim pastor. It was a little bit of a struggle there  
45 too because some people in the church thought what why do we have to bring in someone like that up  
46 here - who is this organization? There were some questions but when we put it to a vote people said yes  
47 let's bring him in and it turned out to be a great thing. He was a relief for the elders because we just did  
48 not have to carry that burden of all the details of leadership and preaching. Their whole deal is to help a  
49 church heal after it has been through crisis and they have a systematic way of doing things. It has been  
50 fantastic! I just don't know what it would be like without this organization – it was tremendous. So,  
51 when he came, we were just about at the point where we were finalizing our purpose statement and  
52 getting ready to start with putting the word out for a pastor and he said let's put the brakes on. I want to  
53 do my assessment I want to interview everybody I want to find out what this community is like and see  
54 what the healthier churches are like, which is what we do. So, we backed off. We still met a little bit and  
55 we worked on a few things. He said we needed to shorten our purpose statement it was too long and he  
56 helped us kind of refocus and rethink where we were going, which was good. Then once he brought our  
57 church through the process - his evaluation, help with some of the healing, some of the hurt feelings -  
58 that kind of thing. So then, I think it was just maybe in January of this year we started putting the word  
59 out for a pastor. Still sticking to that new generation idea where we wanted a pastor that could speak in a  
60 relevant, credible way with applicable teaching that an unchurched person could come in and listen to  
61 and not be lost in christianese. We also wanted evangelism, outreach into our community was important  
62 and mentorship. So, just being one of them, we had a number of Millennials on our search committee.  
63 We had three Millennials an X'er and two Boomers and the pastor of course. So, I just liked that cross  
64 demographic and the Millennials said mentorship is important. I didn't get that at first. I just think that if  
65 you want to grow then grow. Do your study, do whatever - go on a mission's trip, that is really really  
66 important. So, I finally realized that was important to them and so that was one of the things we were  
67 looking for. Someone who could mentor – very relational, but could also communicate. So, that's kind  
68 of what we were looking for and so we put about as much advertising as we could on various websites  
69 and whatnot, and then they started coming in. I think we ended up with about 23 candidates to screen.  
70 Since we kind of landed on our pastoral candidate who is coming, we had four or five more. We decided  
71 to just hold on until we are sure here. So, that's the broad overview.

72 **Question: Of those different factors that you put together for your search process, what factors**  
73 **have been the most significant? If there were a couple of things that were – yeah, it's really good**  
74 **that we did this. Are there any factors in particular that really say – this was really important for**  
75 **our process?**

76 Having an intentional interim pastor, no question. I think everybody on our committee would say and  
77 they have said how much they have appreciated our interim pastor. It wasn't only the fact that he came in  
78 with his kind of assessment and healing process he just knew the details about how you should interview  
79 - that process and what comes next? What do you do now? Do call him? How many interviews? What  
80 do you say in an interview? He just knew how that process should work. He had handouts for us and  
81 when we had questions about what's appropriate and what's kind of not, he just had good answers for us.  
82 And that's what they do. That would be number one. Number two I would say would be our stepping  
83 back and refocusing. So, here's the deal. When a church needs a pastor, the people want a pastor now.  
84 “We don't have a pastor”. It's like losing a parent or something. So, the pressure is on the search  
85 committee and it's awful. That pressure is awful. And so, what happens is you end up. You know, this  
86 guy – he seems like a pretty nice guy and this is what has happened in the past. Yeah, there are a few

87 issues here, but they're on our back you know. He loves Jesus and let's go for it. But we at the beginning  
88 said no we are stepping back and then we got an intentional interim pastor and he said let's put the  
89 brakes on. So, the pressure was off. Let's make sure we get this right. So, with the pressure off of us, the  
90 pressure off the elders, it just gave us so much freedom to explore where we wanted to go and let people  
91 speak. So, taking the pressure off was just so valuable, I think.

92 **Interviewer: That's Good**

93 **Question: How did you – now, granted you weren't there at the beginning as an elder, but how did**  
94 **you, if you could speak to this... how did you identify the people and actually assemble the search**  
95 **committee initially? Do you know how that came about?**

96 I wasn't an elder and I'm trying to remember if it was the nominating committee that kind of selected  
97 them. It went to the annual meeting. It was more people than our constitution says. It's only supposed to  
98 be five we have 8. To tell you the truth I can't comment on that because I can't remember and I wasn't at  
99 that annual meeting. I was on a trip and I missed it so I don't know. I am not sure if the elders came up  
100 with those names or not. That might be something another one of your interviewees might be able to  
101 answer.

102 **Interviewer: So, were you on the search committee initially? Were you one of the members who**  
103 **was put on the search committee?**

104 No, that was the other elder. Now, how did that work? That was the other Elder and then he and I  
105 switched once I became an elder.

106 **Interviewer (Question): The reason I was going to ask was, what instruction, or if there was any**  
107 **specific instruction or criteria that were given to the search committee?**

108 Originally? Yeah, I don't know. So, the search committee formed before the annual meeting it was  
109 ratified at the annual meeting, but that annual meeting I came on as elder also. It was already formed  
110 with the other Elder on it. After the summer holidays, that's when I took over. That's when I jumped on.

111 **OK. The annual meeting is in June?** Yeah. 2017 June is when it would have been formed, I guess. I  
112 think they probably called the committee, maybe April or May and you know, got the group together  
113 and it was voted on at the Annual meeting in June. And then I think they met once in the summer with  
114 the other elder and then I came on after.

115 **Fair enough. So then, when you came on, they had been formed and then they were already**  
116 **working Did they have certain instructions or a mandate they were following, or were they just**  
117 **only beginning to start to come together?**

118 I would say, there was not really a clear sense of any mandate, other than we have got to find a pastor.  
119 There was not really any reflection at that point.

120 **So then, at what point did the committee receive some criteria or instruction as to what they were**  
121 **supposed to be doing and how they should be, and what was that input?**

122 So, I don't want to sound arrogant but I think I brought that and drove that. There are only two Elders at  
123 that point and I just had this - and the reason I say this too is because years prior to that we had other  
124 pastors. During one in particular, years ago, it seemed like the church had reached a plateau. We met  
125 with the elders with a whiteboard and said let's figure out what's going on here. And ironically, we  
126 looked at Rick Warren's book back then and we said the preaching needs to change. It has to be less

127 doctrinal, less theological and more relational and relevant and credible. And he said I can't preach that  
128 way and he resigned right there. But he was tired and burned out as well. So then, the hope was that the  
129 next pastor would do it but I was not an elder or on the search committee at that point, so that dream  
130 kind of got lost and then the next Pastor came in and we kind of put it to him and he said yes I can  
131 preach that way but he never did and so this is kind of a resurrected direction that I felt strongly and I  
132 guess it's a personal impression of my own that maybe is not shared so much by too many others but it  
133 just seems to be more and more confirmed the more I listen to other podcasts and people who are on the  
134 cutting edge of what is going on in New Generation churches- North Creek, Saddleback - all those  
135 churches that are really booming. It just seems that this kind of communication style, this kind of  
136 pastoral leadership is seen in churches that are growing. With, and this is the stat that I continually  
137 repeated to the search committee, 80% of Evangelical churches in Canada are either plateaued or in  
138 decline. 97% aren't growing at the same rate as the community around them. It's a staggering statistic.  
139 So why are some Churches blowing out the doors? So, I kept saying and kind of encouraging our  
140 committee the ones that seem to be growing are this kind of model. It's how they communicate and it's  
141 their outward focus to the community, being attractional bringing people in so that they can hear a  
142 message that they can understand. So, we sat around this living room and I kind of explained this and  
143 said let's read this book and I think they got it. One of the committee members said the other day when  
144 we had a debriefing search committee meeting, I know we kind of kick back at the beginning and gave  
145 push back but she said I am glad we kept going. Our other Elder read the book too and he's kind of a  
146 quiet, contemplative kind of guy but I really was pushing this I really wanted to see this. I think it is  
147 vital. I think if our church does not make this change it's not going to go well.

148 **Q: So then what kind of instruction or criteria did you give to the search committee as you began**  
149 **that process? One of them was read the book and such, and dialogue with these core pieces... were**  
150 **there any other instructions as to what they were to do? How they were to it? What kind of**  
151 **criteria they had to...? You talked earlier about how they were a part of the vision casting?**

152 Some of them on the committee said Well that sounds like you but we want to make sure that we are not  
153 pushing this and the elders are not on board. The strange thing is our elder board is only two so half of  
154 them were on board and they still wanted to meet with the elders. So, we all sat around and talked back  
155 and forth and both Elders said no we agree in let's move forward. So, we highlighted those three things:  
156 Evangelism, mentorship - because we realized we needed to raise up our own leaders from within the  
157 church which is really important because we have some key millennials, young men who really want  
158 mentorship they say that; and communication style. Those three things. That's the direction we are going  
159 in. We are going to be outward focused in evangelism, we are going to be able to speak in a clear way  
160 and we are going to be able to Mentor from within. Mentorship / discipleship - they are different but  
161 they are kind of the same. So that's the direction and we set our purpose statement but then when our  
162 intentional interim pastor came in, we tweaked it a bit. Once we met with the elders, we brought that all  
163 to the church - I think our interim pastor did, and then we proceeded.

164 **Q: In terms of proceeding, other than saying we have our purpose and these three key areas:**  
165 **mentorship, evangelism, communication – were there any other criteria for the process or for the**  
166 **candidate that you guys put together?**

167 Our interim pastor gave us a list that we could fill out with must haves and would be nice, or hopefuls or  
168 something. So, we just made our list - good with youth SEE LIST)! I've got it there if you want to see it.

169 **C: If I could get a copy of that I could take a picture – that would be great! That would help.**

170 Let me get that. It will refresh my memory. It's in here somewhere. I think I can find it. There's the  
171 church effectiveness survey, and the kind of roadmap that our intentional transitional minister's  
172 organization uses.

173 **C: Can I take a photo of that?**

174 Absolutely, sure.

175 **C: So, this list – was a list that he gave you and you guys had to identify if it was a must have or**  
176 **desirable? Or, did you guys come up with that list?**

177 No, I think this is the list that we came up with and he just formalized it.

178 **C: OK. And this roadmap checklist ---?**

179 Came from our intentional transitional pastor organization.

180 **C: It helped to trace or track your... kind of chart the roadmap for your way forward?**

181 Yeah, that's kind of what he used to let us know where he was going. That was helpful and you can see  
182 it's pretty detailed. Our interim pastor has a coach that is constantly checking in on him and he's  
183 bouncing ideas off of. So, when he comes to a roadblock his coach kind of helps him through it.

184 **C: And this survey – your interim pastor took you through this as well?**

185 Yes. Our intentional interim pastor took us through the survey tool as well and other tools that helped us  
186 to identify primary roles and priorities for any potential candidate.

187 **C: These resources are great and helped inform your practice. Do you have these electronically?**

188 I'm pretty sure I do – it would just be a matter of finding them. I'm pretty sure I could source that pretty  
189 quick.

190 **C: If you would please, that would be awesome.**

191 I'm just going to make a note to myself or I will forget to do that. It's quite a resource. It's probably way  
192 more than we needed, but I guess it's their thing to do.

193

194 **C: The beauty of this is they give you a template and a tool now to help you as your new pastor**  
195 **comes in and transitioning and helping him understand even not only just the history but some of**  
196 **where the congregation is at as you look at these kinds of things. You set your course but as you**  
197 **help him transition and as the congregation works - this is not new to your congregation. They've**  
198 **seen this. They've heard this. So, as they can work together it also will make him aware of any**  
199 **potential landmines to avoid so he won't step on them – that's great!**

200 Yeah - and we sent them these. We held off on that. I think that for the more serious candidates we sent  
201 that to them.

202 **C: That's good.**

203 I think these tools just confirmed what we already knew.

204 **C: The beauty of someone outside doing it – it confirmed what some of you knew. Others may**  
205 **have known it but were unwilling to see it. But it brings it in an objective way to say, here. It helps**  
206 **to give a framework to move forward.**

207 Yeah. And I think it really confirmed all that we had been talking about. The big thing that I hear over  
208 and over – it doesn't matter who is speaking whether it's one podcaster or another – it's not about  
209 growing your church; it's about making your church healthy then it will grow. So, it's about the health  
210 of your church. We all realized we had some ill-health issues. That's part of what our interim pastor's  
211 mandate was to do – and heal things. I was really worried about this last annual meeting because in the  
212 past some of the atmosphere has been kind of - like there's a tension. He said, I think things have calmed  
213 down don't worry. He was dead right. Like the meeting went so smooth. I've never seen anything like it.  
214 It was so smooth. It was so calm. There was a spirit of unity. The vote went through hardly any  
215 questions. I mean annual meetings can be a powder keg as I'm sure you know and I hate that. It's almost  
216 like a spectator sport. People come to see who's going to blow up. So that to me just showed he's right.  
217 Our interim pastor has settled a lot of issues here and he has met with people and interviewed a lot of  
218 people and gotten to the root of some of the problems and brought a certain amount of Health so  
219 hopefully now he is handing the church off in a healthy situation to the next pastor.

220 **C: So, in terms of criteria, you worked together through establishing the process based upon those**  
221 **core pieces. You got input and feedback. As a search committee you all worked on that together?**

222 We worked together to establish our process based on those core pieces, we got feedback and input from  
223 the congregation and our search committee and we all worked on that together. I think we met maybe a  
224 couple of times with the elders and the search committee just to make sure we are all on the same page  
225 moving forward.

226 **C: In your process, the search committee interviewed candidates, then as elders you interviewed**  
227 **them separately?**

228 So, what happened was once the search committee narrowed it down to two; the first interview with  
229 each of them was with two or three on our committee that they recorded and let us all listen to after so  
230 they could all give their opinion. The second interview the other Elder sat in so he was watching and  
231 listening and of course I was there, so elders and the search committee. At that point we narrowed it  
232 down to one. It became apparent to us that candidate B was not going to cut it and candidate A was the  
233 one we wanted. It was very strong. There was one little question about a comment the candidate made  
234 on his pastoral profile about eternal conscious suffering and he was just honest about this as something  
235 he had struggled with for years but said that he would abide with whatever doctrine your church thought  
236 was right in terms of hell. It was a little bit of a red flag for some but our interim pastor's suggestion was  
237 - since he was not ordained if he comes and goes through an ordination process and this becomes an  
238 issue or no-go then what? We better talk to our regional director. So, there was another interview with  
239 the regional leadership director who talked to the candidate with the chair of our committee and they had  
240 a Skype interview. The leadership director then gave a heads up to our interim pastor and through  
241 conversation they suggested we talk to the regional director and then he talked to the candidate and gave  
242 his endorsement and said no that won't be an issue, he's just being honest. And the ordination process  
243 apparently is not that you have all the answers but at least you have thought things through. So, the  
244 regional director said no he was quite satisfied that this was not an issue that would be blowing up in any  
245 sense for us.

246 **C: So, were there any other aspects to your role as elders?**

247 The only input we as Elders would have had a fair bit of input on was right at the end when it came time  
248 for the congregational vote. We kind of came under this time crunch because our candidate worked in an  
249 environment that required sufficient notice so his employer could find someone to replace him and yet  
250 our annual meeting was fast approaching in the summer so we had to squeeze things in there. Plus, we  
251 became Incorporated a few years ago and as a result our original constitution lapsed, so it became null  
252 and void. So, we still haven't settled a lot of our old constitutional issues in terms of what type of  
253 Quorum do you need, arm's length policy, length of tenure as elder, even our doctrinal statement. I guess  
254 we've taken care of that now though. All the doctrinal things – about baptism, deity of Christ and things  
255 like that have been settled but more of the details of who can be an elder, baptism, things like that. So,  
256 we did not even have a quorum set in terms of what was needed - what number or percentage was  
257 needed to call a pastor. So, our interim pastor fortunately clued-in to that about two months ago and he  
258 has been trying to get it sorted out. At the very least we've got to have a meeting with the congregation  
259 to settle that so we can call the pastor. So, at the same meeting as we called the pastor, we settled that  
260 issue first. It went right to the wire. People were wondering what is going on here? We had this business  
261 thing we have to take care of first. But if that goes and we don't have the right quorum, we can't vote on  
262 a pastor anyway - so our backs were kind of to the wall as far as timing and I wondered how is this  
263 going to go. But it ended up all working out. We didn't really realize that it was like that. There's the  
264 bylaw number 1 they call it – it became very confusing. There's bylaw number 1, then there's board  
265 policy and bylaw policy – and we had our church constitution, and then we had a membership guy and it  
266 was just like... I know I didn't have it straight in my head for a long time.

267 We had someone on our board formerly – that was his forte – he loved that stuff regarding constitution,  
268 bylaws and incorporation and policies but then he went off the board and all that knowledge went with  
269 him but we still had to get it all sorted out. It all worked out and we had a quorum - the thing passed and  
270 it all went through. So, our board role in this process was a little more extensive due to all these other  
271 matters. It would have been a completely different ballgame without our intentional interim pastor and  
272 his organization. We would have had to have had a lot more involvement to get through all of this. Two  
273 other elders left a year ago because we have a three year and out process, or ten years for elders. The  
274 other Elder it was exhausting for him – he just crawled through to the end because he was burned out.  
275 So, I was coming in fresh. This was a great opportunity! This was new and the time to change the way  
276 things go. I just think God does that. He just brings somebody in fresh when somebody else is beat up  
277 and they need a break.

278

279 **Question: What were your considerations when you were developing your job description?**

280 We had a job description already and we just tweaked that a little bit. I don't think we changed it a lot  
281 from our old job description. You were probably on our website and saw what we were looking for in a  
282 pastor? I don't know if we've taken that off. I think it's still on there. That mission statement at the  
283 beginning, that's what our interim pastor helped us with.

284 We got bogged down on purpose, mission and vision because churches tend to use them  
285 interchangeably. So, the deacons take care of the financial side of things and they came up with the  
286 package of salary and benefits and all that kind of thing, which was basically what we had before. It may  
287 have tweaked a bit and they gave it to us and our interim pastor put it together with the contract and I  
288 kind of stamped my name on it as the Elder and sent it off to him. So, we would have been involved a  
289 little bit that way. Really all that was on it was my name. Our interim pastor sent it to me and asked if I  
290 was okay with it, he put it all together. Any kind of letter to the congregation our interim pastor would



291 write it and then he would ask what we thought of it and we might make a few little changes and I would  
292 just thank him for being a great Ghostwriter. I got the credit but it was him who was doing it.

293 **C: So, were there any other considerations as you were putting together that job description or**  
294 **things that you wanted to make sure that we have this in? Was there anything that stood out?**

295 You know, I don't remember anything significant. Some small things. So, when these last two  
296 candidates were looking pretty serious and they were both pretty strong, I called them personally myself  
297 just to make sure they understood what we were saying in there, and I talked about credible relevant  
298 applicable teaching. They both found it intriguing and I said it comes from chapter 12 and 14 of The  
299 Purpose Driven Church. I asked them if they knew anything about Carey Nieuwhof and his master class  
300 in teaching. Look on YouTube. So, it wasn't something that was at the forefront of their thinking but  
301 they both said it is very interesting. Our final candidate said that he finds this a challenge but he sees the  
302 importance of it - I'm looking forward to it as a challenge. That's where I was trying to emphasize to  
303 them that this was really important and being able to communicate with those who are far from God so  
304 communication is really important. So, I guess I would say, my perspective that was key number one.  
305 Many on our search committee thought that the mentoring was key number one but they're both  
306 important. So, in answer to your question we've got the job description but I emphasized that this is  
307 really important just verbally.

308

309 **Question: What role does your church community have in the hiring process?**

310 The vote.

311 When we decided to go with Purpose Driven Church, I felt it was important to say to the church that we  
312 were kind of like a fish out of water. We were kind of floundering around and we wanted the search  
313 committee to have some direction and focus so we are using this book as our guide. I thought in my  
314 small perspective that it would be to the church to say look they have some direction. Here is an  
315 established way of doing things from somebody who has researched pastors for 20 or 30 years. But there  
316 were a number of people that were uncomfortable and pushed back over Rick Warren. There were some  
317 people who were really upset. It was perplexing to me. Looking back, it was not a smart thing to do. I  
318 could have said we have some principles that we are looking at and here they are without saying Rick  
319 Warren. There is a lot of stuff on the internet that's nonsense, and armchair quarterbacks that sit there  
320 and pick things apart anyway it's unfortunate. I hate to see that in the body of Christ.

321 **C: I imagine you were updating them and soliciting prayer.**

322 We enlisted one of our search committee to be our spokesperson and she brought a fairly regular update.  
323 Maybe not as much as we should have. Then, once our interim pastor came, he would give updates to  
324 inform them.

325 Rick Warren – I had to let that go. We had one person leave the church over that who said we were  
326 going down the wrong path with Rick Warren.

327 **Question: What priorities do you have for a new pastor?**

328 Those three things. Outreach mentorship and relevant applicable communication. Our new pastor when  
329 he came for a candidating weekend indicated that he knew that we had changes that we wanted to see  
330 but he said give me a year to kind of feel the congregation out, understand what their heart is,

331 understanding your community and what the needs are and then we will go from there. I thought, makes  
332 great sense. You don't want to ruffle too many feathers when you're starting out. But back when we said  
333 that the search committee is more than a search committee – it's a vision casting committee that reports  
334 to the elders and then it's a search committee is there a possibility that we could also be the sounding  
335 board later on. Like a follow up committee or an evaluating committee to make sure that we are on track  
336 and they liked that. I liked this term recently and I put it to them at our last debriefing meeting and I  
337 asked them if they would be willing to be a change management team. I had some nods and some blank  
338 looks so we haven't officially gone there but because it's a great cross-section of demographic and the  
339 people on it it's been a tremendous committee. Our interim pastor said it's the high point of his time here  
340 this search committee - just a tremendous group of people. So, I would help they would be change  
341 agents.

342

343 **Question: Is there anything else that you would want to share that we haven't touched on that you**  
344 **think would be an important learning that other churches and groups might benefit from, you**  
345 **have been through in your process?**

346

347 So, the organization behind our intentional interim pastor comes in, they supply the pulpit, they take  
348 over the Pastoral responsibilities, do a survey, help us heal, and help us with the whole process of  
349 searching for a new pastor - tremendous. We are still lay people asked to be HR people. None of us have  
350 experience at that. We do our best, we pray, we really seek God's direction - invaluable. I don't want to  
351 leave out the fact that we had a daily prayer prompt for the church. People were praying. During this  
352 season of the search committee over the last 2 years our prayer meeting numbers have grown  
353 exponentially and I think that God just put a lot of the dear saints together and they have been praying.  
354 Prayer has been so important. But at the end of the day, we are still just lay people doing our best. We  
355 don't even know how to conduct an interview. Our pastoral candidate at the end of one of our interviews  
356 said those questions weren't hard because that's kind of what he does working with staff at an institution.  
357 He said why didn't you ask me some tough questions. We were thinking what were some of the  
358 questions we should ask you? He said Well you should be asking me some questions like are you  
359 struggling with pornography? Or what about your wife and things like this? So, we thought maybe he's  
360 asking us to ask him, so we thought we should have another interview and ask him these questions.

361 About eight months ago we found out about XXX, which is a Christian leadership placement  
362 organization out of the States. They come in and do much the same thing and there would be a lot of  
363 overlap. They do an assessment, figure out where the church is, what healing needs to take place and  
364 then they find you the man that fits in your classification what you're looking for, you know these three  
365 things or whatever else you are looking for, and they guarantee him for a year and then come and do the  
366 handoff where you meet the guy and they say this is your guy and they actually come to your church but  
367 it comes with a price. It's \$\$\$\$\$\$ U.S. So, I brought it to the team - their marketing is unbelievable. I  
368 reached out to them just to find out what it was all about. They emailed me back and they are on you.  
369 Like you can't afford not to use us because here's what it usually costs a church when they get the wrong  
370 guy \$\$\$\$\$\$ is nothing at all. They are right but our committee just said let's just go through the process  
371 and if we get stumped and stuck and frustrated let's consider it. Our interim pastor said if they came on,  
372 and he knew about them, he would probably have to leave because you could not afford me and them.  
373 So, the more I listen to their spin and find out about XXX the more appealing it became to me.  
374 But as it went, the process went fairly smoothly I guess you could say, so by God's grace I think we

375 arrived at a good guy. So, if you had this intentional interim pastor organization coming in and you had  
376 XXX finding you the right guy it would just take the pressure off and be so sweet. I wish  
377 there was an organization that was both together. Supply the pastor, go through the assessment and like,  
378 pastor short-term and then find you your long-term for \$\$\$\$\$\$. Obviously not every Church could do  
379 that but if you were a thousand member Church \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ would be a bargain.

380 All that to say we are just lay people. It would be nice if we had an HR person on our team but we don't  
381 so we are kind of learning as we go and that's one of the downfalls of being volunteers.

382 So, if you need an executive assistant, if you needed a youth pastor, or if you had a Christian nonprofit  
383 or even a Christian prophet, they could Supply you with executive leadership. They have a large  
384 database of people, something like 20,000 people. So, if you are looking for a job you can put your  
385 name in there and now, you're on their database and if you fit with whatever some organization needs  
386 you got a job.

## C1U1BP2

### **Question: Can you describe for me your overall search process?**

Initially we need to search out and ask those that are willing to serve on a search committee. So that's the first process. The elders do that. They choose who will be on the search committee. In this particular case, we broke all former practices and we ended up choosing 8 individuals trying to diversify, with half of them being younger people under 35 or 30 and the remainder of them being more senior, the other four in their 50s and I've been in church attendance for a long time, had been serving. This one here was different. We broke protocol because before it was just elders but at the same time, they did choose the eight individuals. From that step, once we did that it happened to fall on me to ask each individual. The amazing thing was that in this particular case all 8 accepted. Not one turned it down. Neither the younger people or the older ones. They had different Avenues. Some were Sunday school teachers; some were deacons in our church as well. So, we had a variety. This was all new but it was my duty to ask each one and I did and they all accepted. So, we felt that was very positive. The people that we had decided to ask, I knew we had to choose a certain amount of what kind of Pastor we were going to ask. Like, what we needed in our particular Church, what particular type of Pastor we were really looking for. That would be our next process and normally that would be the elders who would do that. In this particular case we decided as elders to allow the search committee to meet with one or two of the elders initially and make a decision on who would be, what we were truly looking for. Who we thought would be a good fit and what we needed at our church - kind of a dual process?

### **Good**

The initial two meetings, that's what transpired and we went from there and we left one Elder on to be the chairperson of that search committee because he was well experienced. They went with a search from there. They went ahead with their process of deciding what our church truly needed, so they went into that process and finished it. It took them quite some time to do that and once that was completed, they did update the congregation periodically about their process. Some felt it was a long, long process and that it took them a long time to do that but, in the end, we felt that was what needed to be done in this particular case because of previous circumstances of our former Pastor leaving. We just felt we did not want to have any more missteps. So, the elders, in the end would have a final vote of course on who they had chosen as candidates. Our interim pastor sat in initially and then after those initial meetings he basically stepped aside but he would lead from arm's length. And they went through that process and in the end the elders, when it came down to a couple of candidates the elders said, well you have to choose one and they did and from that process they had been in touch with this particular pastor that now is being called.

### **Question: What factors in this current search process do you think have been the most significant? You said it has been quite a departure from former practices.**

Without question, having the younger people involved in the search process which gave them some hands on and being part of the church family rather than saying our elders are taking care of everything, they had the feeling that I'm a part of this new pastor coming in. I have been part of it. That's what I see as being a senior elder as being one of the most significant factors of our process and very positive. Even the number of people that were involved as well - we went from 5 on the search committee which usually involved like three elders and one Sunday school chair and one member of the congregation to 8 and the diversity of ages. I think those two things represented a dramatic change from what we had done before.

44 We had lost some confidence, the elders at our church had, in our regional leadership because we felt  
45 that in the past couple of pastors, we had been misled that they were only concerned with relocating a  
46 pastor rather than trying to give us all of the information. So, some previous pastors were ones that they  
47 had recommended and sent our way. That was part of the process.

48 One of the first steps after they decided what we needed at our church, then they approached our  
49 regional leadership to see who they have got already phoning in or sending in profiles or resumes to  
50 them and then they would make the decision down there who they thought would be a good fit for us.  
51 We ended up with 19 names I understand, at the end that was nine after the regional leadership  
52 narrowed that down themselves. There was some confidence that had to be regained with our region  
53 because of circumstances previously. A previous Pastor that they had sent to us that I thought greatly of  
54 had some significant health issues but he was a tremendous pastor, a senior pastor who was well-  
55 schooled and everything but he had been off work for some time after being released from a very major  
56 Church and they recommended him but no one told us those things and that he might have difficulties  
57 here. The next pastor that came, if wondering why we lost confidence, is that they had recommended  
58 that Pastor as well and he left us after we found out that at his previous Church, he had reduced their  
59 numbers by over 100 and then he came here. After he left here the region agreed and he applied again  
60 through the region and they found him another church. So, we wrote letters and when we phoned, the  
61 end result of that was that our elders were really at odds with the region because we were asking for a  
62 list of who they would recommend and how could we do that when the last two had failed. I think, from  
63 what I understand, that we have moved past that and we are still working with our region.

64 **Question: You said that you had the responsibility for approaching and asking the eight individuals.**  
65 **How did you identify the people and assemble your search committee?**

66 I think that at the time there were four Elders on our board so what we do is we sit down with our  
67 membership list, because you have to be a member to be on the committee. We went through our  
68 membership list and we evaluated those that seemed to be genuine in heart, that had a history of  
69 serving the Lord in our local church, as well as serving the Lord in other areas - whether as a deacon or a  
70 Sunday school teacher. Then of course the age factor came in because we wanted to have a strong,  
71 strong representation of young people in their twenties or thirties and some in their fifties. So, we just  
72 sat down and made a decision amongst ourselves and agreed on the eight. Then we had a joint board  
73 meeting of the deacons and elders and we discussed that among ourselves and we all agreed and so  
74 then we went from there.

75 **Question: Good. So, the eight people agreed. What instructions or criteria did you give to your search**  
76 **committee?**

77 Most of them didn't really ask when I phone them. I think they learned the criteria mostly from their  
78 chair of the committee. So even the first meeting that they had that was our first point was to say we  
79 need a vision, we are going to change, basically change. This is what you need to look for as a search  
80 committee. What are you as a search committee member going to be asked to do? And that is to sit  
81 down and decide among yourselves what our church needs most out of a new man, a new pastor that  
82 comes in. Is he going to be the team leader, are you going to allow, is this the kind of man you want who  
83 can reach out to the whole congregation or are you looking just for someone that's more senior that's a  
84 visitation pastor or do you want somebody that encompasses everything? Or do you want an out  
85 looking? You have to make these decisions. So those were our instructions. And then they grew from  
86 that. They expanded from that and had a lot of heavy discussions. That freed the elders up except for  
87 one, their chair and he eventually handed over the chairmanship to someone else and that freed him up  
88 too. He didn't have to arrange for everything. So those were our instructions to them. Look for a vision,

89 another purpose statement. We need a new vision statement. A new purpose statement. And they went  
90 ahead and did that initially and that's what took so long and perhaps the congregation felt they were  
91 taking too long. Some felt that that was the elder's responsibilities but the elders we're overseeing it. It  
92 came back to them and they did not have to do all the legwork.

93 **Question: What were your considerations when you were developing your job description?**

94 The elders did not establish the job description. That was where we moved off from what we had done  
95 before and we gave it to the search committee to come up with the job description. So, the committee  
96 had all these different things we had asked them to do and that's why it took so long. So, the elder  
97 board reviewed what they came up as a job description and did some work with them. Any of the  
98 priorities for the job description for the pastoral role came out of the work that the search committee  
99 did and the elder board simply oversaw it and maybe made some minor tweaks but all of the leg work  
100 was done by the search committee.

101 **Question: What was the elder board's role in the hiring process?**

102 Elder board would oversee the final selection. The search committee brought the list to the elder board  
103 and sadly they were down to two by that time. So, the list came to the Elder Board and they had a  
104 meeting with the search committee and it was the Elder Board's responsibility to say okay we have two  
105 candidates here, what is our next step? So, they contacted both individuals and the Elder Board asked of  
106 the search committee is this the one that you were choosing and they said yes, we would like to move  
107 ahead with this one candidate. So that's all the elders did. So, the Elder Board oversaw everything and  
108 they oversaw the final selection and okayed the candidate.

109 **Q: So, the job description then... the elders didn't develop the job description?**

110 No, the job description, that's where we moved off and did what we had never done before. We gave it  
111 to the search committee to get the job description. So, they had all these different things we asked  
112 them to do and that's why it took so long.

113 **Q: And then the elder board would review what they came up with as a job description and tweak it a  
114 little and approve it?**

115 Yes.

116 **Q: So, any of those priorities for the pastoral role came out of the search committee?**

117 Yes. It was different from how we did things before because the elders did everything.

118 **Question: What role does your church community have in the hiring process?**

119 Well, the search committee would bring periodic updates. Up to the point when the candidate was  
120 called, the people in general were updated. What can I say? The interim pastor, his job was to try to  
121 prepare the way for the new man who was coming in. He would have messages that pertained to that.  
122 And they were very, very good. It had been my position to bring in speakers because I had happened to  
123 know so many pastors in town so I was the obvious guy to choose. So having an interim pastor took a big  
124 relief off my shoulders.

125 **Q: How did you decide to engage with the intentional interim pastor organization?**

126 Well, that came out of the elders. The elders recommended an intentional interim pastor and initially  
127 everyone was a little hesitant because we did not know what type of control it takes away from the local

128 church family. But because of the last two pastors who we felt were qualified enough but we didn't get  
129 the feedback on them and we really didn't know. People would talk and say we want this, this and this  
130 but we thought is this particular case we wanted to go in between - a different way because of the  
131 previous pastor. There were maybe a dozen people or so who are not particularly happy with our  
132 decision to let him go. They really liked him. But we knew that would happen. But it was something that  
133 really did need to be done.

134 So, one of the elders brought this to the board and asked if we would consider bringing in an intentional  
135 transitional pastor, so we had him on Skype, talked to the organization, to his boss, and I came to the  
136 point where I said I agree, let's try it. I was getting tired after a year or year-and-a-half of bringing in  
137 pastors to fill the pulpit. It took a load off me.

138 **Q: Sure. So, the congregation received updates, and I assume they would have prayer meetings –**  
139 **supporting your role...**

140 So, the congregation we would have prayer meetings to support the search committee and process.  
141 During our Wednesday prayer meeting and our Sunday morning prayer meeting before the service we  
142 were encouraged to be praying for the search committee, the process and be praying for the man that  
143 God had chosen to come to our town. So, there were prayer meetings, updates and that's about it.

144 So, it came down to the vote when most of the candidate's family came 2 weeks ago. So, they came in,  
145 and he spoke and he was a different type of speaker – I don't know what type you are, but it was neither  
146 topical nor expositional. Most of my friends are expositional and very very good and good exegetes. I  
147 grew accustomed to that. So, when our candidate came a couple of weeks ago, I thought this is  
148 different. I was a little surprised that the search committee chose the fellow they did rather than a 30-  
149 to 35-year-old. If I had been a betting man, I would have thought they would come up with a 35-year-  
150 old. He is a different kind of speaker but a very good one. I just have to get accustomed to that. He's on  
151 the learning curve to so I thought the search committee really did a fine job because they stepped out of  
152 the norm. They asked him several questions while he was here. The whole process was not just about  
153 when he speaks but he took a question-and-answer period that was recorded so everyone could hear it.  
154 He interacted well with the congregation and agreed with some of the congregation some of his lack of  
155 experience and the need to learn different things. So, is going to be a learning curve for him and a  
156 learning curve for our congregation.

157

158

159 **Question: What priorities do you have for your new pastor?**

160 Initially that was the big question for the search committee, what are the priorities that you have for  
161 him and you list them all down. In this particular case, one thing I may not have mentioned earlier was  
162 that we as Elders had already made up the list of what we needed and we wanted to see what the  
163 search committee came up with as far as priorities. For example, was preaching number one, or is  
164 outreach/evangelism? Is that number one in our church if we want to bring in more people? Because we  
165 have a lot of more senior people in hospital is visitation high on your list? So, we had a number. I don't  
166 know where preaching ended up or teaching, I forget the numbers but those were three of the big ones.  
167 Being a pastor is more than being a great speaker. And I think we found that out with our last pastor. 20  
168 or 30 families left because they just weren't happy with. He was a good speaker/presenter but when it  
169 came to evangelism, came to visitation and he failed in those areas and even one on one like you and I,  
170 they were not happy with some of the things he did. So, I mean you can see the challenges for this

171 particular search committee. This time the search committee had to try to overcome the fact that the  
172 balance between the people that wanted a new pastor and the ones that were happy with the old that  
173 we had already had.

174 **Question: Is there anything else about your search process that you would want to share that could**  
175 **benefit other churches?**

176 The two biggest ones are that I would recommend are not to be stuck at 3 or 5 on the search  
177 committee. I would go beyond the elders and choose those that they felt were qualified to be on the  
178 search committee and to expand it. I don't think it did us any harm at all to do that. That would be a  
179 major one and also if you are looking to grow your church family you have got to have people on your  
180 search committee that are filled with the Spirit, who want to serve the Lord, they want to outreach,  
181 their heart is full of the Lord. And that is the kind of people I think that you need on the search  
182 committee. Not someone who is just going through the process but has an excitement for the Lord and  
183 who wants to see, not just the church to grow, but people coming to know the Lord. That to me is  
184 instrumental.

185 **Q: Is there anything that you wanted to share by way of comparison, because you said that this was a**  
186 **very different process from previous ones?**

187 The challenges in our different search processes over the years is if you have even numbers or odd  
188 numbers on a vote and you have a candidate and the search committee has come to that point where  
189 they say we agree that we need to look at this particular man and then you come to the point where we  
190 need to make a vote. So, you have 5 people initially and may have three people for him and two people  
191 with strong opinions against, what do you do then? You need to know that in advance. If 75% of your  
192 search committee say we need to bring him in, what do you do because we ran into that problem in the  
193 past where we had strong disagreement by one of our members. She ended up being the right one. But  
194 because the majority of the search committee felt this was the ideal candidate what do you do? That  
195 was a problem we had with our last boards.

196 You need an extremely high percentage. If you had said eight on the board, let's say you have 7 - one  
197 disagreement would be okay but you would need say at least 90% to agree because what can happen is  
198 that one person who disagreed strongly, they can overrule a process. They wrote a letter. They were  
199 disappointed. Interesting enough in that case the member-at-large was the one who was right and the  
200 rest of us weren't. If I hadn't said OKAY and we brought the fella in we wouldn't have been in the mess  
201 that we were. So, some of the church people said some bad things about our elders. So, would be my  
202 recommendation – It would have been better to have 6 or 7 - to have enough Elders or leaders making  
203 the decision and drawing from the congregation and then go with a 90% vote - if you don't have it then  
204 you don't move forward.



1           **C1U1SP1**

2

3   **Question: Would you describe your hiring process for me?**

4   For us it was a long time. We started about two years ago. For us we wanted to figure out where our  
5   church was going first before we jumped into the hiring process because in the past, we have hired  
6   several different men over time and things have kind of fallen through and not worked out for us. We  
7   figured that part of that was the hiring process that we took. If we always do what we have always done  
8   then we will always get what we have always got kind of idea. So, we started with one of our elders  
9   recommended a book *The Purpose Driven Church* and he had us all read it and look at how Rick Warren  
10   does things and the whole 9 of that which was really interesting but I think it gave us a lot of ideas about  
11   what we liked and what we didn't like. Then we talked about who is our target church member. Who do  
12   we want to attract to the church and then how do we minister to that person? So, we kind of built a  
13   framework of what we wanted our church to be like someday. Then we did a profile on the pastor that  
14   could lead that type of church and how our current church members would fit into that in terms of  
15   reaching out and the Ministries that the church could have that would support that end goal. After we  
16   built that profile of what we were looking for, we did go through our regional office. We reached out to  
17   a bunch of different hiring platform type things - different colleges, seminaries, and that sort of thing.  
18   Resumes came in and we put them all in a shared spreadsheet. And when the resume came in, we all  
19   decided yes or no in terms of pursuing that guy any further. Often times it was a quick no from more  
20   than half the group and so we decline that resume right away and contacted him to let him know that  
21   we were not pursuing that any further. Any that we wanted to go forward with we would set up an  
22   interview, do references and that sort of thing and go from there. With the man that we chose we had  
23   several interviews with him. He met with some of our elders separate from our search committee group.  
24   He met with our search committee chair, one on one. Then he and his family came to visit and he  
25   preached and we did a bunch of different events that weekend because he is from quite far away. Then  
26   the church voted and we all agreed that we still recommended him after he came to visit and that sort  
27   of thing.

28   **C: You talked about when you found your candidates, you used your regional office for different**  
29   **profiles and you used different platforms. Were there any other means by which you tried to find or**  
30   **identify potential candidates?**

31   Umm, we talked about if you had – like we put it out there if anyone in the congregation had anyone  
32   they knew was a potential fit and that sort of thing. It was put out to our ministerial locally and then  
33   anyone could go on our... we had a search email just for our church so they could pass it along and  
34   resumes could be sent in there. So, we did some of it local – a friend of a friend kind of thing. That was  
35   it.

36   **C: How did you screen those initial candidates? You said some you pursued; some you wouldn't**  
37   **pursue. How did you determine your criteria for screening?**

38   As far as screening our candidates we first made a checklist of all of our must-haves and would be nices  
39   list. Each person would individually compare the resume to that list and then after that point if there  
40   were enough people that said yes, he is in line with what we are looking for - he has all of our must  
41   haves and some of our wish list items, then we would actually have him do the pastoral profile if he had  
42   not sent that already. A lot of the resumes came with that because we were looking for a pastor aligned  
43   with our denomination. If they didn't have that we have them fill that out and that gave us a little bit

44 better idea on some of the wants and must haves because you can only tell so much from the resume.  
45 Some of the resumes were a lot less than other resumes and that sort of thing. From there we did a  
46 phone interview with them as a group. One person would ask the questions but all of us were sitting  
47 there listening. Then we followed up with references and that sort of thing. It was a group consensus on  
48 everything. If anyone had like a strong reason that they did not agree with an individual that was good  
49 enough. If anyone was opposed then it was not an option to continue with that candidate.

50 **Question: How did you develop your selection process?**

51 We winged it in a lot of ways. Our Elder who brought that book *The Purpose Driven Church*, he wanted  
52 us to essentially use that as a guide for finding a pastor that was similar to Rick Warren, which most of  
53 our committee did not agree with, which was really funny. But, in terms of that target audience that we  
54 were looking for, at least half of our search committee was that target audience. So, we talked about  
55 millennials, young families and that sort of thing. Our search committee was primarily millennials, which  
56 was a really cool too because millennials are young and they have ideas that they want to share and we  
57 are very vocal about our opinions and that sort of thing. Just the way that our team developed, the  
58 Millennials were not afraid to tell the elders how they felt about the elders' opinions on Millennials or  
59 that sort of thing. So, it became a really good, cohesive group that was not afraid to challenge each  
60 other despite like power dynamics and stuff like that, which I think was helpful for us.

61 **C: What was that must have and would be nice list? Is that something that is available?**

62 I can get that for you. Every member contributed to our must have and wish list initially so we **all**  
63 brought list of things that we thought were must haves and would be nice. They were a reflection of the  
64 various people on our group and they weren't all in our job description but some of them were there.  
65 Our must have things, some of them we talked about in our job description like we were outward  
66 focused and that sort of thing, we were looking for evangelism and discipleship as primary roles, but in  
67 any pastoral job description those would be there to some extent you would hope. Once everybody  
68 contributed what they wanted we went through each item and discussed them at length and where  
69 their priority was and we picked at 3 top ones which were evangelism discipleship and... The third one  
70 was controversial and we argued back and forth over it so I'm going to drop it but those two were the  
71 big things. We wanted a man to come in to raise leaders within our church, especially for the young men  
72 who are in our church looking for that direction and that sort of thing. That was something that we  
73 wanted him to focus on. And then, to kind of mobilize us to be evangelistic in nature as a church.

74 **C: If I could get that list, it would be helpful to give me a broader picture of your process and the  
75 criteria that you used. What other influences were there in the development of your process? Were  
76 there any other factors you were considering as you developed this process?**

77 I think our church specifically has gone through a lot of pastoral turnovers, and it has been, I don't want  
78 to say traumatic because that sounds too strong a word, but it has been really hard on our church. It  
79 seems like there has been this tradition of pastors coming in - the congregation falling in love with the  
80 pastor and then all of the sudden he is like done something secret and then disappears. That has been  
81 like so hard for the church to deal with that and move on. It's also been hard to it accept someone new  
82 for fear it will end the same way and they will move on and we have just had a pattern of that. So, going  
83 into this all of the millennials who have grown up in the church that has been broken time and time  
84 again from that sort of experience, especially when there is no transparency on what happened - he has  
85 not been above reproach and what does that even mean. So, some millennials, who love transparency  
86 have been through a lot of that and I think that affected our decision in how we were going to pick  
87 somebody because we did not want to rush into anything. People wanted to take the time to fix some of

88 those problems before we hired somebody new. We did not want someone coming into the toxic  
89 atmosphere of people being angry at the elders, people were angry with the pastor. There was like two  
90 sides of the coin that where both sides were upset so I think having our intentional interim pastor there  
91 and sorting out the aftermath was super beneficial for us. Even having him available, since none of us  
92 have been on a search committee and having us sit down and telling us OKAY these are some of the  
93 steps to take, these are some things you could do, these are some questions you can ask any pastor.  
94 And him having been a pastor before could say that's not a normal question. You can't ask that. Or  
95 saying it's completely appropriate to ask xyz.

96 **C: So, some of your process was shaped by input from your transitional pastor.**

97 Definitely. I don't think we would have had a process without him. He really helped us navigate some of  
98 those – like what do we do now - we have picked what our perfect church will look like – now what?

99 **Question: What aspects of your hiring process do you think have been the most significant for your**  
100 **selection decision?**

101 I would say the interview process, both with the candidate and with his references and not doing those  
102 things as individuals. So, we did all of the reference calls as a pair. One person was asking the questions  
103 and the other person was listening in, and giving feedback and stuff but I think we heard a lot more as a  
104 team than we would have individually. We recorded everything and that was really helpful to play it  
105 back for the team so others could point out other things that were said and notice areas that we might  
106 want to check out more and follow up on that question and that sort of thing. The same was true with  
107 the interview. We did a phone interview where everybody listens and our chair asked all the questions  
108 and that sort of thing. We all scribbled our notes and shared them with each other in the room since the  
109 candidate wasn't there and then we did a video interview after that as well. The guy we chose was so  
110 genuine and transparent even just in his language that sort of thing and we were able to see even just in  
111 the video was really helpful. On the phone you can be distracted and you can't tell and all those things. I  
112 think for some of the candidates that we didn't choose there were some red flags that we got from body  
113 language or from things like that. One of the candidates was talking to us and his wife was just standing  
114 beside the computer and you could see him track and then she walked out at the end of the video and  
115 we saw her. There were some things like that that if we were not video chatting, we would not have  
116 caught that. There were some other things that once we listen to it again it was like we wondered if  
117 perhaps she was feeding him some answers it just seemed a little bit off. Just as a group we were able to  
118 determine some of those things a little easier. And, we were a big group. They were eight of us. We  
119 weren't little and it was hard to get that many people together but I think it was well worth it as we  
120 brought different gifts and perspectives to the whole process. There were two guys who were in the  
121 same life stage but the rest of us we're all in different life stages like singles, married, kids, grandmother  
122 - there was a really good mix of life stages.

123 So yes, a lot of us were millennials but some were parents, some were newlyweds, some were...it was  
124 like, a mix.

125 **C: Are there any other aspects that you think were significant in your selection decision and part of**  
126 **your process?**

127 I think at the beginning of each meeting it was also important that we refocused on specific things we  
128 were looking for in a pastor because it was really easy once we started reading through resumes and  
129 reading through that sort of thing to think oh yeah that guy sounds really good and on paper, he did  
130 sound good but he wasn't a match to the specific characteristics we were looking for. So, he might have  
131 pastored a church really well but for us he might not have pastored our church really well, he might not

132 have been a good fit for us. So that and again I would just say having our interim pastor there and do  
133 some of the background work with us as a committee and also with our church was very helpful. I think  
134 that before that work was done, I think that vote would have happened and people would not have had  
135 any faith in the committee. I think the fact that we took as long as we did because there was so much  
136 hurt in the church was helpful in like doing some of that reparative work beforehand.

137

138 **Question: How will you or how did you ultimately make your selection decision?**

139 Well, the process there were two of us that were sold on our specific candidate right away. I read his  
140 resume and just felt a genuineness in that resume. He had included pictures of his kids and all that sort  
141 of thing and all that jazz, but honestly, I just felt such a peace about him before we talked it through or  
142 any of that. There was another person on the committee that felt the exact same way. She said she felt  
143 such a peace about this candidate and I feel like he's the right choice and because we were so Pro this  
144 guy, there was another member of our committee who was intentional about playing the defensive. So,  
145 the whole way along he played the defensive and just said but what about, what about, I think that was  
146 very helpful and challenging us. Once we had the interview with him that guy on the search committee  
147 who was so like I'm going to play Devil's advocate, he was like no I wanted to hate this guy and I feel like  
148 he is who God has chosen for our church. So having the three of us all have this like peace and sense of  
149 this is the guy from God, I think that was a big part of it. But then, in that process the whole way along  
150 there were lots of things that he put forward that were like very helpful to us as a committee to figure  
151 out if he was right or not. So, there were a couple of things in the interview that he said. Like, I expect  
152 that when this gets further along that you will ask me about my financial situation or about  
153 pornography, my family – and the fact that we have six kids. He was very transparent and very honest  
154 about that. I think especially for a search committee primarily millennials, that genuineness sold us very  
155 quickly. So, I don't know if that's how we ultimately made our decision but I feel like there was that and  
156 then us extending the offer and him accepting the offer like those were all confirmation. That his house  
157 sold very quickly was confirmation. Those sorts of things. But that's not really in the decision-making but  
158 maybe more confirmation.

159 **C: So, you as a committee, when you ultimately said “we as a committee feel this is the person to**  
160 **bring their name to the elders or to the church”, however your process – what did you say, or how did**  
161 **you decide – was it a consensus or a vote?**

162 It was a very clear consensus. We had narrowed it down. I think we had five guys one night and then  
163 we narrowed it down to three in that evening. When we started, we got down to two guys and it was  
164 very clear that those were the only two that were potential options. I did not feel a peace about the one  
165 guy again you can't just go on peace and that sort of thing completely but it's genuine. So, we group  
166 discussion. We interviewed both of them more than once and it was a group consensus by the end.  
167 There were enough red flags with the one man and everybody had like... once we had chosen nobody  
168 had anything difficult to say about him. There were a couple things that we wanted to ask about but in  
169 asking about them it just gave us more peace. Asking those tough questions brought so much more  
170 clarity and answers that were encouraging and affirming rather than all divisive and like making us want  
171 to take a break and try to figure this out.

172 **C: So, then your committee interviewed the candidates and when you got down to this last person,**  
173 **your committee interviewed him again and then what? Your elders interviewed him?**

174 After our committee decided our elders interviewed him - they didn't have a formal interview. We only  
175 have two Elders right now.

176 Each of them had one or several lengthy discussions with him just about their vision for the church and  
177 his vision for the church and that sort of thing. I don't think it's like what are your theological positions,  
178 it wasn't the same kind of interview. So, they both had conversations like that with him and the chair of  
179 our committee had several conversations with him as well. And the Pastoral candidate requested some  
180 of them to talk about our community and the dynamics of our church within this context and that sort of  
181 thing. Then when he came to our church, I do not think that he expected it but our church also got to do  
182 a little bit of an interview with him. They had a Q&A time and our church was a little bit more  
183 demanding in their questions than I think any of us expected but it was really good because there had  
184 been so much mistrust in the church previously. And they asked everything.

185

186 **Question: How have you evaluated a candidate's possible fit for the position at your church?**

187 A big part of that initial list of desirable traits and must have traits and that sort of thing. I think  
188 everybody had something that they brought to the table that was like a past experience at our church  
189 that didn't go well so there were lots of things like that that we wanted to weed out. For example, we  
190 had one Pastor that didn't really deal with conflict very well, so conflict with his work team and that sort  
191 of thing and maybe did so angrily or that sort of thing. He was quick to speak on those sorts of things so  
192 in terms of another pastor we want him to be really good at managing a team. We want him to be team  
193 oriented in terms of building up other leaders and being okay taking a backseat sometimes. We have  
194 had micromanaging type pastors and that sort of thing so there has been a lot of really hard things in  
195 our past and history that have definitely influenced how we went about choosing somebody and their  
196 specific fit for our church.

197 **C: How did you evaluate that fit though?**

198 So, we asked those questions other candidate first of all and not are you an angry person but how do  
199 you deal with conflict that sort of thing. Then, with references the interviews were pretty bold in terms  
200 of that too. We asked hard questions and follow-up questions, if there were hesitations with some of  
201 them. With the guy that we chose we did ask for other references that might have a different opinion of  
202 the references and with the man that we chose all of his references said Well who else did he give and  
203 that was a very good spread of opinions. But of other candidates we got feedback like oh well he wasn't  
204 liked by everyone there were lots of people who had different opinions. So as soon as you know that  
205 there are people out there with strong conflicts or that that is a dominant opinion from some people out  
206 there through conversations with other people or past employers or that sort of thing it is a relevant  
207 conversation to have whether it has the same amount of weight as other references or not it is good to  
208 hear two sides of the story. I think especially because of our history our previous pastor, and I don't  
209 want to say anything negative about him at all, when he left there was conflict with the church and with  
210 the elders and he was hired on right away by another church and those elders I don't know if they had a  
211 conversation with the Elders of the new church or if things just got swept under the rug but there had  
212 been issues at his past church as well and we hadn't done our homework in our last hiring process so I  
213 don't know what that look like but it was definitely a missed step in our last one and that was contact his  
214 previous Church we're getting all of the information about the breakdown of relationships at his  
215 previous Church. So, dealing with that going forward there has been some extra checking.

216 **C: So, in evaluating their fit, you then asked questions of references, you asked specific questions of**  
217 **the candidate and based on their feedback, based on some of the situations you raised, it helped you**  
218 **to assess and watching hesitancy, or some of the flags that you saw.**

219 Yeah.

220 **Question: What were some of the challenges or issues as you have worked to identify and select your**  
221 **next pastor?**

222 There were some very strong opinions on our search committee, specifically from leadership in our  
223 church that much of the committee did not agree with. So, they some conflict there that we had to deal  
224 with. There was more than one time that we all left the meeting a little bit heated and we needed to  
225 deal with some of that but part of that is just that you are coming from such different worldviews that it  
226 is hard to understand where other people are coming from sometimes. And, because we had such a big  
227 team, I think that there was some extra conflict in there because our team was so big. But ultimately like  
228 I think our team was really great at the end of the day. We had to work through a lot of those  
229 relationship type issues. Even just in that we were looking for different things in a pastor. As a single  
230 person I was looking for something different than the retired grandpa in the group, that sort of thing.  
231 Even things like organizing schedules for 8 people, most of whom do not live near the church. For me  
232 the church is almost an hour commute from my house so that made it a little more challenging to deal  
233 with. In terms of the actual process, we did have a lot of resumes that came in that we were not  
234 interested in this candidate and we had agreed to a lot of our roles in terms of like our chair dealt with  
235 any that we did not want to pursue and he gently let them down and that sort of thing. There were a  
236 couple of things that we learned along the way that were like interesting, for example our chair quickly  
237 responded to one of the candidates and said oh yeah we are definitely interested, can you do this -  
238 complete the pastoral profile or whatever and as a group we had to say no we want a consensus before  
239 you start reaching out to people because there is false hope there and if there are red flags for some of  
240 us but not for you that is going to be an issue. So, we had to redefine those roles a few times. So, things  
241 like organization, everybody has jobs and lives and that sort of thing so especially for, our committee  
242 met for just over two years. That is a really long commitment for what we were anticipating. We all  
243 thought it would just be a few months thing we will get some resumes, we will pick somebody, it will be  
244 good. Because we took this journey of what we wanted his church to become and that sort of thing it  
245 took a lot longer than anyone expected. A mom got pregnant and had her baby during the process of  
246 that and her whole world has changed since we began the process. So, it was long. That was one of our  
247 biggest challenges.

248 **C: What were the different roles that you defined for your committee?**

249 Some of the roles that we identified for our committee was our chair, we had a split secretary someone  
250 took notes during the meeting and someone else type them up, and that kind of disintegrated along the  
251 way and it ended up being one person but that happens. We had a co-chair or a vice-chair. Our chair  
252 was a young dad and he did not necessarily have the time to do that roll but we wanted him to take the  
253 lead because we felt he was the best choice and that sort of thing, so our vice-chair was a stay-at-home  
254 grandma who was a little bit more able to organize things, to encourage and support the team a little bit  
255 better as a whole, aside from that we're all just kind of equal which was really nice. And an elder and a  
256 deacon and a bunch of us from different parts of the church.

257

258 **Question: Is there anything else from your process that you would want to share with other churches**  
259 **that they might benefit from what you have learned.**

260

261 I would just say that as much as it was painful that it took so long, I am really pleased that we did it the  
262 way that we did. It did take forever but we took the time to like get to know each other on a different  
263 level and be able to have that level of comfort to be able to speak openly about the different candidates

264 and our concerns. I think if we had worked through the process more quickly, we would not have had  
265 that ability to communicate well with each other and have the trust to push each other and say this is  
266 what we are feeling and be able to look more deeply into that. Our team became like this little family  
267 and I think that was super helpful and going forward because even though I didn't necessarily agree with  
268 what our chairman was putting out there we could have the conversation with why and he could see my  
269 perspective and I could see his perspective and we could meet somewhere in the middle. So, I would say  
270 to other search committees just be patient. Also, we bathed the process in prayer not only as a  
271 committee but we sent out prayer prompts every day to members of the congregation and that sort of  
272 thing whether by text or by email and having the support of the church and them just using the process  
273 we were going through a little bit better I think it was more helpful for them too. To see that we were  
274 still working and everyday getting something reminding them that we were still going through this  
275 process was helpful. Yeah.

## C1U1SP2

### **Question: Could you describe your hiring process for me?**

For us we started by looking into what our Church needed. So, we started by going through the Purpose Driven Church and tried to set out the goals that we needed to have in order to be more effective as a church and decide what changes the church needed before we were ready to hire somebody that was going to come in and help us in moving to that. We did The Purpose Driven Church to try to get us in order so that we were ready to move when we find somebody that's ready to come on board and help us move as a church. So, once we had that we picked our specific things that we definitely needed in a pastor and we picked our top three. For us, the top three were: discipleship, relevant communicator, and evangelistic. Every meeting, once we started looking at resumes, we focused on those three. We had a number; we had an entire sheet of qualities that we wanted but we ranked those three very very high. When we started looking at resumes, I don't know about the other search committee people, but I would take the resume and I would take one of those sheets and I would check off what I saw. When we did the interviews, it was the same thing. I took the sheets and checked off what I heard.

### **Q: How did you assess the qualities like that?**

I kind of had to go with what I heard. You can hear somebody's passion for something. You can also hear when somebody - oh, you ask about evangelism and they kind of stop. You have to listen for the way they say it and not just what they say. Especially with the resume. It's basically does it sound like they're evangelistic. Does it sound like... If they say something about it and if they say something about it. Basically, that was how I did it. Eventually we got to the point where we had a number of decent candidates. We had sermon samples, we had the **denomination** package from each of them and we had from most of them, a separate resume as well. We had done a lot of advertising as well outside of our **denomination** because being up here who wants to go north? So, we had six candidates who were decent in some areas. So, what we were asked to do before one meeting, was to rank them one through six in each of the three main categories. So, all of us came together with the goal of getting it down to four. And we ended up with most of us fairly well in unity and we ended up narrowing it down to three by accident. So, we went to first interviews with those three. After the first interviews we knew that one of them was not the right candidate so we graciously declined.

### **Q: How did you do your interviews?**

These interviews were all phone interviews. The second interviews were done by Skype or Zoom or something like that. The first interviews were all phone interviews. Then we were done to the two. We did second interviews with both of the two remaining candidates and we also had our regional leadership director do an interview with our committee chair with both of them and got his outside opinion. After the second interview, which was after the interview with our board chair and the XXX representative, we had a very, very long conversation at which we decided to go down to the one candidate that we got. There were a couple of questions that the search committee needed to answer but at that point we had the regional director interview him as well. After he interviewed him and gave him a glowing



41 recommendation, we knew we were on the right track. The candidates suggested we ask some  
42 tough personal questions, so we asked him about personal morality questions. So, he did that  
43 part of the interview with one of our elders. So, after that was done, we got together for a final  
44 vote. We did a final vote and then we had to organize the preach for a call. We finally got that  
45 organized which was a very extensive weekend for him and his family.

46 Q: And he was traveling?

47 Yeah, he was from Saskatchewan. At the weekend we did the barbecue with him just as a  
48 search committee and the church receptionist – just to get to know him with everybody. On the  
49 Saturday morning it was a men's breakfast with him with a question-and-answer period. Then  
50 in the afternoon there was a ladies' tea with her with another question-and-answer period and  
51 then Sunday he preached and we did a potluck. After that we did a question-and-answer period  
52 with the whole church and then Monday they probably went home and slept. The week after  
53 that we voted to accept and now, we're waiting for him to come.

54 **Good.**

55 **Question: How did you develop your search process?**

56 I have to say that our intentional interim pastor was absolutely crucial to the development of  
57 this process. In being an outside viewpoint of the church, he came in about 16 months ago so  
58 he had a fresh look plus he had been on the other side of the hiring process. So, it was very nice  
59 to be able to ask him "Hey is this an acceptable question to ask"? We have tried to follow the  
60 **denomination's** package as well as our interim's expertise. I don't really have a great answer  
61 why we did all this stuff.

62 That's fine, because the denomination's package is a complete package on what to do when  
63 you are hiring a pastor. I have that package, so I know what you are referring to.

64 **Q: Were there any particular resources that your interim pastor used?**

65 We did a church-wide survey the kind of see where the church stands and where the struggles  
66 were. It wasn't quite as effective as we had hoped but it was very good and there were some  
67 very interesting statistics there. It gave us some insight into what more we needed. Where the  
68 hunger was for our church. Other than that, our interim pastor interviewed at least 50% of the  
69 congregation personally - whether it was couples together or singles to try to get a lay of how  
70 everything was when he first got there. After that he tried to work on preaching and helping  
71 people get past whatever hurts were left over.

72

73 **Sure...**

74 **Question: What elements of your search process do you think were the most significant for  
75 your selection decision, especially now as you are looking back?**

76 I think taking the time to try and recognize what our church needs and trying to figure out how  
77 to start working on that before a new pastor comes in. I think that getting our focus on a small

78 amount of very specific things you are looking for. I think that is crucial because then you can  
79 prioritize. I think, as far as crucial, our interim pastor has been crucial to this whole thing -  
80 having someone who has been on the other side of the hiring process. He has been able to be a  
81 coach and consultant.

82 **Any other aspects?**

83 Part of getting focused was working through the Purpose Driven Church. I think that's the  
84 crucial things.

85 **Question: So, you described your process, how did you ultimately make your selection**  
86 **decision? What were the most important factors as you were narrowing this down and how**  
87 **did you actually decide?**

88 Well, when we started and we came down to the three that we actually interviewed - we had  
89 the one candidate and you could tell his passion was all about discipleship. He cared about  
90 people outside of the church but his passion was discipleship. We had another candidate who  
91 was all about the people outside of the church. Then we had another candidate who was kind  
92 of an even mix of all three. At least on paper. When we actually interviewed them, we could tell  
93 that the one who was kind of a mix of all of them wasn't our guy. The other two they were  
94 passionate - they were ready to go. I'm sorry, what was the specific question again?

95 **Q: How did you ultimately make your decision – any factors from your perspective that**  
96 **brought it to completion.**

97 Ok. with the last two candidates, we had the evangelism guy and the discipleship guy. The  
98 biggest difference between them that I saw was that with one candidate there was something  
99 in his voice or something in his nature that made me consider is he trying to hide something?  
100 And the other guy, the discipleship guy was just "here it is". The biggest thing was, after the  
101 second interview and the references and such were completed, there was the question about  
102 whether the evangelism guy was hiding something. It kept getting more and more obvious, at  
103 least for me. So, I was willing to decline his application. That led us to the discipleship guy. The  
104 more we talked to him, the more he was honest, to the point where, at the end of the second  
105 interview actually he almost scolded us for not asking some of the deep personal questions. So,  
106 we actually had one of our search committee members call him specifically with some of the  
107 questions that he had mentioned and some of the other ones that we decided to throw at him  
108 and you could tell that he was a straight shooter. So, that and his heart for discipleship, which  
109 our Church really needs right now were the big factors. He is definitely a relevant  
110 communicator. And, he is definitely discipleship. He currently works at a Christian College so  
111 evangelism is not something he is doing as much of but, but the rest of the search committee  
112 all agreed that he could reach people.

113 **Q: In making your decision, did anything change from when you started your process, and**  
114 **your expectations and what you were thinking to when you finally concluded and made your**  
115 **decision – were there any changes, or surprises?**

116 When we started the search committee, we had a different Elder who was on the committee  
117 but he already had too much of a workload so the other Elder who would just come on to the  
118 committee was just retiring and he wanted to be there so they switched early on in the process.  
119 He was the one who brought in The Purpose Driven Church. I was expecting to just deal with  
120 here's what we want and let's go to work. He put the brakes on that, which I admit I wasn't  
121 exactly happy with it first, because I just wanted to get going. That was a big surprise for me  
122 and realizing what that meant and why we needed to do that as going through the book was  
123 huge. It turned out to be a very important thing to do. That and our interim pastor being there  
124 – I wasn't expecting him to really be that involved. He was supposed to come, get in touch with  
125 our church and help our people heal and move on. I thought we were going to be a separate  
126 entity but he really stepped in and helped us narrow our focus. So, he helped us shape our  
127 process and ultimately make our decision.

128

129 **Question: How did you evaluate the candidates fit for the position at your church?**

130 That's a really good question. Well, part of what we did was we evaluated what did not go right  
131 with our last pastor. There were some questions about honesty. There were some other  
132 questions as well and in talking with our candidate you could tell, it was just in his nature, that  
133 those were not going to be issues. So, that was a really big thing. Another thing was that we  
134 had some young people who had gone through that College and the daughter of one of our  
135 search committee members was there at the time. A former youth pastor of ours tried to  
136 model his mentorship in our church because of him. So, we had a number of people weigh in,  
137 only because they knew him. He reached out to some people from our church to ask about us  
138 and whether he should apply. So, our former youth pastor weighed in too and said it was  
139 absolutely a good fit. Other than that, it was basically the feeling in the interview. You can kind  
140 of get a feeling for what your church needs by being there and actually trying to listen to the  
141 people. And, at the end of the day we were a pretty good cross section of the church as a  
142 search committee. We had a couple of older people – we don't have many middle-aged people  
143 in our church, so we had the one middle -aged person and a number of us younger people – so  
144 we kind of had a cross section. So, as we talked, you could tell that each person could identify,  
145 so, again it was kind of just a feeling. That was the best we could do with the short-term  
146 interactions.

147 **Q: So, with the different age demographics on your search committee, did the different**  
148 **groups, or persons on your committee have different priorities or expectations that were**  
149 **coming through in the process?**

150 For the most part we were all in agreement. Each of us have our own passions so there were  
151 some who wanted to put more emphasis on teaching. Someone had more of an emphasis on  
152 discipleship. We had our priorities weighted differently but we all had the same priorities.

153 **Question: What were some of the challenges or issues that you had to work through in your**  
154 **process?**

155 Well, when we started, we had a very outdated mission statement, purpose statement and all  
156 of that. That was one thing we had to get set before we found a new pastor so we could say this  
157 is what we expect and this is what we are looking for. If this was not a priority for a candidate  
158 then maybe they aren't the right fit. It was a big challenge to get these statements worded right  
159 because if you change just the slightest thing and put more emphasis in one area rather than  
160 where it should be. That was definitely a challenge. At the end of the process, we had one  
161 individual that wanted a different preaching style and it became very energetic conversation a  
162 number of times trying to all voice our opinions and get our points across. Obviously, you have  
163 to do it with respect but it was definitely a challenge coming down to the end of it. At the last  
164 part coming to the voting time, for me it was like do I pull the trigger now? Is this going to be  
165 the right choice? Because, at the end of the day it's on us for choosing whether to bring them. I  
166 know that the last decision is the church's but it is a lot of responsibility.

167 **Q: You said earlier in our conversation that you were kind of “let’s go. Let’s get at it” ... so talk**  
168 **to me about challenges that those sorts of things would bring – especially when your process**  
169 **changed and shifted.**

170 I was probably the only one who was that fired up and wanting to get going. There was a  
171 question going around the church about the leadership at that time too so I wanted to just get  
172 moving and felt like leadership was slowing us down. At the end of the day, I really appreciate  
173 what was done and I really appreciate that I needed to slow down.

174 **At the start it was a little different...**

175 Yeah. Once we actually got into the Purpose Driven Church and we started talking about doing  
176 the purpose statement and the mission statement, then I was doing something and I was  
177 jumping in with both feet with that – writing it out and asking questions – what about that?  
178 After all of that was moving along then our interim pastor came in and we did a church survey,  
179 so after that I was always doing something. So, it wasn't too bad. It was kind of hard to explain  
180 to the church why it is taking so long, which was also a challenge too which was communication  
181 with the church. At one point, you want to tell them everything but you are also dealing with  
182 people's lives so if the wrong person called the boss to talk and they didn't know you were  
183 looking, that could cause problems. It was challenging to know just how much to say, especially  
184 when people are asking. In November 2019 it would have been three years without a lead  
185 pastor. We have had eight months of just Pulpit filling, and we've had an interim pastor and  
186 now the intentional interim pastor.

187 **Q: So, this is your second interim?**

188 Yeah.

189 **Q: So, when you think about some of the different conflicts or conflicting priorities in your**  
190 **process – how did you overcome that?**

191 When we had conflicting opinions and such we always tried to work for a consensus. When it  
192 came down to the end because we had a seven-person search committee. It was six of us on  
193 one side and the other one wasn't against bringing this person but was wondering if we were

194 settling, because their preference was for a different preaching style. The person expressed  
195 concern that it was not relevant communication while the rest of the committee indicated it  
196 was more about preaching style. At the end of the day, we all agreed and it was a unanimous  
197 decision to invite this candidate. So, there were a lot of conversations to deal with this and  
198 other matters. You say this – but we have this. Not exactly the same, but. If we are looking for  
199 this preacher, then we need to get this preacher. Unfortunately, that’s not an option.

200

201 **Question: Is there anything as a result of your process or that you have learned along the way**  
202 **that you would want to share with other churches who are going through their own search**  
203 **process?**

204 Absolutely. The biggest help for us was having a pastor that didn't have any say, that you could  
205 bounce a question off to make sure what we ask is acceptable of someone, or to have an  
206 outside source. I think for the second is quite simply set your focus on a small group of things  
207 that are absolutely mandatory and then kind of widen the profile at the bottom with things that  
208 really are should-haves or really neat and prioritize them. I think the biggest one for sure  
209 though is having the pastor doesn’t have a say or “dog in the hunt” that is just willing to answer  
210 the questions. It’s been absolutely huge.

## 1 C2U2BP1A&B

2 **Question: So, what is your board's role in the pastoral hiring process?**

3 Our role is to follow our constitution as it's laid out which essentially spells out that we are to appoint  
4 active members into the role of pastoral search committee with representation of the board. So further  
5 to that, the way we've done that or attempted to do that, is to choose individuals that not only we  
6 believe possess the gifts to do the job but also reflects the cultural makeup of the church.

7 **Q: When you say gifts to do the job, what priorities in terms of gift or skill set are you looking for, for  
8 these members?**

9 We looked at who had been on it in the past. So that type of experience. We wanted a few individuals  
10 who had specifically a biblical educational background. We looked at not only a board representative  
11 but also past board members that had, we felt, had a really good grasp on where the church was at, the  
12 challenges of the church, the culture of the church. So those individuals who had kind of served in that  
13 capacity in an area of leadership. Anything further than that we discussed?

14 I know that we also discuss their involvement in the church. Right? I know it's one of the pointers that  
15 we have also included in the church. Their commitment in the church and I know some/ most of them  
16 have leadership background as well.

17 A few of them were previous board members so just knowing how they're wired, how thorough they  
18 are. We specifically were looking and asking ourselves who would we want to chair the committee  
19 which Wally is the one. Wally served on the board for a number of years. He was not our board  
20 representative. He's not on the board now but knowing his gifting, his background.

21 **Q: What other aspects does the board have in terms of the board's role? Following your constitution  
22 but what other aspects within the whole hiring process does the board have?**

23 Within the hiring process? Accurately defining a job description.

24 **Q: Ok so the board put that together.**

25 I think, I guess the way I look at it, it is an opportunity to pause and reflect on what was working as far as  
26 our corporate structure essentially. In other words, our job description might have some slight changes  
27 based on what was working/what was not. In our case we had Pastor XXX kind of switch to an  
28 executive role. Individual before was more of an administrator and Pastor XXX stepped into that role  
29 then more to an executive role so that we could get somebody who was more focused on the preaching  
30 and the teaching and not necessarily as much in the managing of the staff. So, the way it's supposed to  
31 work for us that once the committee has done the leg work, they have received all the different  
32 applicants, they get down to a short list. They prayerfully consider and interview and then they make a  
33 recommendation.

34 So that's the stage we're at right now. So, the committee has made a recommendation to us. So, our  
35 role changes at that point. We basically provide the guide lines. We make recommendations as far as  
36 who to talk to and the organizations where to post and we have those kinds of conversations. But from  
37 that perspective we are fairly hands off. That's somewhat intentional to let them do their job and we're  
38 not necessarily...we're ultimately choosing but we're not the ones that are controlling the whole  
39 process.

40 So now they make a recommendation to us. At that stage we meet with the...or we did already meet  
41 with the committee and to find their rationale and strengths and weaknesses. Ask all our questions. Try  
42 to get us up to the same point of understanding that they have. And then as the board chair, I meet with  
43 the individual in this case by phone just due to distance. Once I've had that conversation, we've already  
44 agreed that we will bring that individual in for in person meetings. So, we'll make arrangements for him  
45 to come on a weekend, meet with the ministry team, meet with the board. And then we prayerfully seek  
46 if that is what we believe God has in store. After that, if we believe that that is where God is leading us,  
47 we vote. Once we vote, then we introduce that to the congregation. He preaches for a call. Now in that I  
48 believe we have a process for keeping the congregation informed.

49 **Q: The board keeps the congregation informed or is it kind of a joint effort?**

50 The committee keeps them informed. We set up the...there's a saying that "what a denomination isn't  
51 up on, they're down on". I'm not so sure we did this as well as I would have liked. But what we stated to  
52 the committee was we wanted a monthly update to the congregation. And if there's not a lot to update  
53 then do it by bulletin. If there's specific information they can give, even in process, then they do it  
54 before the congregation.

55 Always keep the information open even to the board level. Welcome members to ask questions, any  
56 questions

57 And recommend names.

58 **Q: So then after the board votes and you get an affirmative, then you schedule a weekend for other**  
59 **meetings. So, at that point then the board takes over the process or does the search committee steer**  
60 **somehow?**

61 No, I would say the search committee is pretty much done their job unless the individual is not accepted  
62 for whatever reason or he rejects, we don't have a meeting of the minds. Then we send them back to  
63 the drawing board.

64 **Q: So, then you've come to a meeting of the minds and you schedule a weekend where he meets with**  
65 **the various ministry team and pastors and board and such. After that, so the board is scheduling those**  
66 **activities then. What happens after that? Does this potential to preach for a call happen that same**  
67 **weekend or does he come back?**

68 No, the, I don't know if it's, we probably would follow the same process regardless of. (Interruption to  
69 check on background noise of drum kit) We will make time in between more just process time for us, for  
70 everyone "go away, how do you feel about that? Pray about it". The intention would be to bring the  
71 entire family back, wife, kids and we would really welcome them to the congregation. Make more in-  
72 depth opportunity for them to meet with the leadership, not just the board but more in-depth. It's not  
73 enough for them to come and preach. People need to get to know them so everything that we can do to  
74 help the congregation that the people, the family, the depth of maturity and so we'll have to create the  
75 right opportunities for people to do that. And then the preaching for the call, as much as that is  
76 important because they're going to primarily the preaching pastor, we want to, I know for me being at  
77 the stage that we are, what I am most appreciating about the particular individual and what I'm looking  
78 for is the spiritual maturity. Somehow as much as possible we want to be able to have the congregation  
79 tap into that understanding as well. And that will only be by having opportunities in small group settings  
80 or maybe in a larger group kind of get to know and ask questions and things of that nature.

81 I think there is a much deeper work that needs to be done by the board which I don't know if this is  
82 specifically what you're covering but I feel it's just as important from a process perspective. There are  
83 the functions that we play and those are very, you know as I said our constitution that we need to  
84 follow? Then there's just a certain amount of instinct and wisdom that we kind of try to walk with. I  
85 believe what the board needs to do and I was chair when we brought our previous Pastor aboard, the  
86 same year, and I'm chair this year. I believe God chose me for that because we went through a certain  
87 process last time and I want to do that process better because I've looked at what we did well and what  
88 we did not do well. So, this time around, I'm being much more sensitive to the concept of the  
89 responsibility of the board and in this case the executive pastor to prepare the staff for a new lead  
90 pastor. So, I believe there's a delicate process that has to happen in order to do that well. They don't get  
91 to choose their new boss, the new pastor, but they have input and we want their input because we trust  
92 their judgement.

93 We're a little bit different being a larger church that we have a very broad staff and that brings about a  
94 very different responsibility. So, I have put a lot of thought into this and I've mentioned a bit, I think the  
95 board agrees. At the size that we're at, if we had a pastor come in and he was here for ten years, it's not  
96 enough. And yet there's a lot of pastors don't even stay that long. But it's not enough when you have a  
97 staff of this size that we are, there are changes that happen. It takes a pastor a good year or two to  
98 really be integrated into the culture of the church and knowing the people and building momentum in  
99 ministry. But there's also a change of strengths and weaknesses. From a leader perspective you start to  
100 think, "geez I've really, as a leader...if I come into an organization this is my strength, I want somebody  
101 who complements me on my weaknesses". And so, we do need to give some element of flexibility, not  
102 short term but more mid-term, that a leader can build his team.

103 But a church of our size, every time we lose a pastor, we lose some beloved sheep who loves that  
104 pastor. So, there's this group pattern that happens and when pastors start to shuffle, because not  
105 everyone is here for all the reasons we would like to think that they're here, right? Sometimes they're  
106 connected to just you know, "Pastor \_\_\_ I just love him. I love his preaching. When Pastor \_\_\_'s gone I  
107 feel unsettled, disconnected." So that's not the way it's supposed to be but that's often the way it is. So,  
108 I believe we need a pastor that has a shelf life, an opportunity to be here for at least a long run. And not  
109 to go through this pattern of growth and downward and then growth. Let's attempt to do our best. God  
110 could call someone and if he calls them here for five years, so be it. But that's not necessarily what I was  
111 hoping and praying for. So, I was hoping we would have somebody that would have that long term  
112 perspective and from an age perspective, that had the energy to put in the ten plus years. But in doing  
113 that, our job is to prepare the ministry team to support a new pastor. But deeper than that.

114 As we look for a pastor, we want to affirm that he is called to the ministry. Secondly, we want to affirm  
115 that he is called to this ministry. Just because he is a called minister does not mean he is our called  
116 minister. But God sometimes shuffles his foot soldiers and if, in the process, that some of our people  
117 who are beloved and who have been here for a long time, God could shuffle them. I want to, in some  
118 way, allow in the next year or two after somebody comes, to somehow reaffirm their calling. Even  
119 though they've been here maybe ten or fifteen years some of our people. Reaffirm their calling that  
120 they are here for such a time as this to serve under this leader. That's what I'm after. That is what I am  
121 striving for. And the reason because I think it is a biblical process. It removes the sticky fingers that  
122 sometimes people naturally get, say "this is my job". And pastors are people too with normal human  
123 emotions and attachments. But they are to be separated for the work of the Lord, for the calling of the  
124 Lord wherever God should go and if God plants them, they should bloom. And if we could reaffirm their  
125 calling and, in their heart, inspire that this is a man I want to serve under and that man saying this is a  
126 team that I so choose, I think that we can inspire and ignite a deeper level of commitment. So, I believe



127 that process is very much secondary to finding a right man but preparing the field for the farmer to  
128 come and to plant and harvest, I believe that is our responsibility.

129 **Question: That's good. A lot of what you've shared already, you've touched on a couple of the pieces**  
130 **so the questions may seem like "oh I think I answered that" so I'll try to clarify a couple of specific**  
131 **pieces. As you've described your pastoral search process, but are there any factors that you consider**  
132 **to be, aside from what you've already shared, or criteria that you think, "yeah this is really**  
133 **important"? You gave me this piece of preparing the rest of the pastoral staff which is a**  
134 **significant...that's good because I've never had anyone comment on that before and I think it's**  
135 **important. But are there any other factors or criteria in the context of your process that you wanted**  
136 **to, in giving instruction to your committee or that you as a board would want to be cognizant of that**  
137 **you wanted to pass on?**

138 You have any thoughts?

139 Well, I know prior to or during the selection of our committee we had criteria, exactly what we were  
140 looking for or at least some of it

141 Congregational survey

142 Yup we did that and also, we based it also on some inputs we had opportunity to get also inputs from  
143 the board, from the elders, as well as yeah, you're right, from the survey we conducted. And so, from  
144 that we gather those characteristics and we sort of put them all together and submitted it to the search  
145 committee.

146 **Q: How did you do...how did you sift through those sorts of documents or materials to discern needs**  
147 **and wants? Usually, you get both but how did you kind of make a determination of "here's our top**  
148 **ten" or whatever that would be?**

149 I don't know if necessarily we decided needs or wants. You try to get the congregation to participate.  
150 They participate, they have ownership. And if there's any costs associated with whatever the church is  
151 deciding, when a board makes a decision, it does not involve the congregation. You have a little bit  
152 harder time getting things paid for. When the congregation affirms this is what we want, this is what  
153 we're going to do, we know the money is involved in it, then they're committing to pay for it. So, we  
154 want the buy in. They walk with us a lot better when they buy in. So, needs and wants, it was, the survey  
155 was just to give an understanding and have them participate in the things that we, outside of what we  
156 thought, we wanted to know what did they think was important? So, they had said to tell us what  
157 was...and that just got sent to the committee.

158 But to answer your question a little bit deeper, I think as far as the what factors, I think that every  
159 church has its different culture and even different mission and vision and that's something we're  
160 working through, a new mission and vision for ourselves, a candidate must be able to have a passion,  
161 not just a willingness but a passion for the tip of the spear of what the church is or the culture of the  
162 church. So, for us we're extremely multicultural. Seventy odd cultures are represented here. So, for  
163 somebody to come who has ministered solely in a nice white neighbourhood, but in their mind just  
164 recognize "yeah Church of God is all nations"! It's not enough. They have to have had some experience  
165 or passion or something to demonstrate their love for multicultural. Thankfully in this particular case  
166 this gentleman has four kids that are all adopted from different nations and so he's very visible. In fact, I  
167 would say is part and parcel for what has prepared him for perhaps this calling because it's what he  
168 desires more to see in the church.

169 Second to that is the concept of church planting, site planting. That is a part of our culture that is  
170 changing and growing deeper and deeper. We are not looking for and I recognize this might be different  
171 for many churches. We are not looking for someone to come and create a brand-new vision for us. We  
172 are not leaderless. If we needed to sustain the leadership for another year as we went and searched for  
173 the right man, we would not pause our ministry. We would not wait upon that person. We will build the  
174 church, we will plant sites, we will evaluate and re-evaluate, we will push the agenda forward because  
175 praise God we have the people here to do it. We have the passion to do it. We have the commitment to  
176 do it. That is a good sign of a healthy church when a leader/pastor leaves. That although there is a hole  
177 left of the person that we love, there's not a hole in the ministry team because we have all, and there  
178 are so many people come along side that vision, that we are all sustained at that vision.

179 So, we intentionally stated that we will not wait. We will work on our mission, we will work on our vision  
180 and the priorities of the church and we are looking for someone to come, look at that, and find that  
181 attractive. Yes, put their thumbprint on it. It's not inflexible. It will remain flexible. So yes, we are looking  
182 for someone to mold and shape it, change it a degree or two but it will not be a 180. It won't be because  
183 that's not why they're coming. It's not what's going to attract them. So, we are not a church that is  
184 without a vision so from that perspective we can clearly define the character, the experience of the  
185 individual we're looking for.

186 **Q: Sure. Yeah, that's good. Just to go back on one point in your assembling of your search committee,**  
187 **one of the comments you made was just a Biblical educational background. Can you flesh that a little?**  
188 **What particularly? Why were you looking for that particular?**

189 I leave it to our Board Chair. You know I ask when Our Board Chair called me, I told my wife, I said, "I  
190 wonder why our Board Chair wants me to be there because really, but now I know why I am here. I'm  
191 really here just to back up our Board Chair. He screws up, then I'm going to say then. But what are the  
192 chances that he's going to screw up? He knows everything. I'm like pretty new but I'm learning from this  
193 guy. So, I'm just going to be his back up.

194 Well feel free

195 Yeah, just put my input. He's covering everything.

196 **Yes, and the beauty of it and the reason I want to be able to address two board people is that each of**  
197 **you will bring potentially different backgrounds, different thoughts to the process which ultimately**  
198 **will give shape to as the whole board will work together.**

199 Yes, he is our vice chair and I asked him to serve in that because he is a very soft, gentle man. I am more  
200 business. Compassionate but I'm more kind of straight to the point and so I appreciate, you know, our  
201 Vice-Chair will kind of take the edge off me if it needs to be. But we complement each other quite well.  
202 So, a perfect example is myself. I come from a business background. I don't have a Biblical education. So,  
203 I've not gone to Bible school. There's much deeper theological questions and if I were to sit, and you  
204 don't come with a biblical education?

205 So, if we were the ones who were choosing a pastor, I think we would miss some deep theological  
206 questions that either we couldn't answer adequately or we would not be asking adequately. So, we  
207 wanted to be sure that somebody of a similar education background to the individual could ask those  
208 questions and answer those questions. And that was critical to know that theologically we have people  
209 who are very discerning that way.

210 **Q: No, that's good. That's fair. So back to your process. After you've gone through and you've had**  
211 **them come then preach for a call, because we went from there off to what happens? What's the**  
212 **board's role as you get into that weekend and through that weekend?**

213 So, when they come to preach for a call, at that stage, we have done all the kind of leg work, the get-to-  
214 know-you session. We, essentially the church, will vote. I think the vote, if I'm remembering correctly,  
215 it's literally right after. Those particular people would probably, after that, would go home. We'd put  
216 them on a plane in this case. We'd tally up the vote and again, following the constitution there's a  
217 certain percentage required. I'd have to look it up. It's probably about 75 or 80 percent. Something of  
218 that nature. And if we have obtained that percentage then we would, I suppose I would call them up  
219 and say, "here's the vote. We'd love you to come." But it is a two-way street. This is not someone saying  
220 "pick me! Pick me!" You know if...you know this is a man and as I mentioned before, spiritual maturity. It  
221 requires a real sensitivity to know that God is calling you to a particular place. So, we are expecting and  
222 believing that he and his wife and his kids are evaluating Morning star as their church home as their  
223 calling, their community. When our church affirms and God affirms in his own heart and mind and spirit,  
224 and through his family's affirmation, they accept. Then we basically give them a more formal offer. More  
225 from a business perspective, salary compensation and how everything works and we work on a timing in  
226 order to bring them. Can't wait for that to happen.

227 **Q: That's right. You bring your business piece in. Way to go. So, as you developed the job description,**  
228 **you said you took time to pause and reflect on corporate structure, on needs of the church and kind of**  
229 **where you're at as a church. Now that was predominately then the board that brought, that put**  
230 **together this job description. Were there any other factors that you were considering as you were**  
231 **putting that together?**

232 The ministry team participates in that. The executive pastor too.

233 **Oh ok. Sure.**

234 The executive pastor is instrumental in this whole process. He and I talk frequently regarding it. We're in  
235 agreement, in unison on it. We don't, neither one of us acts independent of one another. I'm not saying  
236 we can't, we just don't.

237 **Question: Ok. Good. So, the predominate role then of your church community throughout the whole**  
238 **process is what?**

239 Their role primarily is to pray regarding it. The congregation wants, well I should say they do have  
240 opportunity in the beginning to recommend individuals to serve on the committee. So, individuals, if I'm  
241 remembering correctly, I think we took recommendations from the congregation, from the ministry  
242 team, and then from who we thought and those were the core people that we chose to put together.  
243 So, they participate in the choosing and then they participate in the praying.

244 Let me say this. I spent a long time in the idea of preparing the field from a ministry team perspective.  
245 That could be just as important in preparing the field from a congregation perspective as well. It's not  
246 the concern that I have nor do I believe the board has. But if there are some hot issues or tender issues,  
247 then that would be something I would want to be working on in preparation for our pastor to come. So,  
248 you could need to do both. You could need to do one and not the other. I'm more sensitive of the one  
249 because of the size of our staffing because I felt that we didn't do it as well as we could have and I want  
250 a better buy in of the entire staffing process. But congregationally that could be very vital as well.

251 So, I think the congregation has a responsibility as well that we the leadership are talking about we're  
252 pushing on, we're pushing forward. And that can't, that doesn't happen by us. I mean we might blow  
253 the trumpet to lead the charge but you know, if you're leading and no one's following then all you're  
254 doing is going for a walk. So, the congregation must respond not only in prayer but also in service and in  
255 giving. So, they must keep the church going and moving forward in the meantime.

256 **Q: Within the context of the congregation, has the board taken...how to phrase it...have you sought to**  
257 **instruct and inform your congregation from a biblical perspective in terms of what you're asking them**  
258 **to participate in when it comes to a vote**

259 You know what, I think that's a good question. You know when the vote comes, I think that it is going to  
260 be a reflection of "we trust our leaders who have brought this person to us". And I think you would find  
261 that differently for different churches or even seasons of a church because I think it has a lot to do with  
262 the trust that the congregation has in the board. And there are seasons where we've had less trust and  
263 more trust. So by and large the people here largely trust the leadership and something would have to go  
264 very wrong for that person not to be affirmed. There would have to be a pretty significant disconnect.

265 However, we are asking the people to not just affirm the board's decision. We are asking the people to  
266 follow this man. And so, we are expecting that in their vote, that they are affirming to be paying his  
267 salary, to following his lead, to be praying for him, to embrace him, embrace his kids, embrace his wife,  
268 and so they have a significant part to play in that. So, there's in theory and there's in the real practical.  
269 The real practical is by and large, not entirely but by and large they will vote mostly in affirmation. But  
270 there are some that will be very, really seek to be spirit led outside of the recommendation and they will  
271 pray very fervently and they will seek to get to know the man and the family and they will vote as God is  
272 leading. We're happy for...I'm happy for either. In fact, the more involved in the process, the healthier  
273 the process is.

274 **That's why I asked whether there's some intentional way that the board has been encouraging even**  
275 **within the pastoral leadership and the teaching that goes on so that you're saying when they vote,**  
276 **they're voting to financially support them, to affirm them, to be behind them. Do they understand the**  
277 **scope of what...?**

278 That likely will be part of the presentation of the individual to say this is what we're asking. Yes, you're  
279 going to hear him preach and you're going to envision him on a regular basis but much deeper than that.

280 **Question: What priorities do you have for a new pastor? I mean you worked on your job description**  
281 **so you've got this broad piece but do you have some priorities for this new pastor when he starts?**

282 Priorities as in hiring these are our priorities or now you've been hired, these are the things that we  
283 want you to jump on first?

284 **Q: Priorities in terms of their function, once they've come aboard**

285 What comes to mind when you hear that?

286 You know one thing that I've, that I love about our church is not only that we are multicultural but we  
287 are so focused and dug in to our leadership and you can see that throughout the whole activities and  
288 the training that we're doing in this church and you know it's probably something that we, that is the  
289 secondary priority I think is...one thing that I'm hearing is that he has to be a people pastor. Because  
290 that's pretty much who we are. We are a multicultural church and we really need someone that is not  
291 only good in his preaching but really attached to the people. And I think leadership is something that I  
292 would really think is also...

293 Leadership development

294 Leadership development is one of our passions and our Board Chair mentioned it, is really our site  
295 church plantings and we really need a pastor who is aligned with our vision and our mission in this  
296 church. And I think that's pretty much what we really want right? Aside from...

297 I think I would answer that as if he was asking me. So, if he to the board "what are my priorities? Where  
298 do you want me to start?" So, the two most important things to me are, first of all, we have always had  
299 great preaching. I believe there are a lot of people that are here because of the faithful preaching of  
300 God's word. And so, I would want to affirm that his preaching and presentation of the gospel as  
301 faithfulness, that he is fearless in it and that he makes every effort to make that a priority for the people.  
302 Because that will quickly win the hearts or lose the hearts.

303 Second to that we are a church of over 800 and actually much larger than that because that's 800 on a  
304 Sunday, people come in everyday right. So, he just needs to take time to submerge himself in the people  
305 and getting to know the people and getting to know the strengths and the weaknesses.

306 But let's assume for the moment that he comes and he's preaching and he's right on track and he's  
307 working with the people. We have church goals. And I would say for him to understand which those  
308 major goals are, what are the things that we're working on the next 5 to 7 years. Those are the areas  
309 that I would want him to continue to affirm and work on. And those are our multi-site model, our being  
310 as a church more multi-generational in all elements of ministry. We are focusing on a greater amount of,  
311 and this might not be him focusing on but he might need to have some oversight with it; we want better  
312 technology to be able to connect, train, educate, and communicate with our people. We recognize that  
313 there is a threat financially, that we have been seeing a downtrend from a giving perspective. So, we  
314 believe there is a need to address and focus on the biblical calling to give, the model for giving and  
315 supporting the ministries that God has put before us.

316 So, we would work on those goals that I've just said of our literally fresh this week I've spent time with  
317 the ministry team to say these are the things we've come up with, these are the most pressing, big  
318 picture issues, much that goes into that. So those are the things that I'd want him to start, wrap his head  
319 around. The discipleship model and just being able to have a people pathway for discipleship and  
320 growth. We talked about people growing from an infant perspective to an independent, adult, parenting  
321 perspective. So dependent, independent, interdependent model that we want people to grow through  
322 that model so that they can be mutually a part of the church and bringing people to the church and  
323 supporting the church and active in the church. That requires growth so he'll definitely be part of that,  
324 the oversight of how that is going.

325 **Q: So final question. Do you have any final comments or things that you might like to share about**  
326 **your process or things that you might have learned along the way?**

327 One thing I've learned along the way is and one thing that I...I have to mention actually that this whole  
328 search committee, one thing that I really love about it was we started by asking our people. As I  
329 remember right? We had that sort of questionnaire we asked them what do they want for a new senior  
330 pastor. And then from there and I think that's where we as a board we sort of dive in and really see  
331 where really is the heart of our people. And so, one thing that I really, that is very positive to me is how  
332 the way we conduct ourselves as a board as leadership with regards to the importance of our people.  
333 And I think that really came out to me as very positive. And then one thing that I noticed in any of our  
334 small gathering or small groups, we always make sure that at some point we impart that sort of patience  
335 in waiting for the right pastor, for the right senior pastor to our people. And I see that in our small  
336 groups and our sites and even during our leadership trainings that we always sort of impart that

337 prayerfully to our people that we need to be patient in the Lord's calling for giving us the right senior  
338 pastor. So, for me I think that is something I am very happy with and also how the board, and also with  
339 regards to how the board handles that process of searching for the senior pastor.

340 **C: Good thank you.**

341 I probably would say as our church goes through this process what is key, or has been key for us is a.  
342 appointing somebody within the staffing that is that point person in the short term to ensure that work  
343 is going forward. In this case it's been Pastor Dennis. And we've been blessed that he is very very  
344 capable that way. But from a congregation perspective, what is really key is that there is a capable,  
345 competent, engaging person at the pulpit and the more regular and consistent that person can be, the  
346 better the congregation responds. You have the lifeblood of the church that is going nowhere. They will  
347 go through thick and thin. They will go through hard times. But then you have some that are a bit of the  
348 holdouts. They're not rooted. They're on the peripheral. Well, we need those people and we want them  
349 to grow roots. So, when we, in this whole process, we've had one Pastor who has been here for six  
350 months maybe?

351 About that yeah

352 And while he was here preaching, although his preaching style was different, there was a peace among  
353 us. There was a confidence among people and there was a stabilizing of the church. Now he wasn't here  
354 through the week. He basically, he drove in Saturday night, stayed over, came and preached, and left  
355 but that type of...the character of the person that is there as the face on a Sunday morning, a man of  
356 integrity, a man of faithful preaching, a person this is engaging and one that's not putting you to sleep in  
357 the message but engaging you. That's what the church needs to go from here to here. He unfortunately  
358 could no longer continue due to some health concerns of his wife so we've been kind of filling the gap  
359 and now it's looking like we have something on the horizon. To me those are two key things. Who's at  
360 the helm of the day to day operational and is there commitment to kind of push forward the agenda?  
361 And I think the ministry team and the board is been equally committed to do so but the face for the  
362 congregation, that faithful preaching. And for a church our size, very few pastors can come in here and  
363 fit the preaching of such a large congregation and be engaging so many people. Everyone has different  
364 learning styles or attention so they really have to be top notch. We, I don't know about you but I hear it  
365 afterwards you know when somebody's come and they were just not...you know? Like they might have  
366 been bang on scripturally and they could have been very very correct theologically and people slept  
367 through it. So, presenting, engaging, inviting and the Pastor would finish and he would say a few closing  
368 words and he'd make a bee-line to the back to catch people as they're walking out. And he'd be there to  
369 greet people as they would leave. He was very intentional about it. And still a call to respond to the  
370 gospel, not necessarily an alter call just a calling to a message that encourages you to respond in some  
371 way and here we are. Come talk to us.

## C2U2SP1

### **Question: Would you describe your hiring process for me?**

Basically, we posted the need for a pastor on **our denominational** and the Gospel Coalition websites. Those are two main core websites that we decided to go with. Afterwards, as applicants would come in, we would generally read through their resumes and then go through their message series. Thanks to technology it is very easy for us to be able to listen to people online. Then we developed a ranking system on how they would preach - the content of their message and other factors. So, after developing that we would rank each candidate on how well they did and we came to a consensus that we would not take anyone below about 70 - 75%. Generally, people would score fairly well but it was surprising, and I'm surprised some pastors are preaching with the content they pop out.

### **Q; So, you posted a need for a pastor – what exactly did you post?**

So basically, someone on our search committee put out the general post to identify our need for a pastor.

### **Q: And where did those criteria come from?**

Basically, it was more general than anything else. And if people responded we had a more detailed job description that we could send out to them.

### **Q: If you can find it, if you could please send me a copy I would appreciate that.**

Sure, I can send you a copy of what we posted because I know I have a copy of it somewhere.

### **That would be great!**

After we had worked through our rating system we would gather together in a meeting and discuss the viability of certain pastors based on the scores that we gave and based on our personal feeling and through prayer and supplication we would then try to indicate that someone was not a good fit for us. It was also based on other things too as well like how well did they delivered the message and how the spirit moved through the message. That was, a big deal when I was ranking. You could have good content but if there is no power behind the message itself, kind of just really monotone and it didn't have that weight or power behind it, I would automatically think, just no - good content basically but it's just not a good delivery or the message.

### **So, then what?**

So, we eventually managed to narrow it down to, and that's process upon process upon process and we eventually narrowed it down to two people and from there we would do a face-to-face review, via skype since they were all affair distance away. One was in B.C and one was in the States. And there we had a whole gamut of questions that we asked from the theological to the personal. The first interview was actually more generic in nature, just getting to know the person and seeing how they interacted, how they led in the conversation. From there we could glean a lot of information even from their body language, how they sat, how they held themselves up and how they answered questions. From there we basically narrowed it down to one person. That's basically it. There was a lot but for us the main work of the searching was the sitting and listening to their messages because there were so many people who applied that we really had to work hard and listening to each message and dissecting whether or not this person is good. Sometimes it would be a very short process because sometimes I would just press play and the moment, I would hear some inconsistency I would just say no, sorry. That was probably the

41 most tedious portion of it. Getting down to that number one guy was easier per se because we already  
42 know what we were looking for.

43 **Q: Now, those questions that you asked in the interview, were they a fairly standard set of questions**  
44 **that you as a committee had established? I would be interested in looking at those too.**

45 Yeah. I will try to forward the questions to you that I had made. The questions that we asked were all  
46 fairly generic.

47 **Q: So, then as you went through your process, you listened to a lot of sermons and went through a**  
48 **process of trying to evaluate them.**

49 Yup.

50 **Q: Now, would you say that as a committee that you were fairly unified?**

51 In all of this our committee was pretty unified. That was actually a big blessing. I didn't expect all of us to  
52 be in agreement as we each favoured some people over other people but for the most part, we were  
53 pretty unified and especially for the candidate that we have right now. We were all like no warning bells  
54 or any concerns so we were all unified in that. That was a big blessing for us.

55 **Q: As you reflect on your process to this point, has anything changed or been different from what you**  
56 **expected when you first started?**

57 Nothing really changed in our process from when we first started. We didn't really deviate from our  
58 direction, our path at all. I think the thing with search committees is we have to really keep it simple,  
59 organized and really prayer oriented - that is really bathing it in prayer and allowing God to work  
60 through the process. Sometimes there is a structure but we depend on the structure so much that we  
61 negate prayer and I think this committee, not that any previous committees didn't have a lot of prayer  
62 but this committee bathed everything in prayer and I believe God's spirit was amazingly, miraculously  
63 moving in our midst to actually make the process as smooth as possible, without roadblocks, without  
64 people fighting with one another or anything like that, so I actually really enjoyed it. It was a blessing to  
65 actually work with the people. This was actually the very first committee that I have ever been on.

66 **Q: What were your expectations going into it?**

67 So, personally for me, I was expecting people to be more contentious. I expected a lot of strong  
68 personalities and there were no contentions but the personalities were definitely there as I expected  
69 from a search committee. I didn't expect what I would call weak standing people to be on a committee  
70 like this. I expected very robust - like I don't believe that. People who could stand up for themselves. It  
71 was good.

72

73

74

75 **Question: How did you develop your selection process?**

76 As far as the questions we developed I think we just took the main attributes of preaching that we kind  
77 of all knew was core in having a senior pastor. Now, we were not taking into account how they deal with  
78 interpersonal relationship skills within other people and things like that. We are not taking that into  
79 account we were just strictly looking at their preaching capability and content. So that's basically what



80 we did. Since our church is a very Bible-based church, for us the Word was very much a pinnacle so  
81 content, theologically aligned and then we are also a mission sending church as well so was there an  
82 evangelistic theme to the message and is the pastor charismatic when he preaches. So those things  
83 were considerations when we put those questions together.

84 **Q: When it came to actually developing your search process, and you first got together and said – ok,**  
85 **how are we going to find a pastor – what will our process be?**

86 As far as our process I think for us we all just practically said, okay we need to post. So okay where are  
87 we going to post? So, we belong to **this denomination**, so we should put it on their website. And we said  
88 that the Gospel Coalition is actually a really good place for us to get started as well because our original  
89 pastor is part of the Gospel Coalition and the church is part of the Gospel Coalition so in order to  
90 broaden our scope, we will post their as well too just to see and cast our net wide. Funny enough, a lot  
91 of the pastors I have been talking to said that you will not find a pastor that will be leading your church  
92 that way. Most of the time you will have to go into the church and really Woo that Pastor over and place  
93 that seed of questioning in their minds and prompt them and say “Don’t you think you should be moving  
94 already”?

95 **Q: So, these were pastors who were giving you this advice?**

96 Yeah. So, pastors were advising us to get pastors from other churches.

97 **Q: Pastors from where?**

98 Like, our old Pastor. That's how our old Pastor left to go somewhere else. For two years that church  
99 went after him feverishly, so he believed that was the way that we would get our pastor. That was funny  
100 because how we got to this selection was just through regular means. We did not have to go to other  
101 churches and kind of like cherry pick someone else's pastor even though basically that's what several  
102 pastors recommended. It is funny but it actually happens more often than not. That was how our former  
103 Pastor moved over and our other pastor too - they went after him and then he moved over. Is that a  
104 good way of doing things? I don't know. As much as that is a great suggestion, I humbly believe that God  
105 will bring the person to us and I think that that was a lot of how our prayers were focused. God will bring  
106 the person. And I was pleasantly proven right. God is able if you pray and just search and wait.

107 **Q: So, you just arrived at your process by just dialoguing as a committee – how are we going to do**  
108 **this? What were the factors you considered?**

109 Yeah, so we just arrived at our process by talking as a committee and responding realistically to what we  
110 had to do. Our process has been heavily influenced by the document we got from **our denomination**  
111 regarding searching for a pastor but otherwise there weren't any other real influences. We just had a  
112 keep it simple philosophy. We did not want to overcomplicate the process so we just stuck with what  
113 **our denomination's** guidelines were and we just sent out the posting and that's it.

114

115 So, aside of the message portion, for us as a group we really wanted to see what his personality was like  
116 as well as his preaching - what he was like as much as we could ascertain. Apart from interviewing every  
117 single person one-on-one there would be other way of doing it.

118 So, for us since we are an established church already, we do feel that the pastor having educational  
119 experience is very important. Having a multicultural background too is somewhat important and being  
120 able to reach the demographic that we have, which is a multicultural Church of about 60 Nations

121 represented. Being able to speak to not just multiple cultures but also multiple generations at the same  
122 time. So, we were looking at age as a big factor. We were looking at other factors as well on top of his  
123 ability to preach.

124 **Q: So, were there any other underlying factors, or considerations that were either given to your**  
125 **committee or you developed in the scope of your selection criteria?**

126 I think some other factors were along the Pastoral line of things, like how was he going to meld with the  
127 rest of the Pastoral team. That was one thing that the board was letting us know that it was something  
128 that we really need to be looking for. We don't want to choose their next boss for them, meaning we do  
129 not want to cater to their needs but we need to really focus on the needs of the church. What the  
130 church needs versus what the church wants. What the pastor's need versus what the pastor's want. So,  
131 a very strong leadership capability as well was another factor that came along when we started to talk  
132 to them one on one and ask if they would be willing to break down the team or would they be willing to  
133 build their own team? So, these are factors that we also thought about and whether they would be able  
134 to lead these pastors and if there were any disciplinary actions are you going to be able to be strong  
135 enough to stand on your own two feet and say you know what this is where we are headed and you are  
136 not with us. You're going to have to go. So, he has to be able to build a Team up around him to do the  
137 vision thing that God has given to him. If he is willing to do that. So those were some other criteria that  
138 we were considering. So, they had to be a leader but also a manager who could raise up others to help  
139 us go in the direction that we have set. Are you willing to do what needs to get done in order to progress  
140 the kingdom? Not necessarily - we love people, but the kingdom comes first and you have to do the  
141 kingdom work. So, if we needed to hire another team member, we would probably go through a similar  
142 process but he would maybe want to advise or something like that for a certain individual.

143 **Q: Have there been any other influences for your committee that have been helpful or that have**  
144 **influenced your process?**

145 Yeah - talking to other head pastors, previous pastors from the churches, was something that weighed  
146 heavily on me personally as we developed our process because I respected these people a lot and  
147 especially on certain pastors that they suggested, that I didn't feel were strong enough to lead. So,  
148 pastors that they suggested that we might want to approach I didn't feel were good candidates. So  
149 being able to juggle those too because we wanted to respect them but at the same time. So other  
150 pastors definitely had a big say and for me it was influential on a certain level on how we selected and  
151 how we went about doing what we have to do. We didn't end up, God led us in a different way but yes,  
152 their input did matter a lot.

153

154 **Question: What aspects of the hiring process do you believe have been the most significant for your**  
155 **selection decision?**

156 I think it was the face-to-face interview that was that was probably the most important part because in  
157 as much as we have our sermon criteria for preaching and everything you can only get to know a person  
158 at all unless you actually talk to them. So, to me the actual interview process was pinnacle. There are a  
159 lot of strong preachers but personality-wise when you start talking to them you are unsure. He may be  
160 young but... It's just funny but I think that sometimes people just want to get away from what they are  
161 doing in their church right now. Kind of like an escape. I don't even think they are actually called to go.  
162 That's actually, the last Pastor that - of the two pastors that we actually personally interviewed - one  
163 being the one that we are bringing to the board, the other guy... After I talked to him, I thought that guy  
164 just seems like he wants to run away. Seriously, a good guy but he just seems, I don't know, but like he is

165 looking more for a family because he has a younger family so he is just looking basically to move closer  
166 to his family so that their kids will be with their family and they can have help raising their family. So,  
167 that to me is a red flag.

168 **Q: You mentioned calling. How would you discern something like a calling?**

169 So, while geography may be a factor for them one of the hardest things to do is probably discerning a  
170 calling because the Bible does not really give you five points for discerning. So, for me when it comes to  
171 discerning, I obviously go through a lot of bathing the situation in prayer and as I do that and as I listen  
172 to the message, automatically things will just come up and there is almost like a switch that goes on  
173 inside of me like a spiritual barometer that says no, run. Just pull the ripcord and go. God has been good  
174 in that way. And we would go to God's Word – okay, what do we do? So that's how we would discern. A  
175 lot of prayer and just listening to God as we pray and read the Bible and as I listen to the interviews and  
176 listening for God to say yeah this is the person or this is a prospective. Most of the people that I listen to,  
177 though they might have scored well, weren't really somebody that struck me as the guy.

178 **Question: How will you ultimately make your selection decision?**

179 Ultimately the church will be the one that decides whether this individual is the one. It goes before the  
180 church. As much as the committee prays, and as much as the committee gives all of the questions we  
181 could possibly ask and as we try to cover all of our bases to ensure a good selection, currently the  
182 church is the one who ultimately decides whether this will be the new head Pastor or not. So, we have  
183 met with this person twice through an initial interview and then a more thorough interview as well as  
184 listening to their sermons and reviewing their resume. The next part is that we would fly this person in  
185 once the board is kosher with everything to meet the other pastors - not with the people yet and then  
186 once he goes through a service and sits through everything, he gets introduced to people and  
187 afterwards then if everything goes well then, he will have a call back and then he would preach for a call  
188 afterwards.

189 So, we make our decision as a committee and recommendation to the board. Then the board has to do  
190 their process. The Elder board basically trusts the path of the search committee - that's the reason they  
191 commissioned us do this to begin with. To them it would be redundant to go through another process.  
192 So, the board is basically saying if you guys feel this way, we will bring him in, we'll talk to you guys a bit  
193 about it, we will bring him in and we will introduce him to people and the pastor's, he can get to know  
194 the team a little bit for a week or something like that, and they can see how he will gel. Can't really find  
195 everything within a week but at least he will know, because he was interviewed previously by a church  
196 in the states and he went over and right off the bat he was like no. So, we are trusting the process now  
197 that God will, and even beforehand we already told the church that you guys need to pray because  
198 ultimately you guys will be the ones deciding if this guy is the one. So, you guys need to pray. You cannot  
199 be like oh yeah, you guys selected him so... Just at our last prayer meeting we reminded them to pray  
200 fervently because the future of our church is in Christ's hands. But your spiritual growth – whether or  
201 not this church stays or goes... The future of our church is dependent upon whether you are searching  
202 and seeking his face so I encouraged the team to just really pray and emphasized how important this is.  
203 Your spiritual growth and welfare are in the balance and whether or not our church will be here is in the  
204 balance because we already had two senior pastors leave within a short period of time (10 years and 18  
205 years) and it is important for us to have stability for the long run as well. People have short memories.

206 **Question: How have you evaluated a candidate's fit for the position at your church?**

207 Actually, a lot of that was with the second interview. Those face-to-face were pinnacle and we actually  
208 relied on those heavily whether or not this guy, personality wise, because we know the personalities of  
209 our pastors- will he be cohesive in the unit or will he be an abrasion?

210 The way they format their language, the way they direct the meeting is interesting. This pastor that we  
211 are looking at right now, the way he directed our interview was very like, hey guys can we pray first? He  
212 was leading already before we asked him any questions. He was setting the pace; the tempo and he was  
213 asking very relevant questions that the other candidate never even bothered asking. He asked us what  
214 he could pray for us for. We were blown away as a committee. And the fact that this person actually  
215 took the time to read up on the church and to understand its complexities, the programs that are  
216 running. He really did his homework on top of being just a pastor. Someone who just cared. So, off the  
217 bat we were like this guy is organized, he knows what he wants. He goes after what he wants, which is  
218 what we need. The other candidate was like well I don't really have a lot of time to go through the  
219 website or anything like that. He did not have enough seasoning even though he was leading his church  
220 he didn't seem like he was very pastoral and he didn't really engage in what we would see as a very  
221 pastoral way of leading the interview. I think once a pastor always a pastor and when being interviewed  
222 that seep through because you can't help it because it is literally a part of your DNA because this is who  
223 God has called you to be and equipped you to be. The face-to-face interviews were a big part.

224 **Q: Were there any other priorities, or things that you considered?**

225 Oh, yeah. His family is very Multicultural as well, meaning he has four kids and they are all from different  
226 parts of the world and his wife is from a different country as well. He would fit demographically very  
227 well with the church and even though he was preaching in the States he has more of a European  
228 background than anything else. That really struck a chord with us. This is really what we are looking for-  
229 basically a pastor who understands multiculturalism, who is living it out actually, also his wife. His wife  
230 was one of the bigger points too as well. She was so supportive of her husband and she was honest with  
231 us saying you know I would be leaving a lot of friends behind but you know what I can make new  
232 friends. So, a very supportive wife and she is an open house type of lady too as well, meaning her house  
233 is open to ministry, she is not closed off, she is very personable as well so she would mix very well with  
234 the personalities of the other women in the church as well. So, being able to integrate her into the  
235 family of people is great. She is very down earth and just loving people so that was another factor too.

236 Theologically speaking he had to be in line with the Theology of the church, which he is. We did ask him  
237 about whether and how he would be able to deal with the interpersonal relationships within pastors,  
238 disciplinary acts and that too - so we asked about that and how his leadership style is. On a personal  
239 level I am looking for someone who just takes the reins and runs. He was more of the cooperative, let's  
240 talk and we will develop an idea together but I did ask him if he was able to actually develop his own  
241 ideas and run with them. That is important too.

242 **Q: How did you discover that they were aligned with your theology in the context of your**  
243 **denomination?**

244 As far as understanding if they were theologically aligned with us, we just looked at the doctrines of  
245 faith that **our denomination** outlines. We asked them to fill out the profile to apply to apply. That was  
246 one of the pointers too. If they didn't want to sign the doctrine of faith of **our denomination**, that was  
247 actually a big alarm bell for us and we would say wait - wait why? Because you would have to have an  
248 explanation as to why you would not want to sign on to our denomination, or believe their statement of  
249 faith.

250 **Q: So, where did those criteria come from?**

251 So that was one of our criteria that we got from our denomination itself. So, anyone applying had to  
252 complete a profile. It is something that is very exhaustive but to their credit they are very thorough.

253 **Q: Were there any other specific things that you were looking for in that profile?**

254 We were not as concerned about all the details of the profile as we were just concerned with them  
255 signing it. That was it. Because we believed in the totality of our doctrines that any deviation from that  
256 really would be not what the church doctrine is beholding to. How the spirit moves, they are Calvinistic  
257 in their point of view - it wouldn't work well if they were Arminian. So just to make sure that they are  
258 able to say yep you know what I am with this and I am with what our denomination is stating, sign it and  
259 once they signed that it's a gold seal for us. There is nothing really that we would think. If he differed  
260 with some things he would have to explain as to why. Not that we won't, open handed issues yes, close  
261 handed issues no. So closed issues are Jesus is God number one, the gospel obviously, the inerrancy of  
262 scripture, the Virgin birth and other core Doctrines.

263 Open handed doctrines would be things like forms of baptisms, even as to how the spirit is moving in  
264 our generation now, eschatology. Even within our committee there are some differences as to these  
265 positions.

266 It is just amazing how God confirms somebody so it has been a good run for us.

267 **Question: What have been some of the challenges or issues as you have worked to identify and select**  
268 **your next pastor?**

269 There is nothing that comes into my head right now because we were working so well together that  
270 whenever we would - probably where we would get the pastor. Some people wanted a Canadian pastor  
271 and I was more, it doesn't really matter. If this is God's man I don't care if he's in Timbuktu - go. That was  
272 probably about our biggest challenge and some of us were more focused on local, just realistically as  
273 well - it would be easier to transition. They don't have to go far or do anything like that. But God has a  
274 way of changing people's minds - especially when He says no. Off the top of my head if anything that  
275 was it. That maybe had to do with people's expectations and the demographic that we had to deal with  
276 our Logistics, but definitely the fact that if they were here already, they would know what we were  
277 dealing with in our culture, they know all of this and don't need to be indoctrinated into anything like  
278 that.

279 **Question: Is there anything else about your process or the things that you have learned that you**  
280 **would want to share with other churches who might be going through a similar search?**

281 I believe that prayer is the most important aspect of choosing a pastor. Ask for God's guidance and  
282 leadership because we tend to overthink things and to manhandle the process. Kind of like making  
283 pancakes. People tend to overbeat the batter and you're supposed to leave lumps in there. As Christians  
284 we tend to rely upon our own strength and our own abilities to be able to guide a church and lose sight  
285 of that it is God who is building His church and His kingdom. That is the biggest takeaway for me is that  
286 prayer is very, very important and the most essential aspect of the entire process. Just as the spirit  
287 guided the early church it is the same spirit that guides the church now. I just believe that sometimes  
288 there is a disconnect between the church and how the spirit moves, depending on your theology of the  
289 Holy Spirit and how He moves, it sometimes hampers that process. Does He still speak? I still think so.  
290 And our committee was all on that same page too. We all understood that if we don't do this we are  
291 going to fail. It was as simple as that. There were no ifs, ands, or buts. We were just praying. I guess  
292 some committees have a hard time gelling together but this one really worked and God blessed it.

## C2U2SP2

**Question: Would you describe your hiring process for me please?**

Well, we haven't hired anyone yet but we are in the process as you know. So, what we did was we initially advertised the position in various places - our website, gospel coalition, ministry jobs.

**Q: How did you come up with even what you were advertising as far as your job description?**

The board gave us a job. I'm basically and we worked with that to create an ad. So, we placed the ad on those various places. The majority of our responses came from gospel coalition. A large percentage came out of the U.S. and some overseas, and some Canadian of course. We also reached out to our congregation as well as our ministry team - our pastors and so on and our former pastors as well to see if they had some suggestions or names that they could put forward. And, all did.

**Q: So, then the board established the criteria or job description for your candidate. How was your search committee established?**

So as far as our search committee I was appointed by the board. They chose me to do this because they wanted an ex-board member. Then the board basically put together a list of names and we approached people to serve and we ended up with a committee. There are eight of us in total on the search committee. One is currently on the board right now. The other thing we went through was that our constitution had to be changed in order to adjust the size of the committee because it had been limited at 5. That was a minor detail that the board had to deal with at last year's annual general meeting. So, we have one current board member and two other previous board members on the committee as well, then we have tried to get a range of people – age and so on - two ladies, three younger people in their early 30s and then the rest of us are older, so we have a range.

So, the committee was formed and we started meeting last April. Our constitution had a requirement that we had to have at least one board member on the committee and I forget the exact wording but they had to make some changes to it.

**Q: Ok, so then the board established that, and the committee was struck – then you began to advertise for a position, so can you describe your process to date?**

So, we began receiving resumes and we set up any email for them to respond to and set up a Blog for us to work with. We started receiving email responses and as we did, we started reading and evaluating what came in. We put together an evaluation process for basically reading and reviewing resumes. We put together a process for reviewing these sermons and we ranked them. We had five points: Presentation, application, personal impact, biblical exposition and evangelism or evangelistic focus - a rating overall out of 100. I can get you a copy of that. It's basically a summary of everything we have done to this point.

So, we all listened to the various sermons that came in and we scored them and we wanted to get people with at least 80% as a ranking based on the criteria that we had established for their sermon evaluation because that's the main thing that we can do. Everyone is required to put in a **denominational** profile and provide that and a resume. Applicants that did not provide a profile or sermons or anything that we could not track anything down we just discarded. Some were from way overseas and obviously had no experience whatsoever so we just filtered those out. There were other ones that were unsolicited that we approached over that period of time. So, we put together a list of candidates and we work through them periodically and we probably ended up with about 40 candidates that we would work through over the summer, as well as unsolicited that were provided to us, even one

43 of our former pastors that we approached to come back. He was a youth pastor. He said no. He turned  
44 us down. So, at that point in time, we finally reduced it down to a list of about 5 people. We prioritized  
45 Canadians first and then we had a US and international list.

46 So, we reduced our list down to about 5 names. I reached out to those people and a few of them  
47 immediately turned us down, and said no we are happy where we are here. One never responded. Very  
48 interesting because his email address on his Church website was his secretary's email. He did not have  
49 one listed. So, either she just discarded our email or I don't know. We never knew what happened. We  
50 ended up finally with basically three names and I had a conversation with one and after he thought  
51 about it for a little while he called me back and said no thank you, he did not want to move. So, at that  
52 point we had two people in mind and one of them ironically was the very first person who had applied  
53 for the job online. We had interviews with them for about 30 minutes and got some basic information  
54 from them and we decided where to go from there.

55 After that point we unanimously decided on one person, so we set up a 2-hour review with him and  
56 created a list of questions which I can also provide you - personal, ministry, family etc. and that kind of  
57 thing as well as doctrinal questions, ministry philosophy, family - we actually spoke with his wife for  
58 about 15 minutes as well and after the two-hour interview, which we recorded, we said goodbye to him  
59 and we chatted amongst ourselves. My original plan was let's take a few days and pray about this  
60 person and we did anyway because I insisted that we do that but everybody in the room said he's it. It  
61 was unanimous. We decided this person was the one we wanted to pursue so after everybody officially  
62 said yes via email, I forwarded his information to the board along with the recorded interview and  
63 everything and the board was actually away on their annual retreat or just about to go on it I should say  
64 so they had a little chance to discuss it and we recommended him to the board and now the board has  
65 to do their due diligence. I am meeting with the board later next week to see what they've done and  
66 where do we go.

67 **Q: What was your evaluation process for the resumes and the profile?**

68 Our evaluation of the resumes and profile wasn't really very scientific I would have to admit, we would  
69 read the resumes and the profiles as far as their doctrinal statements and just review them all to make  
70 sure everything appeared to be good and so on. We didn't obviously ask for references or anything like  
71 that yet. So, we just basically did it that way.

72 **Q: Were there some key criteria or aspects that you were considering?**

73 Some of the things that were really important to us were things such as experience because he would be  
74 coming into a large Church with a large Ministry team so we needed someone who isn't new and hasn't  
75 at least worked in that type of scenario to a certain extent. When they fill out the denomination's profile  
76 their Doctrinal statement and their doctrinal beliefs are very important and they fall in line there.  
77 Obviously, we are a denominational Church and so there are easily defined doctrines and beliefs. It is  
78 kind of ironic because I was saved in a Brethren assembly where there are no pastors - just elders and  
79 deacons.

80 So, looking for someone we thought was a good fit for a large Urban church and a large Multicultural  
81 setting, which our church is very Multicultural. Someone who could work well with a Team of ministry  
82 leaders and pastors and so on. It was kind of what we focused on but when you read them you just get a  
83 sense sometimes. There were a lot of times that we looked at each another and said how do we do this?  
84 What do we do next?

85 **Question: How did you develop your selection process?**

86 It was an idea that one of our members came up with. Our denomination has a document they gave us.  
87 It's got a number of steps to go through this whole process, I don't know if you have seen it before, and  
88 we have been following that document for the most part. I can't recall the name of the document but  
89 that's what we've been using. It is very helpful and very, very well done. Before the committee was even  
90 formed and I was still on the board, we invited their leadership director to come and he went through  
91 this whole process with us. I did not know at the time that I would become the chairman of the  
92 committee. I was still a board member at the time. But that was extremely helpful and still is.

93 So, the primary influence for our process was that document.

94 **Q: Were there any other considerations that you brought into that process?**

95 I'm not sure that I could say there was. Obviously, our real concern was just making sure we tried to  
96 seek God's will and to do this in a way that would be the right way in a sense. What we do in our  
97 meeting is we start off with a short devotional and prayer first before we get into our agenda. Early on  
98 one of our team members shared the passage in 1st Samuel 16 where Samuel gets to anoint David as  
99 king. He shows up at Jesse's house to find the next king and he meets seven sons. He was ready to pick  
100 the first guy because he looked good. He ended up not and interviewing all seven and rejecting all seven  
101 or God rejecting them. So, we kind of used that passage as our premise or our philosophy to follow that  
102 the Lord looks at the heart and not the appearance. Obviously, other than pictures on the website or  
103 online, we didn't meet any people face-to-face.

104 **Q: So, how would you suggest that you discerned the heart of the candidate?**

105 I think mostly through our interview with him and this particular candidate plus his responses to us  
106 helped us discern his heart. He has been intentionally staying in contact with us. He has researched us.  
107 He has done so much to indicate to us that he is very very - I'm not sure that interested is the right word,  
108 but interested in this position. He is still pastoring where he is but doesn't see any future there really in  
109 the long-term. He has been there a long time. He doesn't see the senior pastor ever stepping down. I  
110 think the Lord will make him step down one day because he is almost 80 - I don't know.

111 The other thing is he and his wife about a year or so ago, sold their house and they are renting so that  
112 they can be ready to move when the Lord calls them somewhere. That and just things like at the end of  
113 an interview he said Well, let me pray for you. We were going to pray for him. And just his mind, his  
114 heart is just so obvious. So that really helped a lot.

115 **Question: What have been some of the most significant aspects of your hiring process – or what were  
116 some significant core values that you considered?**

117 That was our major core value. Everything that we did had to be prayed through before and after and so  
118 on. Recognizing that this is not our work. The Lord has already chosen this person we just have to find  
119 him. So that was a significant aspect or core value for us. We just wanted to make sure that we were  
120 thorough, that we were consistent in what we did on a regular basis. That we looked at every  
121 application the same so to speak and equally, evaluated them based on their merit.

122 **Question: How will you ultimately make your selection decision?**

123 My understanding is that obviously the board will want to talk with him. Our board chair does not think  
124 they will interview him per se like we did - they will just use ours. He feels that if the board is in  
125 agreement, then they will ask him to come and speak. Our board chair is a lifer at our church. He grew  
126 up there. I think he was the chair of the board when we called our last pastor so he is somewhat familiar  
127 with the process.



128 As far as we are concerned as a committee if this person comes and the Congregation votes, we are on  
129 board - he is our choice. We understand that it may not work out - you never know.

130 The congregation votes eventually but as far as the logistics of every little part of it I'm not really sure.

131 **Question: How have you evaluated a candidate's possible fit for the position at your church?**

132 We did it through basically all of the questions that we asked him and his response. Again, it was just  
133 how we felt he answered the questions. He just answered them in such a way that we feel he would be  
134 an excellent fit. His background, his experience level, his personal life, his walk, his testimony, his  
135 experience in inner-city Ministry and so on. He has a multi- cultural, adopted family which is very  
136 interesting.

137 So, our committee basically came to the point where we were unanimous and felt that this was the guy.  
138 Everyone on the committee felt that way right after the interview and I said I agree but let's take a week  
139 or so and pray and think and make sure we don't have any second thoughts or that the Lord doesn't lead  
140 us somewhere else. Then respond to me by email and say yes or no and everybody responded to me  
141 absolutely positively. For an 8-person committee, our constitution states that 75% would be fine but I  
142 was really hoping for this and the Lord came through. It has been amazing how we came together as a  
143 group of 8 people with such different perspectives and backgrounds and worked together so well. And  
144 these guys made my life so easy. They are so good. I manage 8 people where I work and it is not as easy  
145 as these 7 people have been.

146 **Q: When did your committee make their decision?**

147 We just made our decision just recently within the past few weeks.

148 **Question: What have been some of the challenges or issues as you have worked to identify and select  
149 your next pastor?**

150 One of the challenges early on was just the fact of a lack of experience and not knowing - we kind of  
151 knew a process based on the document that our denomination gave us, but really just fleshing that out  
152 and the sheer volume of applicants was a bit of a challenge at first. It was a little overwhelming at first  
153 for me. And then a few months into the process the board came to us and said we don't think that's the  
154 right way to go at it at all. We would like to put forth some names that we think you should basically  
155 approach these people and go from there. And we didn't really totally agree with that. It wasn't that we  
156 weren't willing to accept the names. I said we would be more than willing to accept the names and look  
157 at their resumes and look at their applications and so on, or reach out to these people that haven't  
158 applied if you've given us the name, which they did. So that was a bit of a challenge but we worked  
159 through it and it worked out fine. The candidate that we picked is not one of those people at all but it  
160 just worked out that way. Because I know of churches that have settled on a candidate and they would  
161 not give up until they get him. I know, for example, one Pastor that a church had decided - they settled  
162 on him and it took them two years but they finally got him. They were not taking anybody but him. And  
163 we did not want to take that approach. We wanted to be open minded. If they felt that was the Lord will  
164 then that's great but we did not feel that was the way we should go. But the board and the ministry  
165 team we felt should do more of that so we had to work through that. That was a bit of a challenge. But  
166 we worked through it and in the end, it worked out very well.

167 Other than that, we had no, no conflicts or difficulties amongst ourselves. Everybody worked together  
168 really well. We had a couple of younger people, maybe in their 30s and they handled all of the tech stuff

169 for us. I don't really do that sort of thing so it was great that we let them do that for us. I can do it but  
170 why bother?

171 **Q: You said that one of your challenges early on was a lack of experience, so you worked through your**  
172 **denominational document. How did you overcome that?**

173 Because we weren't very experienced at the beginning working from the denominational document  
174 really helped. As we got into it - at the very, very beginning we thought well what are we going to do?  
175 Well, we will advertise. Then what are we going to do? Well, we will see who we get. So, it was kind of  
176 like at first, we were unsure but once we got into it and got a whole list of names and so on and worked  
177 our way through the process - we reviewed the whole process with the committee early on. They had  
178 not seen all of this. I had when I was on the board. So that help them understand it. It just seemed to  
179 come together that way for us.

180 **Q: Have there been any surprises along the way?**

181 I was so much surprised by the sheer number of applicants and the variety and range of people that  
182 applied. That was the major thing. There were no surprises as far as candidates in the process  
183 themselves.

184 One of the biggest challenges though was our own congregation and their desire to have this process  
185 over and done with quickly and for you to give them all kinds of information about what's going on. You  
186 know, why is it taking so long? What's going on? Just trying to give regular updates and their responses.

187 Other than that, not really. We knew going in it was going to be a lot of work. I knew that. We didn't  
188 realize really how much but we know our job isn't done yet. There is a lot more to do here but we knew  
189 that. That was not really a surprise, I guess. I think that there is a mindset amongst many of our  
190 congregation that we are this great church and people would be flocking here to be the pastor and we  
191 should have a guy in a few months. I had to tell people from day one it is going to be a year or even  
192 longer. It will probably be at least a year. And it has been a year since our pastor left but we weren't  
193 formed until 6 months after that.

194 **Question: Do you have any final thoughts or things that you would like to share about your process?**

195 For me - my wife said to me, are you sure that you want to do this when I got asked to take this on and I  
196 said yeah, I really feel that the Lord has called me to do this. She said, if you pick a dud, you will be  
197 known as the guy that picked the bad pastor but I said I'm not too concerned about that. The Lord will  
198 give us his right choice. It has been a real interesting process but it has been a real privilege to do it I feel  
199 and a really good experience having never done anything like it before. That's been really good. Getting  
200 the chance to work with people. Some I know well and some I've never worked with before and getting  
201 to know them and getting to work with them and just seeing the Lord at work through this whole thing.  
202 So that has been a real pleasure. I really enjoyed it.

1 **C3R1BP1**

2 **Q: How long have you been the board chair?**

3 I was just elected on a year ago.

4 **Q: Ok so first term.**

5 No, I've been on the elder board many times but a year ago I got re-elected on and became board chair  
6 then. But I've been board chair other times too.

7 **C: Sure, ok so you've been on the elder board for a while. More than 6 years?**

8 Yes

9 **C: So, you were there for the previous search too?**

10 Actually, yes, I was. I wasn't on the search committee at that time but yes.

11 **C: So, you're on the search committee as well then?**

12 As well as on the board yes.

13 **Question: So, you're going to bring quite the perspective then. That's great. What is your board's role,  
14 what is the elder board's role actually in the pastoral hiring process?**

15 The board's role? Well, the first thing is the board did a profile of what we were looking for as far as a  
16 pastor is concerned. Some of that came out of, I'm not sure if you realize but the church has had kind of  
17 a split about two-three years ago. Not so much a split but just some discontented members because we  
18 dealt with a pastor, sided with the pastor, left and went with him and that type of thing. And at that  
19 time some theological issues came up at the same time so we thought, you know, if we're going to, you  
20 know, what are we looking for to get us past this incident that had happened. Thankfully we hired on  
21 Howard and he's done a marvelous job of getting everybody back on board. Not the ones that left  
22 but...although he's worked with some of them and a couple of them have come back but just kind of  
23 focused us. So, what we did was the first thing as far as the searching for a new pastor was develop a  
24 profile of what we were looking for, someone that would be a strong leader, teacher. The split was or  
25 part of the split was between charismatic and you know the Baptist type of thing so they kind of put in  
26 some guidelines on that issue as well which I think if I look at it now is probably not the best thing to put  
27 into a profile because when pastors see that they automatically and I do think you've got to be honest  
28 when you are searching for someone you've got to tell them the history is and that kind of thing but to  
29 put it right in the profile you know, saying they can't be charismatic. What does charismatic mean right?  
30 So, we're looking at even changing that now but yeah so that's what we did. Then we sent that profile to  
31 the regional office, asked them to kind of go through the ones they had applications for and see what  
32 would be a good fit for us and they sent us different applications and then we reviewed them. What I  
33 really like about what we are doing on the search committee, and this is, I think it came from our interim  
34 Pastor, is we are not just looking at those that are applying. We are looking at who are successful  
35 pastors in the region and that are similar to ours and listening to them online which is you know,  
36 nowadays you can listen to them without going there and all that kind of thing. What we have done is  
37 we have got some names of some very good pastors that have been there for a while so might be  
38 considering or maybe God is leading them and listen to them online and if we are all in consensus, we  
39 would approach that person and see if they are even interested in leave or talking or moving or that  
40 type of thing. So, we have done that now with two or three people that we have approached and asked.

41 So far none of them have moved farther. One of them is praying about it but from all the indications  
42 he's given us it sounds like he's not going to go. His associate just left so it's just him and he doesn't  
43 want to. He's been at that church for 13 years which is all understandable.

44 **Q: Sure. So, you say you look at successful pastors. How would you define successful?**

45 I would define a successful pastor as churches that have grown and churches that...I would more say I  
46 look at how do they preach? How do they, you know, what kind of message are they bringing across on  
47 a regular basis? Just because you get sermons all online now and say ok, is that someone that would fit  
48 into our church and into our style of worship and that kind of thing. And we also take of course all the  
49 applications we're getting, we're also taking those seriously, listening to them and we've approached a  
50 few of them and have gone further with them but nothing has really come out of it yet so. We're only, I  
51 mean we started in I think June that the search committee started meeting first time so we're not that  
52 far into the process yet.

53 **Question: With some of the questions there will be some overlap because I'm going to ask questions**  
54 **that may be more relevant to the search committee but others will be very specific more to your**  
55 **board role because I've split the questions up a little. So, the board then developed the profile. How**  
56 **did you develop the profile of what you were looking for?**

57 We basically got together as a board and said what does this church need at this time in its life? A few  
58 years ago, when we were looking for a senior pastor, we were looking for someone that was very  
59 administrative. More administrative and was able to lead a staff and that kind of stuff whereas this time  
60 we're much more thinking that we need someone who can teach and preach and disciple, that type of  
61 things with our people. We've realized that going through the split that that's lacking in our church, you  
62 know. Very good church as far as loving one another in community and that kind of thing but lacking in  
63 discipleship and training and that. So that was one of the criteria's that we looked at. And yet we  
64 wanted someone that also would be a strong leader. We've got some strong personalities on the board  
65 and so in order to counterbalance that you also need a strong leader that can work through those  
66 things.

67 **Q: So then in terms of developing this profile, it was done just at your elder board level. You guys**  
68 **talked about these pieces.**

69 Yes

70 **C: And so, developing the profile, what else? What other elements would be part of the board's role in**  
71 **this the pastoral process?**

72 Well first we had the congregation and the board basically figures out who is going to be on the search  
73 committee. So that had to be done.

74 **Q: Ok how does that work?**

75 So, we have in our constitution, it basically says that there has to be three elders on the search  
76 committee and at least three people from the congregation. And recommendation is that they're not all  
77 men, that there are some women in there. Also, that we try to cover the different areas in our church  
78 life like youth and that type of thing, women's ministry, maybe the missions committee, that type of  
79 thing too.

80 But then the congregation at an annual meeting voted on or nominated people to be on the search  
81 committee and then they were voted on and they were accepted or ratified. So, we do have I guess  
82 three people from the congregation and three elders.

83 **Q: So, they were ratified at your**

84 annual meeting. And the board decided ahead of time who would be on the search committee from the  
85 elders so that people knew who the elders were and they had to get three more.

86 **Q: So just a quick aside note perhaps. So, your process, I guess you set the timeline when you would**  
87 **start based on establishing a search committee through your annual meeting.**

88 Right

89 **Q: So, then you wouldn't really start outside of that timeline?**

90 No, we could. We'd just call a special business meeting for that. We do have a nominating committee  
91 who does all the vetting of people so they would first come up with the names and I think at that time  
92 there was six names that people came up with and three were... if I remember correctly. It might be just  
93 three too that they just came up with the three names. So, then they're presented at a business meeting  
94 and then they're ratified.

95 **Q: Ok. So, then you develop the profile, you've established your search committee. What other roles**  
96 **does the board have?**

97 Well prayer of course is essential. So, we pray for the search committee all the time. Search committee  
98 does too. But that's central that God would lead us and direct us in all that. Other than that, the search  
99 committee gives a report, one of the elders actually the chairman of the search committee is an elder  
100 and he gives a report to the board at every monthly meeting. Not really giving out names or anything  
101 like that just what's happening.

102 **Q: And then as the search committee proceeds through and gives a report and they come up with a**  
103 **potential candidate or a candidate that they then want to bring, how does that work?**

104 Ok so once the search committee has someone that they want to recommend, they would bring that to  
105 the elders, the elder board. The elder board would then meet with that person like after the search  
106 committee has already met with the person and has vetted him and everything else. Then the elder  
107 board meets with that pastor and interviews him as well see if there's any concerns that they might  
108 have. If everything's in agreement then the elder board would bring it to the congregation as a  
109 recommendation. The one thing that we are going to try to institute this time is to see if we can get the  
110 pastor, whoever that new pastor would be, to come for two weekends in a row. So, one weekend he  
111 would preach for the call and just get to meet everybody and talk to people. And then the next weekend  
112 he would come again and preach again and then we would vote. So, we are just trying to...the last one  
113 we had basically it was...I mean the congregation had no idea who it was until it was announced that  
114 next Sunday this guy, somebody (Somebody! They did not even know who) is coming, you are going to  
115 meet him before church, he is going to preach and you vote. And people did not really like that process  
116 because it was just "snap" all in one day you had to kind of make up your mind and make a decision and  
117 yeah. I know there's concern on the pastor's side, like, I'm preaching. I'm in a church you know and as  
118 far as I'm concerned, if God calls you to go you know and if he didn't get the vote here, so what. He  
119 would go back to his church and wait for the next time type of thing. And if it is an actual call then he's  
120 going to get the vote. So, I don't have a problem.

121 **Q: What percentage of your vote?**

122 I believe it's 85. 80 or 85. I think it's 85.

123 **Q: Is your constitution available online? I'm just wondering if it's possible to get it because that would**  
124 **break down some of these specifics.**

125 It would be no problem to get. I don't think it's online though. But if you stop at the church there on  
126 your way home, I'll call ask.

127 **Q: Ok thank you. So, then what other aspects? The individual comes for a weekend, preaches, comes**  
128 **back then potentially for the second weekend. Maybe then comes in and yay we got 87 percent. The**  
129 **candidate says yes. What other pieces to that? Does the board look after all other hiring specifics?**

130 Yeah. You mean like the salary?

131 **All of that.**

132 Yeah, that's all looked after once we...now I'm sure in the interview process they're going to ask you  
133 know what kind of salary range are we looking at. I mean at least I would. I've never been on a  
134 search...this is the first search committee I've been in the Baptist, now I've been on one in Christian  
135 Reformed before so but in the Baptist, I've never been on one until this. This is the first time. So, I'm not  
136 sure you know if that's all laid out to the guy before he even preaches. I would assume so because we  
137 use a grid and that kind of stuff. I'm sure that it's pretty standard. So, we'd have a pretty close ballpark  
138 of where he would fit in depending on the experience.

139 **Question: So, as you consider with your board hat on, what are the most significant factors based on**  
140 **your description and the things that you anticipate will happen as you go through your process, I**  
141 **mean work with the search committee, what do you think are some of the most significant factors of**  
142 **your search process?**

143 you mean what are we looking for in a pastor? Is that what you mean?

144 **Q: No. Priorities. Factors and priorities that the board would have for this process? What are some of**  
145 **the things that you really want to make sure we see these things happening?**

146 Again, prayer is the first thing. Without prayer we're not going anywhere. God's not going to lead and  
147 direct and so we want to make sure that as a search committee we're praying continually even for such  
148 things as names of who can we contact, who should we be going after, that type of thing. And as a board  
149 we do the same thing that we pray for unity. I think if there's six people from the congregation even  
150 though three are elders, if we can all agree on a person that is a big step. You know, if it's one or two  
151 people pushing one person and the other ones are not quite sure, we would...we have been praying for  
152 unity and we've had unity so far in everything we've decided to do and done. And I would say that's key  
153 in moving forward as well. If there's concerns by one or there's two people, that's a check from God is  
154 the way I look at it and we need to say, "ok let's stop and rethink this. Pray about it more and see if this  
155 is where we should be going or not." And there was one incident where one wasn't quite in tune with  
156 the rest of the committee and eventually the committee changed because the guy just kept saying this is  
157 what I think we should do. Just seemed very strong on that and the more we thought about it, the more  
158 we prayed about it, said yeah, maybe he's right. So, unity is essential.

159 Looking for the right fit too. We've kind of set a...it's not written in stone or anything so it's not saying  
160 we wouldn't, but we're looking...we would like to get someone in their mid-40s, second congregation  
161 type of thing. At least has had some experience before he comes on. And someone that's not ready to

162 retire either. We want stability if possible. And it's foreign to us because our pastor when I joined was  
163 here for 19 years and then our associate pastor took over and he did, he's still with the church but he's  
164 not pastoring anymore. I think he did 9 years. Then we had a year where we didn't have anybody. Then  
165 Brent came in for 5 years and then retired so yeah. We'd like someone in the late 40s, early 50s and  
166 hopefully will stay for a while and bring stability to the church. Those are things we've talked about but  
167 that doesn't mean we...I mean we've interviewed a guy that was 55/56 and he wasn't the right fit for us  
168 but otherwise we would have...we're accepting of it because he applied and seemed like he might be a  
169 fit. We interviewed him and it didn't quite work out but that's ok. But our criteria would say middle 40s  
170 to middle 50s is ideal, is what we would look for.

171 **Question: What kind of instructions or criteria did you give to your search committee from the elder**  
172 **board establishing a profile, developing a job description which was used in sending it out to get**  
173 **people to apply, that came from the board. But then as you handed this task off to the search**  
174 **committee, what kind of criteria did you give them, what kind of instruction did you give to your**  
175 **search committee?**

176 Not a lot. When we first met as a search committee, we went over the profile and the three elders that  
177 were there gave them kind of the criteria, why we were looking for someone like that. There was buy in  
178 from all three of them, that wasn't a problem at all. So, then we talked more about the process. Ok so  
179 you know, we'll send the profile to the regional office, we'll contact the AGC church and see if there's  
180 anybody there. Everyone had a copy of the profile so start looking online and see who you can find or  
181 somebody you might know who'll fit that. So then at our next meeting we had I think five profiles to  
182 look at and we also had some recommendations from different people on the search committee like,  
183 can we look at this person, can we look at that person and that type of thing. But that's about all the  
184 instructions we gave them.

185 **Q: So, in terms of how the search committee established their process then for actually functioning,**  
186 **they developed that themselves.**

187 Well yeah as a search committee, basically the first meeting too we elected somebody to be the chair.  
188 We elected somebody to be the secretary and the rest of us are just part of the team. Yeah, but the  
189 board is not giving them like "you can only approach people from our denomination" or you can only do  
190 this or you can only do that. We've got free reign as far as looking for the right person that fits that  
191 profile.

192 **Q: Ok so were there any particular factors that you really wanted them to consider?**

193 Well, the things we wanted them to consider was in the profile. So, it was all developed in the profile. As  
194 long as persons met that, or came close to that. I mean you're never going to get someone that fits  
195 exactly in your profile right. At least that hardly ever.

196 **Q: Can I get a copy of that profile?**

197 Yeah. I don't know. I'll check downstairs if I got it or not here but otherwise yeah, I'll get you a copy. I'll  
198 make sure you get a copy.

199 **Ok thank you. We touched on this. You hit almost three of the questions as you were responding to**  
200 **one.**

201 Sorry about that.

202 **Question: No, that's great. It's efficient. It's good but I'm just going to ask, in case there's anything**  
203 **else. So, what were some of the other considerations when you were developing your job description**  
204 **or profile? You mentioned a few things, strong leader and teacher, but what brought about, what was**  
205 **it that helped you, what were the different things you were considering even as you tried to put that**  
206 **together?**

207 Well like I said we had that divide in the church between three denominational perspectives. The thing  
208 is we're finding out neither side knows what they believe, they just believe it. You know how people are.  
209 We thought that that was the criteria that we needed someone that could lead both sides to be  
210 together. There's no interest in "those guys are a different denomination - get them out of our church".  
211 No. How can we work together to develop? But we are still a particular denomination, so as leaders  
212 that's, we think it's critical that we remain that. So, we wanted some, in the profile, that's why we said  
213 strong leader, strong teacher that can develop that. And still do it out of love and grace. It's not like my  
214 way or the highway. It's doing it in love and grace so...

215 **Yes. And the last one you said was more administrative.**

216 Yeah, that guy was more administrative, office managing, staff manager type of thing. We were having  
217 some issues with staff and stuff and we just felt we needed someone who was strong in that area.

218 Now it's more teaching and discipleship and developing small groups and that type of stuff.

219 **Q: How did you assess what you perceived to be the needs of the church at this time?**

220 A lot of that came from after we hired our interim pastor, he basically invited the entire congregation,  
221 anyone who wanted to talk to him, to set up times to meet with him. So, he had a book and people  
222 would put down and out of...and he met with like everybody. Like it wasn't just ok I'm only going to  
223 meet with those that are strong Baptist or strong Pentecostal or whatever. He met with everybody and  
224 he kind of got a feel in the sense of where we were as a church and from that we realized that ok, these  
225 are the areas where we need to work on and develop. One of the things he mentioned was like a lot of  
226 them, even though they say they're Pentecostal, they don't know what that means. You know, what's  
227 the doctrine. He had a sermon a couple of weeks ago on what Pentecostal people believe in. People  
228 came up to him after and said, "I didn't know we believed that!" And you know, likewise what Baptists  
229 believe, "oh I didn't know that!" that type of thing so that really enforced what we already knew, that  
230 we need to develop a strong teaching area in the church. You know, so people can learn what does the  
231 Bible say about these things? And how do we interpret that as 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians? So that was  
232 developed into the profile as well, you know strong leadership and teaching.

233 **Q: Ok. What other...were there any other...I'm asking this question because sometimes there's things**  
234 **that are just assumed, "yeah of course this or this". Were there any other priorities or considerations**  
235 **for either the pastoral role or this job description? It's like well they need this.**

236 I think those two things were the main points of our profile but a lot of things came out of that. Like ok,  
237 if you want someone who's a strong leader and teacher, you don't want somebody who's fresh out of  
238 seminary.

239 **Sure.**

240 So, the criteria were ok, you want somebody who's at least been a pastor in a church for a certain length  
241 of time and probably either associate or a lead pastor, or you know, not necessarily a youth pastor type  
242 person. And again, we're not ruling out youth pastors if they're looking to go move further and going to  
243 lead pastor. I mean we can gladly interview them and see what are their strengths. I know our youth



244 leader and if he would apply, we would hire him tomorrow type of thing. He doesn't want it but he's  
245 that excellent. So those kinds of things went into it like but then it all came out of those two main things,  
246 teaching and leadership.

247 **Ok so not fresh out of seminary, certain degree of experience, based again it comes out of this whole**  
248 **strong leader/teacher situation.**

249 Even the age criteria comes out of that right? But I would say those were the main two areas. Like I said  
250 the other thing was it says in our profile 'not charismatic'. We're looking at changing that.

251 **Question: What role does your church community have in the process or throughout the process?**

252 Basically, they've entrusted the search committee to find the person. Once the person is found and the  
253 elders have approved, then the final decision is always them. They're not that involved other than we  
254 constantly ask them to pray for the search committee, pray for the man that God's already set apart.  
255 You know, those kinds of things. But other than that, they're not involved. Unless. I mean we have asked  
256 them to suggest names type of thing if they know of someone, bring it to the search committee and we  
257 put that in a couple of our reports. So far, we haven't heard anything from anyone else.

258 So, then it comes to the congregation after a candidate has gone through the search process, gone  
259 through the interview process with the elder board and such and then they come on a weekend to  
260 preach for a call and also to meet people

261 **Q: Is there teaching or instruction or anything that helps the congregation become either more aware**  
262 **of their responsibility and actually casting this vote or is it you're just going to be deciding on this**  
263 **pastor so we're going to leave. To what extent are they instructed?**

264 As I mentioned before, this is my first time on the search committee. I think that's a great idea and I  
265 think it should be done. I know the last one, he didn't want anybody to know who he was or anything  
266 until the vote was done and then he told his other congregation. It was hard to even pull references and  
267 that kind of stuff because he wanted it all kept hush hush. Because it said it would affect his ministry if  
268 we didn't get the vote. I don't know. I don't agree with that. I was actually a little upset about it the last  
269 time because we had no idea who this guy was and we meet him on Sunday morning, he preaches a  
270 sermon, and we've got to decide right after the sermon.

271 So yeah, the board was at that time fully in agreement with the guy and said yeah, we'll keep it hush  
272 hush and basically, they told the congregation "You've got to trust us" which you do and I voted in  
273 favour of the guy because I trusted the board and the search committee that this was the guy and I'm  
274 not saying he wasn't the right one. I'm just saying it was almost like, well you don't need us to vote  
275 because you've already made up your mind that this is the guy. You're not giving us any information so. I  
276 like to be open and say we're considering this guy. For me and we haven't gone through this process  
277 with the search committee but I would say when the search committee has someone in mind that it  
278 should, at that time, go to the congregation and say, "we're looking at so-and-so". Keep it confidential.  
279 Most people keep it confidential, there might be one or two. And it's going to the elder board and the  
280 elder board will do the interviewing and stuff. I'm not sure how that process should work but it's got to  
281 be more open is what I'm saying. That's my personal feeling. I haven't heard what the board thinks on  
282 that one. I've got to bring it up I guess as chair, don't I? Yeah. And I will.

283 **Question: What priorities do you have for a new pastor in terms of priorities or expectations? I mean**  
284 **you've already set out in terms of the profile but in your say a job description or the expectation of**  
285 **someone coming in "here's what we think you should really focus your efforts on"?**

286 We basically have not done that as of yet. I think that's something you should do in conjunction with  
287 him. Again, it depends on what his gifts are and maybe our criteria are too strong and we end up with  
288 someone that's not quite everything we want but still a very good fit, then you work on, but yeah,  
289 priorities would be, as far as we've laid out right now, is discipleship and teaching, preaching. Some  
290 people would like to see someone who is very community minded and reaching out into the community  
291 and evangelism but as a board we've come to the conclusion that we first need to disciple our own in  
292 order to reach out. One man can't do all the reaching out anyways so if we're not trained how to do that  
293 then how can we. And in a lot of ways, we are reaching out to the community, our youth program, 60%  
294 are from the town, not from the church at all. Junior youth it's even higher so yeah families are coming  
295 to church because of their kids. So, like I said, we've got a great youth pastor.

296 **Question: So final question. Is there anything else that you'd like to share either about your process,**  
297 **the board's role, any challenges perhaps that you've encountered or seen within...**

298 One thing we've discussed as a search committee that we this time we have given the profile to the  
299 regional office and said 'weed out the ones that do not fit' kind of thing and send us the others. We are  
300 getting very few. So, either our profile is too strong type of thing or maybe the regional office is culling  
301 too tight, I don't know. So, we're looking at maybe we're going to have to say to them is just send us  
302 whoever's looking and let us do the culling rather than...which means more work for us but there might  
303 be people slipping through the cracks. We're just wondering because the last time we just said send us  
304 whoever you've got. This is what we're looking for but we didn't have it in paper. And so, we were  
305 getting hundreds of applications. A lot of them didn't fit the criteria at all so you throw them out but in  
306 the same respect now we're getting, we've been going now for five months and I think we've gotten 7  
307 applications. And I know there are vacant churches and that kind of stuff so maybe there is many  
308 looking but I don't know.

309 **Yes, I just wonder how many they'd even have in terms of active profiles.**

310 So, it's something we're talking about. We haven't done anything about that yet, we're still got names  
311 that we're working through anyways so we'll leave it at that for now but it's something to consider. And  
312 the big thing that you have to guard against is the longer you're in this process, the more you tend to say  
313 "maybe it doesn't quite fit but you know". We want the right person and we believe God has the right  
314 person and that he's already has him picked, we just have to find him. We don't want to rush through  
315 this process. In the same respect, we need someone as soon as possible. There's always a tension

316 Now my question to you. Any recommendations to us? Like that other teams are doing or that you've  
317 come across?

1 **C3R1BP2**

2 **C: there may be some overlap just because of obviously the fact that you're on the board and on the**  
3 **search committee but primarily if you could think about it from the board perspective and as you have**  
4 **a bit of overlap, we'll make sure we touch on some of those pieces too but I'm trying to gather**  
5 **perspective from the board at this point.**

6 **Question: What is your board's role in your pastoral hiring process?**

7 We basically oversee, we set up the search committee. Well actually the congregation set that up and  
8 the search committee reports to us. Now the board has three board members that sit on the search  
9 committee and as you said earlier, I'm one of those board members. Makes sense?

10 **Q: So how is the process for your pastoral search then established?**

11 You mean we have a policy and procedure if that's what you're talking about

12 **Q: ok so you have a policy and procedure. Where is that located? Is that within your bylaws?**

13 yes, it's within the constitution. Right. If you go by our constitution that's all in there and I don't have a  
14 copy of it unfortunately. Do you have it?

15 **Q: Yes, I have it. So, I went through that. So, the process that is established through your constitution,**  
16 **so then the board works, the congregation establishes the search committee.**

17 So, they pick, I think it's...how many of us are there? I think it's six or seven. I'd have to add it. But they  
18 pick their members and then the board sends three.

19 **Q: So, the congregation votes on it?**

20 Correct

21 **Q: If I understand correctly, as I read through your constitution the people are nominated through**  
22 **your nominating committee**

23 Correct

24 **Q: and the congregation votes to affirm or ratify the candidate or people**

25 Correct. Yes, you are correct.

26 **Question: ok, so then in terms of once your committee has been struck, in establishing the process**  
27 **that they would follow for actually conducting their search, how is that arrived at? Is that strictly**  
28 **through the search committee or does the board, is there board involvement in some way in**  
29 **establishing that?**

30 ok. The three board members that are on the committee kind of direct traffic shall we say. One of the  
31 board members will be the chair of the committee itself and then we would vote on who is the secretary  
32 who in this case happens to be a member. Right? So as far as the board itself, the three board members  
33 would report a little bit back when we meet as a, on a regular basis but we don't really give details  
34 because that's not really how that's done. There's an update report that's presented to the whole  
35 congregation and that's kind of how the board would hear as well.

36 **Q: So, there's a distinction then in your role based on this task and you honour the committee and the**  
37 **process.**

38 Correct. Now there's a little bit of overlap but we don't get into details such as names or anything like  
39 that at the board level because confidentiality is huge on this committee. Right? Because maybe some  
40 of the people that we're interviewing already have a job and we don't want that to come out before it  
41 needs to.

42 **Q: Sure. So then when it comes to the process itself, how they would go about and try to find**  
43 **candidates, job descriptions, all those sorts of things, that all happens at the level of the search**  
44 **committee?**

45 mmhmm (affirmative) and how we did it, I can show you without showing you names, but we went to  
46 our denomination and we get pastor profiles. Are you familiar with those?

47 **Q: I am familiar with the profiles.**

48 Ok so that's primarily where we started and then we expanded out from there.

49 **Q: ok that was the committee that did that? So, in terms of establishing a process to say ok we're**  
50 **going to approach your denomination for profiles, how did the committee establish what profiles you**  
51 **were going to be asking for?**

52 well, we have our interim pastor. He was our liaison. He kind of explained who we wanted that would be  
53 a good fit for our church. So, he was able to weed some profiles out.

54 Ok now let me back that up. We met as a group for the search committee and we established what it  
55 was we were looking for in a pastor so we developed a more or less profile.

56 **Q: so, the search committee established the profile.**

57 That's correct. That's where we started and then we went, our interim pastor went to our denomination  
58 and he had them kind of weed them out if that makes sense?

59 **Q: So, then the board didn't establish the profile. That was done at the search committee level.**

60 Correct

61 **Q: So, the board had no input other than the board members serving on the committee. It was the six**  
62 **of you or whomever that developed the profile.**

63 Correct. There was no board member that was not part of the committee.

64 **Q: Sure. There was no "Board" influence. You were there as a group serving on the committee.**

65 Correct.

66 **Question: Thank you. So, in terms of instruction then that the board would have given to the**  
67 **committee at the outset once they had been elected and appointed and they had come together,**  
68 **what...was there a particular instruction or pathway that they were instructed to kind of follow?**

69 mhmm (affirmative). We told the search committee that they were going to see profiles and that all this  
70 information was confidential and they weren't to share it with other people. SO that was kind of our  
71 first step. And then they were to read through this and the sermons and that sort of thing, just some  
72 guidance on how to select. So, our process was a little bit more streamlined because we went through it  
73 about five years ago, I'd have to look at how many years ago it was because I wasn't at the board at the  
74 time. But some of the guys that I'm serving with were. So, we'd been through this and we had already  
75 established a pretty good way of finding people shall we say.

76 **Q: Sure. Now was that written down somewhere?**

77 Nope that was just the guys

78 **Q: the guys that had done it had been there before**

79 yup. We asked them how they did it.

80 **Q: sure. Ok when you say we asked them how they did it, "we" being the board asked them or the**  
81 **search committee asked the people who had served on the search committee previously or who are**  
82 **serving now perhaps as well**

83 correct. The search committee. They are. We have a member who was on the previous search  
84 committee so that's who we asked directly. I'm not sure if the other two elders, maybe one of them was  
85 too. I'm not sure. I'd have to ask them.

86 **Q: Ok. So basically, they establish their own process. They were given some guidance at the beginning**  
87 **in terms of how to process. Were there any particular instructions that the board said or cautions or**  
88 **anything that said, you know when you're working through this just try to remember or anything like**  
89 **that?**

90 not really because in our situation the catch for that stuff is having three board members present. So,  
91 we'll catch anything that's like against our beliefs shall we say to use an example. We're not going to go  
92 after just another example, a different denominational pastor.

93 If it isn't a fit so. So, there is that. So, we're the checks and balances. And if there's anybody that's  
94 recommended because people from the church can recommend somebody for the search committee to  
95 look at, and let's say one of the elders knows them, we would vet that right away. Like we would say  
96 something and that's where it would end. So that's our input as elder on the committee if that makes  
97 sense.

98 **Q: What is your role on the board?**

99 I'm the secretary on the board. I don't think I can be a director because my wife is the secretary and that  
100 would be a conflict of interest.

101 **Question: What factors of the search process do you view as a board member as the most significant?**

102 I think it's important to find someone who really fits our church and to take the time. I think we learned  
103 that from our last search that we need to make sure that we really take our time and do our research  
104 and make sure that the person that we go with is a good fit for our congregation. I'm not saying that we  
105 did anything wrong the last time it's just an observation of what I feel is important. I think for our  
106 church, age would be a factor as well. We are looking for somebody who is going to stay a little bit  
107 longer.

108 **Q: Were there any other factors or priorities that the Board said, as you work through your process,**  
109 **make sure to take note of these sorts of things, or any other regulations or priorities?**

110 Confidentiality is a big thing. We have to make sure that no one at the board level or at the search  
111 committee level lets a person from the church know who we are looking at because that would interfere  
112 with the whole process. For example, we are looking at somebody who presently is a pastor at another  
113 church and they have no clue. So, you put his name out there would jeopardize his job perhaps. So,  
114 there are reasons. So... these are things that we are looking for in a pastor, right?

115 **Q: These are things from a Board perspective that you would consider are important for the search**  
116 **committee to be aware of and considering as you work through this process.**

117 I don't think it is written anywhere but I think that education would be an important piece of it, not that  
118 they have to have a specific thing but they need to have a level of Education that's suitable for a senior  
119 pastor position. I'm not sure if that is in our bylaws or not.

120 **Q: You said the search committee established the profile – and that is criteria based upon what?**

121 The search committee established the profile based on what they perceive the needs to be of the  
122 congregation for the senior pastor. Now, that being said we had what we call a family meeting that the  
123 elders lead about one year prior to establishing this committee. At the meeting we ask the church  
124 members what they wanted in a pastor. So, we basically had this laundry list of things that people  
125 wanted to see. This wasn't totally us picking things out of the air. We had input from the congregation  
126 and we made sure that that got put into place. All that information was given to the search committee  
127 and they had to sift through it to develop the profile. As the secretary at the time, I took all of the data  
128 and compiled it made graphs and it was presented raw to the search committee. There wasn't any  
129 editing involved. Don't think the board ever really set any boundaries up. It was the search committee  
130 and when we met as a search committee. Now, when there was some input from the three of us as  
131 elders on that committee, these are things that we think are important - that's kind of how the  
132 conversation went but it wasn't like you have to. It was a conversation. Again, that was led by elders but  
133 we weren't dictating how it is. So, to select or establish your search committee -three elders, who are  
134 appointed by the board and then the nominating committee came up with the other 3 names and there  
135 was a congregational vote. There was a total of six.

136 **Question: How did the nominating committee choose to select or put forward as potential search**  
137 **committee numbers?**

138 I was not a member of the nominating committee so I do not know. I think they just felt like these are  
139 people with good reputations. One of them had done it on the previous committee and agreed to do it  
140 again. I know that that probably was a significant reason why she got on. And, really good  
141 representation of the demographics of our church. We have someone who is a little bit older, middle-  
142 aged and then a younger guy that has young children so I think that was a good pick.

143 **Q: Was there any other criteria of any kind that was given to the search committee?**

144 We left it all wide open with our search committee in terms of timeline. Criteria we left that up to them.  
145 I think that we were in a very unique position because we had an interim pastor already so we didn't  
146 have the pressure that previous search committees did. This is a document what we came up with which  
147 lists desired qualifications. I think some of these came from our denomination, so these were all kind of  
148 amalgamated. One of these. That we had the board develop and passed it on to the search committee.  
149 We also had a job description from a different church that the search committee went through in order  
150 to put this all together. So, the board gave a lot of different resources to the search committee so that  
151 they could work through them all to put together the profile. The job description was a board-level thing  
152 because the board developed the job descriptions of all of our staff. That was something that we  
153 worked on this year and we are calling it the lead pastor, we have changed it from senior pastor. I think  
154 that is the latest trend. So, I have all these other. Which talk about confidentiality and other parts of our  
155 process that I can give to you. This will help you understand what we started with which was day one.  
156 That's the document that everybody on the committee got. And we went through all of that.

157 **Q: What were your considerations as you developed your job description? Were there some things**  
158 **that you said – we definitely need this?**

159 We had a lot of papers and job descriptions from other churches that we used to put ours together. We  
160 did specifically talk about someone who was able to run an office. That discussion was board level. We  
161 talked about his qualities as being good in the office, conflict management was another really big one  
162 that we talked about, and just an ability to take a stand firmly on beliefs - doctrinal stuff. We also talked  
163 about what he should do as far as visitation and that sort of thing. We never really said either way. It  
164 would depend upon the person we got. We would have to negotiate that. We talked a little bit about  
165 how many hours he would put in and that sort of things. He would need to be given time to study the  
166 word. That was an important thing that we talked about. And we set some money aside for conferences  
167 so that he can go educate himself - further education.

168 **Q: Is there anything else that you would want to add from the board's perspective or conversations**  
169 **that helped set the tone or expectations for this search?**

170 I think that given it was such a short time that our last Pastor was here – it wasn't very long. Our goal  
171 now is to find someone who is going to be long term. So, one of the things that everybody has talked  
172 about is that we do not want to get a pastor who is in retirement phase. So middle-aged is important -  
173 age was a factor. We want them to be able to relate to our congregation - we have a young  
174 congregation. We don't want to isolate them from our older people either, so it has to be a balance.

175 **Question: What role does your church community have in the hiring process?**

176 That is something we have really made an effort as a search committee to bring them updates and keep  
177 them informed of where we are, so just to keep everyone calm and realizing that we are doing  
178 something. We are trying to stay ahead of that. As far as their input, they really don't now - it is all on  
179 the search committee. So, our congregation eventually votes and they will vote the guy in. We make the  
180 recommendation to them. They will hear him and after we recommend people to the congregation,  
181 they will vote to accept the person or not to accept the person. It is a yay or nay. It

182 is a hard position for a pastor to be in but I do not know what else you would do. I believe that it is a  
183 ballot vote and it requires 75%. We want to avoid a popularity situation. Ideally, we keep the  
184 congregation informed monthly but we sometimes miss months, but that is our goal.

185 **Q: Is there any other kind of congregational involvement?**

186 We also have prayer meetings on Wednesday nights so they are always praying for our search  
187 committee and they are always praying for our new pastor. Now, that being said we also did 30 days of  
188 Prayer and went through little document as part of our prayer meeting and that was specifically for the  
189 pastor. And again, that is an elder lead prayer meeting, so one elder takes that on each month. We  
190 specifically make sure these things are prayed for. But everybody does anyway.

191 **Q: What priorities do you have for a new pastor?**

192 Well, we have been through some stuff as a church so one of our things is that we want to make sure we  
193 stick to our doctrine shall we say. I don't think that's a huge deal but if you ask people in the church 90%  
194 would agree with that. We need somebody who is strong enough to speak and say this is what we  
195 believe. That's what we need. A clear strong leader with our denomination's distinctives. I personally  
196 would like an expository pastor, that is in our denomination. I would say, when we talk about the board,  
197 that would be high on our list from a board perspective. We really don't want him to have a second job.  
198 A job on the side would not be a helpful thing. We want them to focus on church and not be distracted

199 by other things. We are also very community focused in our church so somebody that's got a little  
200 community would be important I believe.

201 **Final question: Is there anything else that you would want to add or comment on?**

202 Nothing that comes to mind.



1           **C3R1SP1**

2           **Question: Would you describe your hiring process, your selection process for me?**

3           Ok so we formed a committee. Six of us on the committee. There are three elders and three, I guess you  
4           would call us just members of the church body. So, consists of three men as elders, two women, and  
5           one other man from the church body. We got together for our first meeting and the elders had worked  
6           with our interim pastor this time and kind of come up with what we're looking for in a new pastor and  
7           the criteria that we would hope that he would meet.

8           So, they had developed that and before that there was a sort of questionnaire, round table chat I guess  
9           you'd call it with the whole body and questions were asked of what we wanted to see in the next lead  
10          pastor and what would be important to us and things in that nature. And we broke off into tables of  
11          eight or ten and we were asked certain questions at each table and gave our input. From that they  
12          developed criteria that the church body was looking for and added it along with of course what the  
13          elders would expect in the next lead pastor as well for us.

14          So, we went over that the first meeting and we kind of got an idea of the type of man we were looking  
15          for and of course much prayer would go into each meeting before we would start to just seek God's  
16          guidance, his leading and the direction he wanted us to go to bring us you know the man he has for us.  
17          You know we trust that he has a man in place and he will provide whoever that man may be.

18          So, then the next meetings then we were, our regional office was a contact that given that we were  
19          looking. They were to provide for us names and profiles of candidates that would come in and be  
20          looking as well for a church to move to.

21          So as those names come in, we read over their profiles and we go online and we listen to their sermons  
22          and see if any of them you know kind of catch our attention and see if they are, you know, what their  
23          messages are like and who they are themselves possibly. And then we'd get back together and discuss  
24          what were our findings. Not sure if that answers everything you asked me in that.

25          **Q: Now how long have you been searching to this point?**

26          We actually started searching in I would say it was March of this year. That's when it really got  
27          underway the process. The previous pastor left I guess it was last I want to say September I think or the  
28          end of August I think he was gone. We kind of got an interim pastor in and then they started to  
29          formulate what you know the qualifications and that they were looking for.

30          **Q: Ok. Good. So, in your process to this point has anything changed or been different from what you  
31          expected when you first started?**

32          I guess for me I expected because I've been through this just six years ago, I expected that we would  
33          have several, like a lot of profiles come in because last time around we had numerous profiles come in  
34          to an email box that we set up that they would send to. This time however oh I don't know I'd say we've  
35          only maybe I'm guessing a bit here but I'm thinking maybe ten maybe twelve candidates have been  
36          brought to our attention. So, I'm disappointed kind of in that and I shouldn't be because every search is  
37          different but it's been a little frustrating for me to see that there hasn't been the outpouring of profiles  
38          come in. So that is different.

39          But actually, from what, what has been different from when we actually started out on this particular  
40          process, I'm not sure that I would say there's anything that's really changed or been different that I can  
41          think of right off the top of my head.

42 **Q: Right. Yes. I guess it was just, when you started out in March and ok, here's our process and here's**  
43 **what we kind of understand where we're going and now, we're in October, it's kind of like hmmm.**  
44 **Maybe we need to tweak this or tweak that or do something different or...**

45 Yeah, I guess with that we have on occasion you know maybe a couple months ago kind of said OK  
46 where do we go from here. We're not getting the names coming forward. We're kind of in a dry spell.  
47 You know. Kind of say Lord where are you taking us and you know what are you doing? We feel kind of  
48 like at loose ends. We've had a few where the profiles that have come in really haven't been  
49 outstanding to us and we've all been wonderfully unanimous about that. We have great unity within our  
50 group which is really awesome and we've all agreed that what we've seen so far hasn't really been  
51 anybody dynamic. So, we kind of like so where do we go. So, our interim pastor has been very good to  
52 know names of men here and there that we could contact and maybe say ok would you be interested  
53 like are you thinking about moving or you know. And we've found two men that have been absolutely  
54 wonderful. Like we've all felt/said wow if we could get this guy, we think that he would be ideal. One has  
55 turned us down. The other one is still waiting to see where God is leading him. But it doesn't look really  
56 hopeful at this point. So, we're kind of back at ok where do we go from here? So, we've kind of gone  
57 with the idea that alright maybe our interim pastor, he has connections with the international head. Is  
58 that the right word? He looks after all of Canada I believe. I'm not sure where he's out of but maybe  
59 contacting him seeing if there's any out in the west that might want to come east and maybe there's  
60 some candidates that way because that we could take a look at and see. So, we're kind of that's where  
61 we are right now. It's...this one man we're really hoping will be the one, he has encouraged us greatly.  
62 He's been tremendous just the emails back and forth, correspondence that he's had with our chair. It  
63 has been a huge encouragement for us so we know God is moving and working and it keeps us, yes, we  
64 are doing God's work and he will move. He will show us the right time but we have to really keep on top  
65 of that because you get to the point where you're thinking, wow is this ever going to come to an end?  
66 Which really, we've only just started really so we should be excited about that yet. But you get to a spot  
67 where you're running out of options and ideas is like oh no what now? The waiting part can be  
68 frustrating but waiting we are.

69 **Question: So, you described your selection process for me in terms of how you established different**  
70 **criteria in round tables and questionnaires, elders having input with your interim pastor to help**  
71 **develop some criteria as well that all went together and then prayer before every meeting. Were**  
72 **there any other factors or influences, actual specifics then as you were developing your criteria? What**  
73 **did those criteria actually look like? What were some of the influences or specific criteria that were**  
74 **important?**

75 Well, I guess this may not be the answer you're looking for but it sticks out in my mind. Our church has  
76 come through a very tough three years because we had a couple pastor that, a youth pastor and an  
77 associate pastor that there were some issues and problems and that had to be addressed. And our...the  
78 lead pastor that we had did address those and brought them to light and it was a mess. To say kindly, it  
79 was a big mess and it was very hard. We had quite a few people leave the church, upset, angry,  
80 bitterness, unforgiveness. Still have people in the church that are working, struggling with that, trying to  
81 get to the resolve on that. The elders are still trying to resolve, our interim pastor is still trying to  
82 resolve. So, what happened with that also I think affected, ok what do we need. Because in our church  
83 we have several different denominations. We have people that have come to our church from the  
84 Brethren, from Catholics, from Pentecostals, Christian Reformed, Dutch Christian Reformed I believe,  
85 United, I think that kind of gets most of them. But we have quite a mix so all those people that have  
86 come in, it is almost like they all have their ideas of what they wanted and some of that has flared up  
87 and like well...the crux of it has come down to there's a very strong Pentecostal movement in our church

88 and those people want to see some changes where we're not willing to change. We are this  
89 denomination this is what we've given them. This is what we stand for. This is what we believe. This is  
90 what we're going to teach and we're not going to say you can't come to our church but on the other  
91 hand we cannot be teaching what you believe and expecting us to change. So, it's kind of set out some  
92 guidelines I think as to ok the man we get, we're really praying that God will bring us a man who's very  
93 strong in that and we will not waver. A man of great integrity who will stand up for truth, preach truth,  
94 speak truth, and will not waver in that. That if things need to be dealt with, it will get dealt with in a  
95 godly manner and in love and that type of thing. So, I think that's had an impact.

96 **Q: Yes, I can see that. So, some of the input that was received through your round tables and such,**  
97 **may have reflected some of the various influences.**

98 Absolutely I think it did

99 **Q: And so, then you had to or I guess the elders then and the search committee would have to then**  
100 **sift through them?**

101 I think the elders did that for us. A lot of those ideas came out in those round tables and it was like well  
102 we can't have that because we don't believe that. So yes, they went through that before we got  
103 together.

104 And our interim pastor now has made it really clear and done a great job of saying what we believe and  
105 having what he calls a family chat where he says ok here is some of the things that are going on, here's  
106 what we've found, here's where we are and again, here's what we believe and we're not going to  
107 deviate from that so you know, you can be here but if you don't agree and you know, aren't happy or  
108 not comfortable then maybe there's someplace better for you to be.

109 **Question: what aspects of the hiring process do you believe have been the most significant so far for**  
110 **the selection decision**

111 Not just sure I'm really understanding what you're asking me but we look for the age of the candidate. Is  
112 that kind of what you're getting at? Those kinds of things?

113 **Q: well, that's a factor. I mean yes there may be some criteria that make it really easy. There may be**  
114 **aspects of your process.**

115 Ok so we look at his age. We look at where his background as to his education. We look for has he been  
116 a lead pastor previous or is he a youth pastor looking to become a lead. You know that kind of  
117 experience. We look at how he grew up, what his childhood kind of idea of when he got saved, that kind  
118 of thing. That's some of the main things we look for. I'm not sure there's anything else. I'm not sure that  
119 I'm understanding your question well enough to answer.

120 **Question: That's fine. I guess I'm just thinking in terms of. How will you ultimately make your**  
121 **decision? Are there criteria, different things that you're looking for that will allow you to say, like you**  
122 **said, we're really interested in this guy or really interested in this guy. These people were unanimous**  
123 **that they weren't the guy. But there must have been some criteria or some means by which you made**  
124 **those evaluations. You said earlier that you listen to their message, some sermons online so what are**  
125 **some of those things?**

126 ok. Some were, we would have described them as, they were weak preachers in that they would, some  
127 of them went off on bunny trails and maybe had three or four messages within one that you really

128 couldn't follow. So, we were looking for someone that was a strong message, was a clear message. I'm  
129 trying to think of some of the other things. Nothing's coming to mind other than that right now sorry.

130 **oh, that's fine.**

131 Some of them were tone of voice, some of them were very monotone and very hard to listen to. They  
132 had a good message but the tone, there was no life in their voice and in the message so it was just this  
133 drone that just went oh man it could put you to sleep. So, we don't want that either. Things like that, I  
134 guess.

135 I think we're probably looking for I would say forty-five to fifty-five at the oldest. I think that's where  
136 we're at. Somewhere in that range. We don't want older than fifty-five necessarily because we want a  
137 man that's going to stick around for a while. Because we've had a few...our first pastor from when I went  
138 to the church back in 2000, he had been there seventeen years. Then the next one was only there a  
139 short, I'm thinking maybe five. Then the one after that was only about five and now here, we are again  
140 so we don't want to be doing this over and over. So, we're looking for a man that wants to stay.

141 **Q: And you mentioned education. Are you looking for a particular type of education?**

142 Well just his background you know has he been to seminary has he you know that kind of thing. whether  
143 it's just you know out of college who has had no Biblical training at all like we want someone who's gone  
144 through some of that. So, he knows his way around the Bible, I guess you could say.

145 **Q: and you're looking for some degree of experience**

146 Yes, someone who's maybe been in a church similar in size to our own and looked after a group, church  
147 body of similar size. Now our last pastor had a whole slew of credentials behind his name and he had a  
148 large staff under him but when he arrived, I mean we all agreed for him to come and he came for a  
149 purpose we know that now. We see God's hand in that. But yet when it was done, we saw God move  
150 him out too. But we realized in that a whole string of credentials and a staff underneath you do not  
151 really mean squat you know. It helps I am sure but sometimes it does not really mean anything.

152 So, this fellow doesn't have to have a big long history of credentials but certainly needs some you know.  
153 He's genuine and he's true. He has to have a loving heart. We're looking for like a preacher not  
154 necessarily a teacher. We had a teacher last time. We need a preacher who can teach so that we feel  
155 the love, has a shepherd heart for the people. That was missing the last time too. The man, I mean he  
156 loved us we know that, but his heart was not, we didn't feel that love exuding from him. You had to find  
157 it and we want someone who can, you know hey yeah, this guy is genuine, he's real, he does love us and  
158 he's there for us. And I have to say our interim pastor now, for me, he's the first pastor I've ever had  
159 that I could go to with any problem and know that I could talk to him about that. I've never felt that  
160 before so personally myself I want to find a lead pastor like that again. And I think the majority of people  
161 want that too and that really came out strong that this man has to have a shepherd's heart.

162 We want to be able to be willing to visit. Like this time too with our interim pastor, I don't mean to keep  
163 referring back to him but he's awesome. He really is. Anyway, he has set up one evening a week where  
164 we can fill in a time slot and go talk to him about anything at all. He's there whether anybody shows up  
165 or not he's sitting there that whole evening and he's available. I've never seen that before. He's there  
166 and that to me is a really great thing and it makes people feel like wow this guy is real. He means it.  
167 When he says I'm here, he means it. He's put meat to this so you know

168 **Question: So ultimately then you're going to hopefully discern. You'll have someone you know meets**  
169 **these various criteria... then how do you ultimately make the decision?**

170 First, we would have to agree that we want to pursue this fellow further. We would call him up and ask  
171 for a brief sit down and just a short chat with him just to get to know him a little better, a little more  
172 personal face to face and just get a sense of his personality and his heart and just who he really is and  
173 how we respond to him and how he might respond to our people.

174 **Q: So, this face to face is initially with your committee.**

175 Yes, just the committee at this point. From there if we still felt, there'd be much discussion I'm sure and  
176 prayer after that. And if we still felt that yeah you know. We would listen to more sermons and that too.  
177 Just, maybe go and visit him at his church discreetly if we could get away with that. Sometimes that's  
178 difficult. Just hear him in his own setting and see his people in his church now how they respond to him,  
179 how they interact with him. Listen to the music they have there. Get to know what their ministries are  
180 there and see whether he's you know, whether that's fitting what we're looking for too. Whether he's  
181 used to that kind of style and what's going on there. If we still like him at that point, then we would sit  
182 down with him again and do a deeper discussion with him again and ask him more like an interview.  
183 We'd have a whole gamut of questions. Last time around we had sixty questions for the poor man. And  
184 it was good! It was interesting and it was good. It didn't seem to be a hardship to him for the answers so  
185 we'd have a list of questions we'd formulate and sit down for more of a formal interview. If we still felt  
186 at that point that yeah you know, more prayer would be involved and Lord is this really who you have  
187 for us? Is this really what you want? And then he'd be contacted if we felt that we wanted to present  
188 him to the board for hiring. So, at that point we'd present him and they'd take it from there.

189 **Q: Do you have a job description? Is there a job description that was developed?**

190 For him?

191 **Q: For this new candidate? You say there's the qualities you're looking for...**

192 I guess it is the. I would kind of call it a job description, I guess. It's all the things we expect of him. It isn't  
193 a job description like a secular world but in a sort, I believe it is that list of criteria that we would want  
194 him to meet, I think.

195 **Q: Well criteria and expectations in terms of the ministry roll**

196 See right now we have, our church staff is accountable to the pastor, the pastor is accountable to the  
197 elders, the elders are accountable to the body, and the body is accountable to Christ so that's kind of  
198 the job description. He has to be able to work with a board of elders.

199 **Q: I just wondered, sometimes churches get very specific you know, in terms of the expectations**  
200 **around the oversight of the various ministries, preaching, maybe sometimes visitation. They may get**  
201 **very specific in terms of what the expectations were and I just wondered if you had anything that**  
202 **specific and I wondered whether or not, how that even would have been developed, whether the**  
203 **elders would have done that or is it the search committee develops the job description.**

204 I'm thinking the elders probably would have done more of that but I know that just being in our church  
205 what we have. I mean we want him to, we want to know his worship style of music, what he wants and  
206 what we have. I think that's something they would have developed.

207 Yeah, again I think it's probably the elders that look at that because for us, yeah, we want them to be,  
208 have some administration skills obviously to be able to function because they need to work with our  
209 PowerPoint and sound people to put up overviews and things on the head screen and outlines, sermon  
210 outlines, things like that. They have to be able to do some of that stuff so... And preaching I know we like

211 to see the man in the pulpit for sure every Sunday with you know the exception of possibly the youth  
212 pastor would preach once a month and of course they get holidays. So yeah, and we want to see him be  
213 able to schedule in visitation and also keep on top of his own study and his own development.

214 But yeah, that's something the elders would develop. I'm not sure the committee does.

215 **Question: What role does your church community have in the hiring process? You described those**  
216 **groups initially in giving some input in terms of what they would like. Is there any other role that the**  
217 **church has in this process?**

218 At the end when we bring him for a call, then they get to hear him. Now the last time I think we only had  
219 him preach once. I think we're discussing this time maybe have him come a couple times so that people  
220 have a little more eyes on and ears to him and then there will be a vote and they would have a vote as  
221 to whether they want him or not. I mean the elders would certainly say we recommend this person but  
222 it does have to go to a membership vote.

223 **Q: What percentage?**

224 golly I'm not sure what the percentage

225 I'd wonder if it isn't a 75-25 but I'm not certain. I know the last time it was a 99 percent. It was  
226 recommended I mean he was accepted so. I never really thought about that and I can't remember what  
227 we said last time. We really haven't discussed that this time. We haven't got that far.

228 **Q: Ok so then the congregation would vote. Is there anything else?**

229 I think we have a time when they first hear him that I'm wondering, I'm not certain but I thinking that  
230 we discussed that they would have a little more input. Maybe be able to ask questions and yes, they  
231 would be able to hear him and then ask him questions too so that they'd have a better understanding of  
232 who he is and his capabilities I guess you could want to call it. His qualifications. and last time too we  
233 had after he preached there was a time of questions and that will happen again, I'm sure.

234 **Q: Ok so how are the congregation informed? Like are they kept up to date on some kind of reporting**  
235 **that happens periodically or how are they involved?**

236 Yes, we try to give them an update every two months I think we have been and then we've been a little  
237 lax in that and we want to try to get better in that. We have been giving them updates as to where  
238 we're at and what we've been doing and how the process of it all. I mean we're limited, we can't tell  
239 them everything but yeah, as much as we can.

240 **Q: Is the congregation involved in any other way or...**

241 We were given at the start, we handed out a little booklet "40 days of worship" to go through for them  
242 to pray for us as a search and then things that they could be praying about through that. Hopefully  
243 they've gone through it. I mean they're probably on their second round for sure. And you know just  
244 asking them and you know reminding them how much we appreciate their prayer and how much we  
245 recognize that their prayer is there, that we feel that and that we want them to keep on praying and not  
246 lose heart. So, we're encouraging them to come along as well. And often times many of them will come  
247 up to us individually and also give their support and let us know, "we're still praying for you". And we do  
248 have a very strong prayer emphasis in our church. There's a good group that prayer warriors that are  
249 praying.

250 **Q: How was the search committee selected?**

251 I'm not sure how I got selected but I think it's because I was on the last one.

252 **Q: So, the elders would just come and ask?**

253 The elders came and asked or approached me and said you know we've been; your name has been.  
254 Actually, I should back up. Before that the nominating committee put together a group that they felt  
255 should be on the search committee. So, they named three elders and three members of the church and I  
256 think there was about six or seven names of the church body that were presented and I guess the  
257 elders...yes, they actually approached and said would you be willing to let your name stand to be on the  
258 committee and it was yes or no. And it came down to who was selected.

259 **Q: Ok so there was a nominating committee that was struck. The board or the elders established this**  
260 **nominating committee?**

261 Actually, the nominating committee is voted on at our annual meeting and it's formed. Then we were  
262 asked for...how many members? I forget how many members get on that. I'm thinking it's four or five.  
263 I'm not certain. And then there's a group of elders on it as well. I think it has to be two women and two  
264 men from the body. I'm not certain on that. They are voted on. Like their names are presented and then  
265 voted on yes or no and they form that committee.

266 **Q: And what is the function of that committee?**

267 The nominating committee? They look at different aspects of the church that maybe someone is moving  
268 out of the ministry and it's an opening and who they would say, "well we think this person would fit  
269 there well" and you know they start to look at who in the body could fill that position.

270 **Q: So, they're looking to fill ministry positions and that falls under the scope of "ok we have this need"**  
271 **so they cover a fairly broad**

272 Yeah, and they take who they feel would be suited, they take that back to the elders. And they of course  
273 would say yea or nay. There could be issues that they couldn't know about or reasons that can't be.

274 **Q: Ok so there's this separate group that deals with those types of things. This just happens to be**  
275 **because there's a need for hiring a pastor and a search committee and they facilitate that**

276 Yeah, it could be someone to head up the kitchen committee. You know whatever

277 **Q: So, like Sunday school or worship**

278 Yes, and every year that committee changes.

279 **Question: It's the first time I've actually heard that so good. So, are there any other elements that you**  
280 **consider when you're evaluating a candidate's possible fit at your church? How do you evaluate their**  
281 **possible fit for your church?**

282 Me personally? I want to see a man who is definitely within that age frame. I'd like to see a man who's  
283 like forty-eight myself. I want to see a man who has a family. I want to see a man who has worked with  
284 youth and has moved in to a lead position with some good background in school and studies in theology,  
285 that kind of thing. I want to see a man that has had staff under him and I want to see what that looks  
286 like. Did he meet monthly, weekly, every other day, how often did he meet with that staff? I want to  
287 know things like how does he handle conflict? How does he handle issues that blatantly are sinful in the  
288 church and have to be dealt with? That's...I really want to see a man and understand what he does with  
289 that. That's important to me. And I also want to hear his heart. I want to feel that he is a shepherd like

290 he cares for people, loves people, and that his love for God exceeds that even by great measure. I want  
291 him to be able to preach practical, life skills to people. That he can bring something to us that smacks us  
292 square between the eyes and we can't we can't walk out of church without saying, "woah I'm going to  
293 deal with that in my life. What did that mean to me?" and that it would expose in us, sinful things in us  
294 that we need to deal with and that we would mature and grow in. I want to see a man who will visit and  
295 be readily available to people. And I know he can't do that every day of the week. I know that is difficult  
296 and I understand that but I just want to know that he is available there and will try to do as much of that  
297 as he can.

298 Well, he just really needs to be real. He needs to be genuine and he just. He doesn't have to be...oh! And  
299 somebody that doesn't talk in huge, big words that half the people can't understand. He needs to be in  
300 the middle somewhere. He needs to be able to talk to the people that are not educated that well  
301 maybe. A poor way to turn it but...And not the ones that are so high up there, that are university degree  
302 level that get it all and all of the rest of us are like what the heck is that about.

303 Yeah, he's got to be able to reach people. And that's quite a feat. I think. We've had some really well  
304 scholared. That's not a word. Scholarly? Well educated men in the past as pastors and they've talked big  
305 words. Now for me, I can get there but I know there is many that could not. My husband couldn't get  
306 there. He could be like "oh that's a bit over my head". We don't all do well with that.

307 And that's why for me it's a man that's about forty-eight because he's probably got children hopefully.  
308 He's probably got older parents hopefully still alive or maybe that have passed on or whatever but he's  
309 dealt with some of that, all those family issues and he's kind of in the middle of it yet. But you know he  
310 can relate.

311 **Q: So, have there been any challenges or issues as you've worked thus far to select, identify and select**  
312 **your next pastor? One of the challenges you've mentioned that you've not got very many profiles.**  
313 **Have there been other challenges or issues?**

314 Well, the thing, the other challenges, that I find aren't with the candidates. Some of the challenges I find  
315 are within the committee itself. And I'm not saying we don't have qualified people on the committee.  
316 I'm not saying that at all. We have highly qualified people on the committee. But we're all different  
317 personality types and I'm a bit of an A personality and I am organized out my ying-yang and I drive some  
318 people a little, well I wouldn't say crazy, but they definitely know. Like I'm the minute taker and I like to  
319 see things done and if there are action steps, I want to see those action steps fulfilled before the next  
320 meeting. And we have some that are a little laid back and "oh gee I forgot to do that" and that to me is  
321 frustrating. So really that's a challenge for me is to relax and say "you know God you have this. This is all  
322 up to you." I don't have to sit my two cents in anywhere and I often have to check myself you know, just  
323 relax you know, don't worry about it. But that to me is a challenge and that's probably nothing to do  
324 with what you're looking for but it just, I don't know.

325 Our committee is great. I mean we have very...they are devoted and sometimes their own lives get in  
326 the way and we have to work around that which is fine. But we have some really...we have one man that  
327 is, he's highly trained at being able to really hear what you're saying and understand because that's  
328 what he does for a living. He's kind of like a, I guess a type of psychologist I would think. I've been told  
329 but I don't know that title. And he is so good because we did interview, a short interview, with one  
330 fellow and he just heard between the lines. He knew. He heard things that none of the rest of us  
331 thought in terms like wow! And when he brought them out, pointed them out to us, like yeah, I didn't  
332 hear that but he heard it. So, he's invaluable on our committee I think because when we get to that



333 interviewing process, he's going to hear what's really being said from this person. Which I think is  
334 awesome.

335 And we have one man who is, he's such a godly man. And he is just wisdom, wisdom, wisdom, and it's  
336 just a blessing to listen to him and it's just awesome. And we have a young man also who's a blessing to  
337 us in that way too. We all have our strengths and weaknesses and we all have a good mix. We work well  
338 together. We do. And we are unanimous. God has not brought us anything yet that we've been "wait a  
339 minute here". You know, it's always been "yeah I agree". You know what we've found.

340 **Q: What do you think if you're ever to get into a situation, where you were not unanimous? To this**  
341 **point you've been unanimous which is good. How would you handle it if you weren't?**

342 I think we have come to a point where two wanted to go gung-ho and take a step and three of us said  
343 "wait a minute. slow down. Think we're going a little but too fast with that." And a little bit of a debate  
344 came but at the end of it all the three of us realized and said OK, the one fellow you've got a good point  
345 there. And yeah ok, then it was brought out God was showing us this I think and we were able to debate  
346 again and we all then decided, "you know, you're right. We're just maybe too...two want to relax and we  
347 do need to move ahead like you said." So, we were able to discuss it and get to an agreement without  
348 any anger or bitterness which was good. And I think that will hold true to the end. I really do because I  
349 think we're all well enough along in our lives and in our Christian walk I think to be able to do that. And  
350 we won't let this become something that gets out of hand. We've seen too much of that in our church  
351 already and we know how dangerous, how debilitating, and how destroying that is and we're not going  
352 there.

353 **Question: Ok well thank you. Is there anything else that you might like to share?**

354 I'm not really sure I can think of anything

355 **That's fine**

356 I would like...I do think possibly our region could be a little more helpful in saying "ok, you've hit a dry  
357 patch. Maybe look here or look there." There must be other avenues we can take that they have to  
358 know of I would hope. I would assume they would. I mean I know they are filtering through some of the  
359 ones that have come in because they know the criteria we have and they know some of the history that  
360 has gone on in our church. So, they are filtering through but maybe they should not be filtering so much.  
361 Maybe we should be looking at some of that. I don't know if that's really right or not. Maybe they know  
362 exactly what they're doing and they're saving us a lot of time and effort. But I just wonder if there's not  
363 more help there that they could give us. And it isn't really...sometimes I feel like we're having to get the  
364 crowbar and really pry out information. And not...don't mean that in a bad way. It just seems like we're  
365 having a struggle of different avenues to follow to find more candidates that could be out there. And  
366 maybe they're just not there. Maybe we're at a time where they're just not there. And I know there is a  
367 whole influx and they're working with the younger ones coming up and they're giving them more  
368 training, more education on becoming lead pastors. I know that's happening so maybe that's it. We've  
369 just got a spot where there's all the good ones are coming up and they're just not there yet. I don't  
370 know. It is hard to find the really young ones that have had enough experience especially from what we  
371 have been through. We want a man that is strong and can stand up because yeah, we have had some  
372 issues, terrible, terrible issues that just cannot happen again. We cannot go there again. We have to stay  
373 strong and stand up for truth and preach truth. I truly believe God will not bless our church and move it  
374 forward until we do that and show that we are willing to do that.

## 1 C3R1SP2

2 **Question: Could you describe your hiring process for me?**

3 The process I guess was more...the process had to do kind of with developing a criteria or qualification  
4 of the candidate we're looking for and that was developed at the board level so essentially leadership of  
5 the church determined what criteria, what specific desires do we have in a candidate and then obviously  
6 different qualifications whether its education, experience, scriptural. Kind of put that into a document.  
7 So, we discussed that at length for probably a month or so. Finally got that down on paper and that was  
8 given to the search committee who took those and then developed a process. How do you implement  
9 this? How do we go step one two three etcetera until we find our candidate and hire him? So, we sat  
10 down then as a search committee and drew essentially a search and hire process, developed several  
11 steps whereby generally, initially getting profiles or resumes or otherwise cold calling and asking pastors  
12 that we've heard about that may or may not be interested in transitioning from another church whether  
13 or not we had the profile or resume. So that would have been step one. Step two would have been then  
14 to follow up interview after we had met initially and kind of determined someone is interested and  
15 we're interested in meeting with them. That would have been step one. Step two would be a second  
16 interview whereby we'd get a little more in depth into some of the more specific desires and  
17 qualifications and criteria that we had laid out a little more.

18 **Q: Ok so are you on the board as well?**

19 I am yeah. So, I'll try to keep it as separate as I can. At that point determining on how the search  
20 committee felt after that interview, we would either go back to the board and express our desire to go  
21 to another step with this candidate or as a search committee we would come to a consensus and say,  
22 "you know what we kind of agree that this isn't the man we're looking for". So, if it was unanimous on  
23 the search committee, we would go back to the board and we would say "ok we think we've found the  
24 man that we as a team are unanimously behind pursuing" at which point we've one, introduce ourselves  
25 with a preliminary interview; two, we've kind of sat down and kind of gotten more in depth with criteria  
26 you've given us and we feel confident that he meets all of those. So, step three is now we want you  
27 involved in the process as the church leadership to also meet. You're then able to ask him what you  
28 need to determine whether or not he's going to mesh with current church leadership and pastoral staff  
29 and all that information where, that we may not have, especially the membership Chris representation  
30 would have all the information around the...

31 And then determined from that would be ok "how does the board feel?" Current pastors and the  
32 leadership have a chance to interview. Are they also in agreement that this is and so that would kind of  
33 take us to our final step then? Agreement and then we make the final call and say we would like you to  
34 preach a call at our church. At that point we present candidate to the membership. Usually they would  
35 preach at least once, sometimes twice and then have a general membership meeting. They would sit  
36 down; membership would ask some questions and have a bit of discussion time. Usually not a vote that  
37 day. Candidate usually give them a few days then we would sit down as a membership and people  
38 would have the opportunity to vote. I think our bylaws state that a minimum of 75% or whatever. So, we  
39 determine from the vote ok did membership then also agree with the board and with the search  
40 committee. If yes then we're good. If not, we go back and start over.

41 **Q: Ok so when you were developing your process, the actual process, the board develop the criteria,**  
42 **the qualifications and such and they gave that to the committee. So, then the committee had to**  
43 **develop the process for how do we then go about looking. So, what's your process? You mention cold**  
44 **calling, getting profiles so you get those from YOUR REGIONAL OFFICE.**

45 Yeah, so there was some advice obviously being a board member and a search committee member I  
46 had...the board did talk about some avenues that the search committee could take. They didn't  
47 necessarily develop the entire process for the committee but suggested

48 **recommendations**

49 That's right. Obviously go with OUR REGIONAL OFFICE. The AGC denominations are very similar to ours  
50 so we can ring their bell, see if they've got any profiles. And then another critical piece of advice that the  
51 search committee got was don't just solely rely on candidates that are in the process of looking. Who  
52 are currently employed or employed but looking to move, transition out of where they are currently  
53 are? Try seeing if there's an opportunity to find a candidate that really strikes everyone on the search  
54 committee, that really is compelling, meets all the criteria, is dynamic. And we're trying to find that out  
55 by doing a little bit of background research, listen to sermons, kind of figuring out what church they're  
56 from, going on their website and looking at all their information and history. So, we've done that now  
57 three or four times. And that was given as advice to say maybe that's the first way you go. That way  
58 might seem as a last resort but sometimes, the advice was, God moves pastors on in a way that confirms  
59 maybe what they're thinking but haven't actually taken steps to go through and submit a profile or  
60 currently aren't even unemployed. They're not maybe even in the process of really considering it but the  
61 fact that you're approaching them all of a sudden means that they will seriously consider it, pray about  
62 it and that may be the way that God moves them on from where they are to where you would be. So  
63 that was the advice we were given.

64 **Q: Yeah ok. So, what is your role on the board?**

65 I guess they call me the vice-chairman. The search committee, I actually chair the search committee.

66 So, I think there's six on our board plus our pastoral staff. Then there's six members on our search  
67 committee.

68 **Q: How do you go about deciding what your process will be?**

69 We have an interim pastor who came aboard almost a year ago this time, very end of last year,  
70 beginning of this year and he has had a lot of experience obviously. He's been in ministry some forty  
71 years. He has also a lot of experience helping either the churches he's been directly involved in or other  
72 churches kind of work through a process of where do you go when your senior pastor has left and you're  
73 in the process of finding another so he really brought to us a lot of advice to the board and then the  
74 board kind of relayed that to the search committee and let them discuss and kind of put wheels to how  
75 they were going to use all that information. Our interim pastor also sits in the search committee  
76 meetings so he is helpful and kind of also directly relaying to the search committee what he's told the  
77 board so that's been for our specific situation, incredibly helpful having someone who's there in an  
78 interim position trying to give you twelve or more processes that he's been a part of and seen what's  
79 worked, what hasn't and be able to guide us and get us through that.

80 **Q: Have there been any particular resources that he's recommended or that you guys have used?**

81 Well both recommendations, using the AGC as another denomination to go through as well as just the  
82 cold call idea that really came from him first to the board then from the board to the search committee.

83 **Q: Ok so with cold calling, then you are basically, if you're aware of someone, potentially someone, or**  
84 **you hear then you just basically call and say hey here's who we are and what we're about. Is this**  
85 **something you would be open to considering?**

86 That's right. So as the chairman of the search committee, it's really fallen to me to make those maybe a  
87 little bit awkward communication. It's surprising how well received it is. It kind of comes out of the blue  
88 at some point and if you extend them enough grace to know oh this is going to be a weird call and it's  
89 coming out of the blue at them, I would say all of them handled it very well. Two responses right away  
90 just said no I'm confident I'm not being led out of this church. Three out of the five said let me consider  
91 it, take it back to my wife, we'll pray about it. Two out of those three returned within a week or two and  
92 said it's clear that we aren't moving. But one candidate took at least five or six weeks and made a visit to  
93 Exeter even, really put a lot of time and effort in to considering it but in the end, he too said no, it's clear  
94 to us now we are not being lead.

95 **Question: What aspects of your hiring process do you think or you believe have been the most**  
96 **significant for your selection decision? I mean granted you haven't made a decision yet but what**  
97 **elements do you think are the most significant?**

98 Like out of our criteria?

99 **For your process.**

100 Oh, of our process. Elements most significant. I would say the profile would be the most significant, so  
101 far, the most important to us because it actually does put a lot right in front of every individual on the  
102 committee. There's a packet of information and so it gives a lot of information that can be useful to  
103 determine right away if they are these criteria that we have being met. Right off the bat or are they not?  
104 So that whole profile has been very useful in our process and as a committee sitting down and reviewing  
105 that and being able to discuss "ok so that profile is obviously missing one or two things that we think is  
106 critical to our church". So, we set that aside. Oh, this one has everything. Now we consider whether we  
107 take the next step with this guy.

108 **C: What do you consider to be critical? You establish your criteria and you're measuring up against the**  
109 **profile and some aspects are critical if they don't really have them. What ones do you consider**  
110 **critical?**

111 So, what we would consider most critical for criteria would be for our specific time and place where our  
112 church is at would be experience. We're looking at someone who is not brand new, first ministry as a  
113 lead pastor. So, experience. A certain level of education. We're not demanding PhD level or even post  
114 grad level but certainly a competent level of education and maybe a desire to pursue that. Also, the  
115 situation that we are at right now is there is a lot of doctrinal consideration for us. We as a church have  
116 kind of, over the last several years struggled to come to terms with what exactly do we believe in some  
117 doctrinal areas and make that clear. There has been push back from different people, different  
118 members who have attended the church for a long time saying, "are we sure that is what we believe in  
119 and teach? Are we sure that's what?" So that has been a consideration too. We want to get a man who  
120 believes and teaches what our church represents and what we as a membership believe and teach. I  
121 would say those are the three areas that are critical for us.

122 **Q: So basically, a representative of OUR DENOMINATION, OUR doctrine and theology. We're not a...**

123 That's right.

124 **Q: People sometimes move**

125 Well in this day and age everyone's kind of transitory so they kind of pull whatever they were raised  
126 with to here and they assume it's all...it can cross lines. And to some degree it can but when it comes to

127 teaching and preaching there are certain doctrinal boundaries within our denomination that we would  
128 like to maintain and continue to see taught.

129 **Ok so experience in ministries, a certain competent level of education, and I put doctrinal clarity as**  
130 **representative of YOUR theology.**

131 Yes, that would be right.

132 **Q: so those would be what you consider the three most critical**

133 I would say also either experience or openness to the rural setting. We understand there is a difference  
134 between country and city churches just as the people from the country are different from the people  
135 born and raised and spend all their life in the city so same thing with the church. It's just a collection of  
136 people that have been kind of raised and adopted to this country life. So, we would like to see a pastor  
137 who kind of fits in to the culture of being a rural church.

138 **Question: So ultimately you described a bit of that earlier as you were talking about your process but**  
139 **a question just to clarify for me, how will you ultimately make your decision?**

140 I think there would be a lot of concern for us as a search committee if we ran into some hesitation on  
141 the part of the board or we ran into hesitation on the part of the membership. So, if we as a search  
142 committee, you know, we were all on the same page and we did feel there was unanimity in our  
143 agreement to pursue this guy, we would really have some doubts if we took the next step and the board  
144 got involved and said "we have some hesitation about this guy. We have some concerns". Likewise, if  
145 the two of us, the board and the search committee felt confident and took it to the membership and  
146 they expressed, "well we have hesitation", I would say those are warning signs, red flags for us that ok,  
147 maybe we got something wrong here as a search committee. Maybe we were all unanimous but maybe  
148 we were unanimously wrong or kind of sidetracked or confused or whatever. So, I would say that is  
149 maybe, the biggest consideration if there is not this consistency of agreement and confirming or  
150 affirming what the search committee felt right from the beginning. So, it is affirmed by the board and  
151 affirmed by the membership. If there is something within those two steps that does not affirm what we  
152 first felt or thought then I would say that would be the biggest warning.

153 **Q: Ok because I'm just wondering if the person's got experience in ministry, they've got a certain**  
154 **competent level of education, doctrinal clarity and they're representative of your theology and**  
155 **they're open to fit into a rural setting and already off the bat you're saying "hey, this person kind of**  
156 **lines up well. We're going to be moving forward. We like how they preach". Ok so there's another**  
157 **kind of check mark if you will. Are there any other kind of criteria then that you're looking for that are**  
158 **going to be able to say "hmmm...what about whatever?"**

159 Yeah, so if we've got those four major points and we agree that the candidate demonstrated what we  
160 were looking for in those four major points, I think there would be other minor points, minor to degree I  
161 guess but family life maybe we would definitely look at. There has already been a potential candidate  
162 who had been divorced and that kind of threw a bit of hesitation into the process. So that obviously  
163 marriage and family. Personality to some degree. You know a candidate could have all of those four  
164 major criteria and even a good family/marriage life but personality is maybe just somewhat off-putting  
165 or just not conducive to building relationships that we would feel is necessary in a pastor to be able to  
166 do. So that would be another...you know as we kind of work through our major ones, another one that  
167 we would look out for. I'm trying to think if there's something else.

168 I should say. Just because I assume it is taken for granted which I probably should not do but there is  
169 obviously the scriptural requirements and qualifications 1 Timothy and Titus maybe even 1 Peter that  
170 clearly describe what God's word lays out for consideration and meeting the standard of a pastor and so  
171 that would obviously be foremost and foundational.

172 **Q: How do you measure those?**

173 I think a lot of it is measured in character and attitude so, there would have to be some degree of  
174 examination of past ministry. So, experience and history in other churches, references. I think you can,  
175 to a lesser degree, some sort of clue after a couple of these meetings which is why I think the process  
176 includes several steps of meetings before we bring someone to the membership. Just so you can maybe  
177 start to get a glimpse or idea. Interviewing a spouse which is part of the second step and asking them  
178 some questions, even their children if they're still around. Even if it's possible, early on in the process,  
179 even anonymously visiting their church just to get a sense and feel and see them you know, not just  
180 preach but interact. Yeah, so those would be some ways. In some ways it is difficult to tell.

181 **Q: How do you evaluate someone's possible fit for your church?**

182 If how do you determine whether they're meeting those criteria?

183 **Q: Well not only just the criteria but the fit, the actual fit for the position in your church. Within your**  
184 **own church, your culture and within the role, and the expectations you set out for a role. Because I'm**  
185 **on a date, first date, what am I going to do? I'm going to try to impress.**

186 Every job interviews. And so, I think where we approach it as believers is we do have a deep  
187 dependence on prayerful consideration. So, we are asking beyond what a secular boss would ask of  
188 himself to determine whether or not an employee is fit for his company. We are asking for discernment  
189 that goes beyond what we could ever ascertain from a simple interview or several simple interviews. We  
190 really need to be led in a supernatural way and how you assess that, I do not know. But that would  
191 essentially kind of take us and separate us from okay, this is not a secular process to interview for a job.  
192 This is now something that is in the spiritual realm and needs and depends heavily on prayerful  
193 consideration and being led by the Spirit. So, what that looks like is just time and you do have to have a  
194 search committee that's committed to that and is genuinely pursuing that. And I think that's too where  
195 unanimity throughout these steps with the search committee, with the board and the membership. If  
196 the entire church is committed to that and understands that then I do think the Holy Spirit can use  
197 unanimity through those steps. And that builds consensus, affirmation, and confidence throughout the  
198 process that this guy is a fit. Whereby we would maybe be guessing at some points and still easily could  
199 be guessing.

200 **Q: So, what then are some of the challenges or issues as you've had to work through trying to identify**  
201 **and select your next pastor?**

202 I would say back to the doctrinal point because in order for the search committee to understand the  
203 specific doctrinal criteria that we wanted the next guy to be, believe, and teach, and represent, that  
204 means everyone on the search committee has to understand that otherwise we're going to get lost  
205 when we sit down to talk to somebody and they start explaining what they believe. Well, ok what does  
206 that mean and is that what we believe? So, there has had to be some open and frank discussion about  
207 what we do and don't believe and what we do and don't teach. And we have different backgrounds at  
208 our church and even different backgrounds that have come into membership who are part of this  
209 process whether that's just the membership part or if they're now the three members that represent  
210 the membership on the search committee. And so, some of them have a bit of different denominational

211 backgrounds than we would from just a church in our denomination. So, it has included some open and  
212 frank conversations about ok this is what our denomination believes. You may not hear that directly  
213 from the pulpit so we understand if this maybe hasn't been said in this manner before but it is the  
214 perspective every pastor at our church has taken and usually every one of our pastors would take so  
215 their preaching and teaching kind of comes from a certain direction and angle understanding what we  
216 believe about scripture. We've had to have some frank conversations about that and you have got to be  
217 a little sensitive to people who may or may not agree with that but now have to understand I am now  
218 representing not just myself and my own personal beliefs but I am representing what the church stands  
219 for. That I would say has been something significant we've had to deal with.

220 Again, from the board's perspective, coming up with a document of all the detail we wanted as far as  
221 the criteria and that. And more or less the search committee had to be brought in on that too so the  
222 search committee had to understand ok, what is this specific criterion and how does it apply to the  
223 position where we're looking to hire. I would say most of the doctrinal conversations had been the most  
224 significant to deal with.

225 **Q: Are there any other potential issues or challenges you've identified that maybe you've not yet had**  
226 **to work through?**

227 Yeah, we didn't really address the whole divorce thing and that came up pretty quick. It wasn't really  
228 specifically laid out in our criteria so it led to some conversation, ok just because a man's been divorced,  
229 does that immediately disqualify them? We don't look at him anymore or is there other extenuating  
230 circumstances that we can deal with and kind of look at and would have to talk to him about obviously  
231 but is he not just immediately disqualified? So, we've already had to kind of look at that further.  
232 Communication we've had to kind of refine and look at. It's easy, I think it's easy just our specific  
233 situation, we have an interim pastor, lead pastor, who's been incredibly helpful through all this. It's easy  
234 for him to kind of take on the leadership role of the search committee as far as communication and  
235 interacting with potential candidates and so we as a search committee just once and very gently had to  
236 remind him that this is the search committee and we certainly want his input and help though all of this  
237 and need it but that as far as communication, that should be done by a representative of the search  
238 committee just so that we have direct communication between him and the church and it's not kind of  
239 going through an interim who really isn't even a member of our church but is just there facilitating all of  
240 this. So, we did work through that.

241 **Q: so, what would you say are the highest values that you have for decision making for a new pastor?**

242 the highest values?

243 **Q: yes, in terms of you're dealing with a situation, your process, you have certain values or priorities**  
244 **that will help you overcome challenges or address different challenges? Are there.... usually, they're**  
245 **guided by certain values. We value this. You mention communication, you mentioned earlier**  
246 **unanimity. That's come up several times so it's like a value we have is there's a unity. I just wonder**  
247 **what other because we're pursuing this candidate but we don't or we're not unanimous therefore....**  
248 **therefore what?**

249 Yeah, I would agree with, for us unity in proceeding and pursuing a pastor is fundamental. In fact, if we  
250 don't have that right off the bat, we all look at a profile and we're not all in agreement to take the next  
251 step, we haven't and I don't think we will unless something changes in the future but so far that has  
252 probably been the most significant value and I think that again kind of points us back to the fact that we  
253 are relying on something beyond our own assessment and so we are all committed to prayerful

254 consideration over every profile and every potential candidate. We are expecting and hoping that the  
255 Holy Spirit works in us in a unanimous way to confirm that otherwise.

256 **Q: Is there anything else that you would want to share about your process?**

257 I would say that there is, and it's come out a couple times in meetings. There can be a challenge in  
258 determining whether or not a candidate is a good fit beyond just the paper and all the qualifications.  
259 Whether he is a good fit without actually getting to an interview and spending significant time talking in  
260 a setting and in a manner where you do get a better feel for someone other than just looking at a paper  
261 with all their qualifications listed. And for our process that really does mean we have to get to a point  
262 where we are unanimous as a search committee to agree ok let's reach out to this guy and see if we can  
263 get him to sit down and talk to us face to face without any sort of commitment, just as a way of  
264 introducing ourselves and him to us. So, it almost is like a first hurdle, ok we can look at a paper and we  
265 can all see on the paper there are qualifications that are being met there but for us to really get a good  
266 sense as to whether or not we should be taking the next step, well we actually have to take the next  
267 step. So, it sometimes feels like it is a little backward in that yeah, the process is... I guess that's any  
268 interviewing process that you're not really going to get a good sense of fit or connection or personality  
269 unless you have the chance to meet and sit down and talk. So that's a frustration I know that I've felt a  
270 bit and I know that other members of the team have expressed as well that it is difficult to be able to  
271 feel confident as to whether or not this is a good fit unless we sit down with them face to face and how  
272 do you do that unless we get through the first step and actually go and meet them?

273 **Q: Anything else?**

274 : I don't think so

275 **thank you.**



1 **C4R2BP1**

2 **Question: What is your board's role in your pastoral hiring process?**

3 In our church, the board is part of the search committee so they aren't really playing really a stronger  
4 role except that they meet more regularly as a board and we will discuss the search committee  
5 information there and maybe pre-screen some of the information before we have the search committee  
6 involved. Our search committee where is almost like a committee within a committee. The board is the  
7 decision-making part of the church so they are playing quite an active role in the search committee. Not  
8 that their say weighs any more than any anybody else's but in one sense perhaps it does.

9 **Q: Just within the search process itself – what is the Board’s role?**

10 The board would be the one to meet with potential candidate when we get to that one to discuss salary,  
11 benefits and moving. We have a job description but we have made it clear to the candidates that it is a  
12 job description that perhaps Jesus himself could not fill which is pretty typical, but we try to cover all the  
13 bases with what we think is important. I was talking to a candidate yesterday and trying to say that this  
14 is what we want to cover and yet depending on your individual gift we try to tailor it to what you  
15 thought you could fulfill on what your strengths and specific gifts are. As we are moving toward an elder  
16 led board, we see it as a team approach because it is going to be that team working with the pastor who  
17 we will probably be calling the vocational Elder and the accountability relationship between himself and  
18 the board. So, I guess it is a bit different that the search committee are just reviewing the profiles and  
19 resumes we get while listening to messages and offering their input on who they think might be a good  
20 fit with the church. The search committee won't be involved in any of the actual hiring of the candidate.

21 **Q: In establishing the process – was that all done in advance by the Board? What did that look like?**

22 The board established the process for the search committee with the help of our regional director and  
23 to a certain extent the director of leadership. We went through this process in my recent history 9 years  
24 ago so I kind of remember what we did then and what we didn't do then. So, they helped us with the  
25 information from the handbook on how to approach things. We have also received some coaching from  
26 the leadership director as to how the process should go and up until the start of the summer, we have  
27 just been reviewing profiles that the director had pre-selected and sent to us. It has only been a couple  
28 of months since we posted a job ad because we just thought we might get; we might cast a further net  
29 which certainly we have. We have gotten a lot of very interesting resumes but as a board we had a  
30 process that we wanted to take this time and we made the decision to have a search committee made  
31 up of the leadership team of the church as well as the Deacons.

32 **Question: Could you describe for me your overall search process?**

33 So, the first thing we did was to establish parameters for the candidate we were looking for and that  
34 was from a questionnaire from our denomination. So, we took that and added to it. We thought about  
35 what we felt the needs of the church were and tried to look at what would be important to us in terms  
36 of an age range, a skill range, and just the things that we thought were important to our church at this  
37 point in time. The questionnaire that we did through our regional office that showed us where we were  
38 at as a church and this was a one-page questionnaire to submit to identify what we thought was our  
39 ideal pastor and we use that and conversation with the board chair and the leadership director to begin  
40 screening profiles and sending them to us. So, the profile that's what we thought was the ideal pastor  
41 we completed as a search committee. We talked about it as a board first and then went to the search  
42 committee and kind of reviewed it and modified it based on what we felt was important. I didn't really  
43 change much from what we started out with. We did not start looking as soon as our pastor retired. We

44 have been really happy with the recommendation of our regional office to look at an intentional  
45 transitional pastor program. After the survey that the regional director did with us, he told us about this  
46 and suggested we might want to consider an intentional transitional pastor. So, the intentional  
47 transitional pastor we got was just finishing up another church and he came to us and was available. We  
48 liked the idea of having someone consistently and having somebody take us as a church and get us  
49 started in that renewal process. When we started, he called us a church replant and he indicated he  
50 would be with us for 6 months and here we are two years later almost and he is still with us. He  
51 considers us a going concern; we just need to find the right person. That's a long story to say we didn't  
52 start looking until we got our feet on the ground to know where we were going and what we wanted to  
53 do and it wasn't until then that we actually started looking.

54 **Q: So, what does your search process look like?**

55 So, once we got the parameters established the leadership Director has been a big help. He has  
56 reviewed profiles that he has had on file and he is sent those to us and actually, our first candidate we  
57 got through connections that we had. The leadership director had given us a number of profiles but we  
58 looked through those and we knew somebody that was looking. My son had connections with this other  
59 fellow and he was the first one that we actually approached, but circumstance changed at his church  
60 and he decided to stay where he was. Since then, we have gone back and forth with the leadership  
61 director and said Well this didn't work out, this we liked and these were some of the things we didn't  
62 like about some of the other profiles and so that helped him to narrow down maybe what profiles or  
63 candidates he thought would meet our needs. Through the process he has understood a lot more about  
64 our church and where we are at and where we are going. Since then, we have been right to the end with  
65 three candidates and we have been the Lord's tool to show them that they should either stay where  
66 they are or consider another possibility. It has pretty much followed the same process.

67 When there is a profile of Interest as a search committee have said these are the profiles we have been  
68 given. Then, we meet and discuss the pros and cons of each just as we see them on paper. It is just  
69 preliminary. Then, if there is something that is of Interest then I become the contact person and  
70 basically, I have emailed them and told them a bit about our church and ask them if they would be  
71 interested in starting a conversation with us. Usually by that time they have looked at the church's  
72 website and the community and so if they are interested then I contact them by phone and we talk. We  
73 usually have a good conversation, talking about the church and where their heart is for Ministry. If that  
74 goes well and I take that information back to the committee and they like what they hear then we have  
75 offered or invited them to come for a meet and greet.

76 We have done that 4 times and that has been a lunch meeting with just my wife and I and either  
77 another couple or a couple of others who have a flexible work schedule. We meet informally at our  
78 house and talk about the church and our ministry and tour the church and the town and answer any  
79 questions and then gauge their interest and gauge our interest. If that goes well and they are interested  
80 then the next step is going to be an interview. That's as far as we have gotten. We've done two  
81 interviews with two of the candidates and one interview with another and so far, we have not gotten  
82 any takers.

83 So, we have pretty much followed that. We have done Skype with a couple of the people who weren't  
84 close for that initial contact.

85 **Q: Are there any other aspects to your search process, or things that, in terms of your plan, determine**  
86 **how you would proceed?**

87 I don't see anything different than what we have done. As the process has gone along, we have been  
88 able to provide more information to the people that are interested. Because they asked certain  
89 questions, I have a folder of stuff on my computer that I can give to them. One of them is a letter that  
90 was written by our transitional pastor on his perspective of where we are at as a church and that is  
91 speaking Pastor to Pastor so that's helpful. Our interim pastor has been quite helpful in trying to, as they  
92 say in the business world, drum up business. At the conferences he has talked to people and he has a lot  
93 more connections than we have. We have used the basic connections that we have in the past like  
94 Pastor friends and organizations, but our interim pastor has sat down and had coffee with a number of  
95 people and that has been another approach. He will talk to people and they get more information from  
96 him as he has met with them informally.

97 There is also the reference check in there. We found that very useful but we don't do that again until  
98 somebody has shown interest and then just contacting their references. Obviously if they're being used  
99 as a reference, they're going to have good things to say but at the same time we get very honest and  
100 once we tell them about our church situation then they can more openly discuss the person's strengths  
101 and weaknesses that may or may not fit with a church. That has been really helpful and some of the  
102 candidates are looking like they have been through pretty tough times. I know one reference that I  
103 talked to, his church has been a difficult Church and he was quite honest and suggested we may not be  
104 fair to bring in a younger guy into our church situation. We were expecting too much. So, the references  
105 really helped gain insight as well.

106 **Q: So, as you get through your process and get to a candidate, what do you envision the process to**  
107 **look like as your get to a candidate that is interested and that you are interested in?**

108 When we get to the point of a candidate who is interested in us as well then it becomes a discussion of  
109 our actual hiring process and then there is the candidate process which we haven't completely talked  
110 about yet because that depends a bit on the person. If it is somebody more local then we might have  
111 the person come on more than one Sunday to preach. That can really give us an insight and not just a  
112 snapshot of how he relates to the church. If we bring in someone from further away then we will have  
113 to have an action-packed weekend, I guess.

114 **Q: What considerations has the board made with regards to the hiring practice?**

115 With our hiring practice it's more about the nuts and bolts, so salary would be one element. Housing.  
116 One thing that the church has been fortunate, even for a small Church, we've been pretty good with our  
117 budget, and without a pastor we have been able to save money so depending on the situation we may  
118 be able to provide an interest-free or cover moving expenses. We have done a health plan with our  
119 previous pastor through our denomination. The church has been pretty good. They have in the past and  
120 expect in the future to help people relocate, find housing or help integrate them to life depending on  
121 where they were coming from or to.

122 **Q: As you consider your process to date – what would you consider are some of the most significant**  
123 **factors or learnings that have helped you?**

124 A big learning from last time has been don't make too many assumptions. Last time we thought we  
125 understood what we were getting when we were hiring, and it's not that our previous pastor did not  
126 turn out exactly the way we expected, there were a lot of good things, but we had made assumptions  
127 and we had not put them down on paper. What he was thinking and what we were thinking we're not  
128 really the same and so this time we are going to make sure we both understand each other very well  
129 going into the situation and what is expected of the person we call. You can never cover all the bases  
130 but just more of a, with the job description, accountability, with what's expected, we plan to do a better

131 job of having that understanding with a new person coming in. Also, we've learned to be patient. I know  
132 that there are those within the church that are getting kind of antsy because they see it as being 2 years  
133 but we see it is only being a year-and-a-half because we didn't start looking, but there are questions  
134 about what's happening and why can't you find somebody? It's important to find the right person and  
135 that's what we feel rather than just grab somebody else just for the sake of having someone. What has  
136 really made the difference there is having our intentional interim pastor and the consistency. I was chair  
137 of the committee last time that was not only my responsibility to be chair of the search committee but  
138 looking after the majority of the pulpit Supply. We finally did have a couple of pastors who gave us two  
139 or three months interim and that really helped, but it just became tiring and it's a dream this time as  
140 well but it's been better.

141 The other things are just exactly what we're looking for in a pastor as far as our process. I don't think it's  
142 an uncommon in terms of churches today but the demographics and especially our community. Our  
143 community is a retirement community and we have had a couple of major industry closings so in the  
144 town of 8000 people, we are really low on the younger population right now which isn't uncommon but  
145 we do feel we need to find a younger pastor. Now, that is a range that we are looking for. We are not  
146 stuck with that. One of our weaknesses in the past was that we had not kept up with the times. Not that  
147 we are introducing things that are, well it's just a relevance thing, so we really feel that we need to be  
148 more community-minded and relational. We have a very strong children program. Our church is  
149 between 60 and 75 on a Sunday morning but we have about 60 kids coming out to our midweek  
150 Children's Program and 80% aren't from the church so we see that as a big step forward but we need to  
151 make that bridge to the families and make the gospel relevant to them. So, not that we've changed the  
152 message it's that we maybe have changed the delivery. We are never going to have rock music in our  
153 church but again with our interim pastor and what he has done since we are in a tourist community too,  
154 we got people that show up in the summer and maybe every summer but we've had people come this  
155 summer and say what's happened to you guys as a church? There's a different atmosphere here. So  
156 good things are happening and people do see the difference. We just want the right Pastor now to help  
157 us along and keep us moving in the right direction.

158

159

160

161 **Question: How did you identify the people and assemble your search committee?**

162 Well, that's an easy question because it's all the deacons / elders and the key Ministry leaders in the  
163 church. So, the couple that's in charge of our children's ministry. There's a younger couple that works  
164 with them in the children's ministry and do some other functions so we included them. The couple that's  
165 in charge of our seniors Ministry so that we have both ends of the spectrum. Another couple that's  
166 involved in the children's ministry and some outreach and different things so that's three couples who  
167 are outside of our Deacon board. We've done it as couples.

168 There's another side that you may get to and that's why haven't the people come that we are interested  
169 in? You are not hiring a couple per se, but at the same time we are finding out and the reason that two  
170 of the candidates, we feel, they didn't want to relocate is because of their wife's jobs or ties to the  
171 community. So, we felt it was important to have a lady's perspective on things and again they can see  
172 things that we might not. We have found that works really well to work as couples on the committee as  
173 opposed to just the board. So, we have the age demographics on the search committee, some of the key  
174 people in the church, plus the board. That was just a board decision coming up with that.

175 **Question: What instructions or criteria did you give to your search committee?**

176 That has not been terribly structured. Once we got the search committee together, we went over the  
177 survey to identify what we felt the church needed and what we should be looking for in a pastor. We did  
178 that as a committee and that was probably the only formal thing. After that when we received a profile  
179 and it looks like it's of Interest, and often our interim pastor, when we started, he has since moved so he  
180 comes up for the weekends and often stays at our place so when I get a profile, I have had quite a bit of  
181 time to bat it back and forth with him. If we think it is of Interest, we will circulate it to the board and we  
182 discuss it quite a bit informally and then when I and the board feel we have enough for somebody of  
183 Interest we will call a meeting and we found with our interim pastor's having to travel it works very well  
184 after a Sunday morning service everyone can just get together as a search committee. I guess now when  
185 you get a profile, most churches have online sermons so we'll look at the profile, we will look at the  
186 qualities were looking for and try to listen to some messages to see if you think that it is the type of style  
187 and content that will speak to the people in our church. So, we are pretty good at assessing so I think we  
188 can have some good insight to help our denomination know what type of questions to put on their  
189 profile now because it's kind of common things that come up. So, we discuss what they thought about  
190 what he said here and we think about different situations and what we hear and read. We talk about  
191 what we think of how he presented the message, your scripture and how he brought it to a close and  
192 was there an application there. Was it presented in a form that our people can understand? So, these  
193 are all the things that we try to consider.

194 So, a profile comes in and I in the board would look to see if it fits with what we are looking for and then  
195 we do some pre-screening and if the person is interested in pursuing things more then we have a search  
196 committee meeting to see if the committee agrees and then to look at things in more detail and  
197 consider how we might proceed. If the search committee agrees there are enough qualities, they are to  
198 start the process. It has been difficult over the summer because people are on holidays and we can't  
199 meet so, we have been communicating by email. By now we've kind of figured out whether a couple of  
200 candidates that came in over the summer might meet our criteria so I've sent it to the committee to ask  
201 what they think and then I've done a follow-up phone call conversation with two of them. So, we have  
202 enough information but we can't meet as a committee until everyone's back from holidays but by that  
203 time we will have even more information. Knowing the committee, I know that they will want to  
204 proceed with these two people. So, at this point I have had the conversation with them, if they are still  
205 interested then we will try and set up his meet and greet that will be done. So, the preliminary review of  
206 a profile is done through our elders/ deacons and then we connect with the search committee to see  
207 that we're on the same page and then we proceed to contact the candidate.

208 **Q: So, do you have any other instructions or criteria for your search committee members in terms of**  
209 **role or expectations?**

210 We do have a vice chair on the committee which we really haven't used because if I've been away on  
211 holidays, we haven't had meetings. And we do have a secretary that if we have a meeting, we have  
212 minutes and they send them out. Other than that, are all charged with the same thing basically, is to  
213 review the profiles and listen to messages and come back with your comments.

214 **Question: What were your considerations when you were developing your job description?**

215 The previous Pastor, two pastors ago, talked about the fundamental pillars of the church which are  
216 probably the pillars of any church and our intentional interim pastor has talked about the four legs of a  
217 stool, prayer, preaching, and evangelism all covered by fellowship. So, we've looked at those pillars and  
218 what percentage of time we think is important to those and again, it depends upon gifting. So those are

219 the kind of the pillars of the church that we need to be covered. Discipleship needs to fit in there  
220 somewhere. Discipleship and personal development, preaching, evangelism, fellowship. So, those are  
221 functions that are important for the church and I'm not sure without looking at the description where  
222 we fit in administration, because being a small Church we do have a paid part-time secretary. We have a  
223 worship leader that isn't paid. And then the pastor still has to oversee all of these so there will be a  
224 certain amount of administration time that must be included with the other. I can't remember if we  
225 lumped visitation in with evangelism but just the fact of shepherding the flock. We went to churches we  
226 respected and asked if we could view their job description. We went to the internet. We went to our  
227 denomination. We went to the handbook and looked at all those things and tried to come up with what  
228 we felt was important to us. We did put in a percentage time with that and then again just a candidate I  
229 spoke to yesterday ask for a job description and he felt with his gifting he would like to spend more  
230 time, especially when we spoke about the fact that we are trying to do more community reach, he  
231 thought if the evangelism percentage should be increased and something else. That's what I mean by  
232 tailoring it to a candidate. But those are the things that I think we've tried to cover in our description.

233 **Question: What role does your church community have in the hiring process?**

234 That will be when we get to the candidating process. Depending on how far away this person is coming,  
235 and whether that will involve a full weekend or if it would just be a Sunday. So, at the very minimum the  
236 candidate would preach on the Sunday morning. We would have a fellowship time afterward where we  
237 would have an informal interaction where they can talk a bit about themselves and ask questions about  
238 the church and the church maybe can ask some questions but not trying to get into things which we  
239 should have asked as a search committee and then there has to be a vote. So, we would schedule a  
240 vote. In our constitution we require a certain percentage that has to be the pass. Prior experience and  
241 talking with other people usually the pastor has a figure in mind and if it's kind of less than 90% they  
242 won't come. But our church, reading people I know them that that if it's recommended by the board and  
243 the search committee I would be surprised if it wasn't unanimous or if it wasn't a very high percentage.  
244 So, the congregation would be voting to affirm the recommendation of the search committee and  
245 board. So, they put their trust in us to do the searching and if we recommended somebody and they  
246 turned it down that is probably the end of the committee. Another aspect is praying. A lot of praying  
247 and we try to give them regular updates. We have changed the format of our service since we have gone  
248 through this renewal process. Have a single 10:30 service and in the middle of that we have a family  
249 time which is a praise and prayer time and we use that often to give an update of where we're at and  
250 have people to pray without giving them specifics in terms of the names or something. So, it's a very  
251 important role and people are quite willing to do that.

252 **Question: What priorities do you have for a new pastor?**

253 There are a number of things that we've been leaving until a new pastor comes. A fellow I spoke to  
254 yesterday put a different spin on it. We haven't finalized a job description. That gets finalized through  
255 the pastor, but we are kind of waiting on a few things. We are reworking our constitution and some of  
256 the church documents and we were waiting for a new pastor before we finalize some of those things.  
257 The fella I talked to yesterday had come into a church where I think they were thinking somewhat the  
258 same as we were, but their Church makeup was quite different and so when they finalized some of  
259 these documents, changes to the constitution, people didn't like it and blamed the pastor coming in and  
260 changing things and then and he found that really got him off on a wrong foot and he said I would really  
261 like to see you have all of that stuff in place before he started. So right now, we are working on those. To  
262 have us moving from deacon to elders and what does that exactly look like needs to be rewritten in the  
263 Constitution.

264 **Q: So, do you have any specific priorities for a new pastor coming in?**

265 Well, I guess, as far as priorities, saying this is the direction we are going and I guess we want the Pastor  
266 to help us get there. Our previous Pastor when we brought him in, he was a senior pastor approaching  
267 retirement, and we kind of brought him in with the intention of what our intentional transitional Pastor  
268 is doing in terms of helping us get our feet back under us. We are kind of in the same position now as we  
269 were in 9 years ago. We wanted to make plans for the future but it didn't work out that way so I think  
270 this time around we know where we're going, what we want to do, but we haven't got the goals and  
271 structure in place to get us there. So, what we would like a new pastor to do is to come alongside and  
272 help us answer how best can we build relationships with these parents of the kids in clubs and what can  
273 we do to be more visible in the community. Again, our transitional pastor has let us through that so still  
274 we know now what to do so it's not so much that he is going to have to come and show us or tell us  
275 what we need to do it's more how do we do and get there and what measurable goals do we need.  
276 Again, our transitional Pastor has shown the some of that but he can't continue on so we need  
277 somebody who is going to be there and continue to do it. Nothing else that is out of the ordinary. Our  
278 last Pastor wasn't strong on visitation and we know you can't visit every family every year necessarily  
279 but it is a priority for our pastor to invite me over for dinner on Friday night or bring coffee to my job or  
280 just informal drop in and keep up-to-date. Discipleship is something that we want to do more of and so  
281 that would be a priority that we would see, different from the way things are going now.

282 **Question: Is there anything else that you have learned that you would want to share that other**  
283 **churches might benefit from as they are going through a search process?**

284

285 Well maybe insight we have found trying to pursue some of these younger men that, I guess we joke  
286 about the fact that it's the millennial generation but to a certain extent it seems to be the millennial  
287 thinking that, you know in some ways we don't consider ourselves rural but we are, and just the fact  
288 that people not wanting to leave the big city and the comforts they have in the city to move to a rural  
289 community. Yet there are so many benefits of raising a family in a small town. We have seen that. I don't  
290 know how you share these things but I know it is made our process more this time. I mentioned it  
291 before but I know it's moving a family, but now there seems to be more ties with the wife who has a job  
292 and maybe that job is transferable and maybe it isn't so you have to be providing that information and  
293 looking at those things and answering those questions that you may have in those areas. We found this  
294 a bit difficult but we were trying to sell your church, your community, your people to make it – it is still a  
295 calling for people to come, but we get more of the job aspect I think coming through, like ok, what is the  
296 salary? What are the benefits? What is the cost of living? All of these questions are being asked. Some of  
297 those are more to the front instead of further down the list, so using that information too. It is an  
298 interview both ways but we found out that more as opposed to you interviewing the candidate, they are  
299 interviewing you just as much and that's quite understandable but some of those things we have found  
300 it difficult. Again, our transitional pastor, at one point he was saying, you know you only date one person  
301 at a time and you see it through to the finish. Well, we have gotten burned on that twice and that's the  
302 way things have changed. People who are talking to you are talking to several churches and weighing  
303 the different options. I guess there is certainly nothing wrong with that but we have realized that we do  
304 not have to feel bad about talking to a couple of different people at the same time because we have  
305 spent, on the last candidate, three or four months going through the process and he ended up saying he  
306 didn't feel it was a good move for his family and the next thing we knew he had accepted a position at  
307 another church and we knew right away. Then he told the regional leadership director that we had  
308 pushed him too fast. I just laughed when I heard that. So, not to be unkind, but we just realized that it is

309 a different situation now and we just have to be prepared to sell..., not changing your integrity or  
310 anything how you do about it, it's just a need to be upfront and open and the fact that okay we've got a  
311 couple of options here that we have on the table to right now too.



1 **C4R2BP2**

2 **Question: What is the board's roll in the Pastoral hiring process.**

3 I think they, as those who fulfill elder qualifications have to be able to identify and articulate the  
4 teaching Elder/lead elder/senior pastor role that can no longer be performed by lay elders and give  
5 leadership to the congregation to understand that and to the search committee to ingrain that in their  
6 search process.

7 **Q: So, in looking at it from a practical standpoint – from a process standpoint, how would you identify**  
8 **the Board's role overall in the process?**

9 Well for us in a re-plant, it was saying what of these four things we are going to focus on? I'm not saying  
10 other things aren't important but how are we going to reincorporate these as priorities into our  
11 ministry/ program. So, they had already agreed on those 4 things before I came. I am not sure that they  
12 had articulated them well. And that has been my role at another organization to take what things other  
13 people gave me and put them into a package. Every three or four weeks I would turn the stool upside  
14 down and say these are legs on which are Ministry stands and this is why we are doing or this or this  
15 today and what this future event will be. I think that the average lay elder understands but is not always  
16 able to fully articulate, so I am helping them to do that from a pastoral perspective since they are  
17 moving from deacons to elders. So, it has been a learning process for them. Their role would be to, and  
18 they are just learning this, how to evaluate and continue to twig ministries so that they remember what  
19 their purpose is, which one of the legs of the stool they are providing. I would say the church is doing  
20 that well although we are coming up to a period now when we cut back and now, we need to be re-  
21 introducing that which addresses the legs and we are having a smaller deacon/elder meeting to talk  
22 about a couple of ministry things and saying how does this address the legs of the stool so that we can  
23 go from good to better to best.

24 And that's hard I think in the average Church to be that, which some would term worldly conscious that  
25 we are no longer content with good. We need to always be aiming for the better and the best. We are  
26 no longer the only act in town. We are no longer the only church in town. And many of the churches  
27 have forfeited the default position they should have so there has to be value added. So, what is the  
28 value added? So, the board really takes that leadership role. Unfortunately, most elders, even elder lead  
29 churches still do a lot of the deacon stuff. It just has to be done somebody and I think we will continue  
30 to do that at this church because to this point just to say okay these people are deacons; we have to  
31 solidify the elder leader situation before we can re-introduce the leader and facilitators of ministry.

32 **Question: Can you describe the overall search process? How it took shape and what does it look like?**

33 When and when and I need to stress that. When I agreed that we were at a stage that we knew who we  
34 were and made the changes that needed to be made and knew the type of leadership we needed then  
35 we struck a search committee. And nobody asked questions about that. Nobody argued about it  
36 because they knew we were in transition. I probably gave them some... We did everything that we  
37 should have done. We began just by asking for profiles from the denomination and we agreed that there  
38 was no guarantee that denominational profiles were going to produce the results we needed so we all  
39 embarked on beating the bushes and talking to every member we could. Having already done the job  
40 description. This is the job description we drew up - we put that together too. So, whether it was too  
41 much or too little that's what we did. After the first bunch of profiles, I also did an accompanying letter  
42 that we sent to key people from my perspective of the transition. So, it's from the transitional interim  
43 pastor's perspective where we had gone and where we were going. Now, this may seem a little bit

44 arduous but I learned when I was with another organization, the board was doing their fiduciary role  
45 and saying we like what you are doing but we can't let you keep doing what you're doing in order for us  
46 to fulfill our fiduciary responsibility. So, at that point on the board a key person with significant  
47 management background steered us in and asked me to write down everything I did each year and  
48 there were two and a half pages. Then he divided it into administrative, outreach, developing contacts,  
49 maintaining contacts, all those things and then he had me put it into a percentage- how much of my  
50 time over the year I felt that took. And so, then we build accordingly because I could build some of my  
51 time back with administration, some was in fundraising, some was just in cultivating contacts, so hence  
52 the percentage. Is it realistic? I think it's pretty close. I think if you don't do that you aren't going to stay  
53 balanced. So, we got the batches of profiles and we went over them. We did the standard approach: Did  
54 we like him did we not like him. Every time we had four or five prospects, we would have zeroed in on  
55 two or three and then found out - were they interested in talking to at church in our situation - a  
56 replant, a healthy replant in a smaller community. We did not pull the plug on anybody. We did not say  
57 no to any situation. I gave them probably some wrong advice, that I am still not sure that it was wrong  
58 advice it is just how the game is being played now and this is why I think what we talked about here  
59 needs to mesh with somehow how pastors are taught to look for churches. I was taught and the analogy  
60 may have been wrong, but once you go steady you go steady. Now it seems to be you can date 5 and 6  
61 churches until somebody calls you. And so, in a couple of situations we were very transparent. We are  
62 looking at you among other prospects but we will let you know when you are the only one that we will  
63 be focusing on. Would you do the same with us? All of the first groups even though we acknowledged  
64 this upfront did not say no, we are keeping our options open. And that really does bother me. Then it  
65 becomes - how am I weighing this? If I am dating three women seriously, how do I decide who I'm going  
66 to ask to marry me? Or if you put it on the other way if she is dating three or four fellows seriously and  
67 gets three proposals at once, how did she decide? And I think that is a flaw. But, we decided, rightly or  
68 wrongly we are going to do the same approach but because of what has happened and being honest, we  
69 will still let you know when we are looking at you only but we are not reserving the right to look at you  
70 only until we preach for the call because we've been burned a number of times, where one was a lack of  
71 transparency. We are being transparent. Everyone liked my analogy going steady and engagement and  
72 now we're engaged to you. We're engaged. Would you? No. So, we are at another batch which I think is  
73 a good batch but this is our process now. But we did not really get into this until close to a year. In one  
74 case a fellow stayed where he was and, in another case, somebody went to a multiple staff situation and  
75 in another case, someone did not want to move geographically and I think it was his wife that did not  
76 want to move. So, I would say the denomination needs to say to these fellows don't put your profile in  
77 unless you're prepared to move. That is not fair to a church. If you are going to stay close to your  
78 mother's parents stay there. Work within your Association but don't come to our denomination. Or if all  
79 you want is the Ottawa Valley or southwestern Ontario, mention that. Otherwise, you are being  
80 duplicitous. Forgive my frankness.

81 **Q: So, within your process, you are working with the denomination to get profiles. So, as you get the**  
82 **various profiles, how would screen them?**

83 So, we screen the profiles according to those four legs. Those are the bases that need to be touched and  
84 asking for sermon connections so we can listen to sermons. I need to add in there too that once we felt  
85 a fellow was a prospect, we had a subset of the search committee meet with that fellow. Some people  
86 would say we have too large of a search committee for the size of our church. I would say we have an  
87 appropriate size because of the seriousness with which we attached this. We would never have any fear  
88 of a person not getting a call if the search committee recommends it. Because we've had people with  
89 vested interests from each ministry having a voice.

90 **Question: How did you identify the people to assemble your search committee?**

91 The elders and their wives, and in some cases that overlapped with those who were heading up like our  
92 midweek children's ministry: We have a senior couple who has been an elder elsewhere that head up  
93 our prime-timers - so that covered our older section; we brought in a young couple who have no  
94 children but are also involved in the children's ministry and we felt that gave a voice to the young  
95 couples - how would they identify or not identify? Could they understand - that fellow's wife is a  
96 relatively new believer; we brought in a fella who has been an elder and worked in a couple of ministries  
97 and has teenage kids - so we brought them in just so that we had covered our bases. So, it was  
98 intentional. We wanted to cover all of our demographics and not just assume that the elders had a  
99 handle on everything. Because we recognize that we are fallible that way.

100 One of the things being that the director had recommended they should probably consider a name  
101 change and that has got over like a lead balloon. People don't say it's needed but do we need to  
102 acknowledge that we're a certain denomination? It might still happen as part of the replant or re  
103 identity. I think what would fly, it's had a couple of morphs, but I think the only thing that would fly  
104 would be something including community and the denominational identity. I understand that.  
105 Community can be very nebulous. But the current name no longer means anything.

106 **Question: Once it was assembled - what kind of instruction did you give to the search committee?**

107 Wear the hat of their group but also look beyond to the members and the type of person that they  
108 would want to invite whether their children, their grandchildren or friends- what type of leadership do  
109 we need to communicate to our community because we are drawing and redrawing people from a  
110 number of communities around us. So, we have ceased to become the default position and we have  
111 people now who have gone elsewhere because they were not been happy with what they saw but they  
112 are much happier now and they are joining. People who are this denomination but just didn't know it.

113 **Q: So, were there any other instructions or priorities given to the search committee?**

114 The priorities were: we need to nail down these four legs, we need to address this type of thing, we  
115 need somebody who can communicate effectively, and apply effectively, not just John 3:16, not just  
116 teaching but what do we do with the teaching. And so, in that sense they have said when I came, there  
117 was a King James only fellow and now he never mentions it. He was staying clear of the Lord's table and  
118 I had been away from for 2 weeks and his comment to me was you don't know what happens until the  
119 well is dry. I said what do you mean and he said I did not know what I was missing until you came and  
120 until you were away for two weeks, I didn't realize what you were giving us. It's not that the others were  
121 no good, they just didn't have it. So, I think that's one of the things that they are wrestling with - how do  
122 we get someone who is younger, which they need, and how do we compensate for weaknesses so we  
123 can help him to grow quickly to what he needs to be? So, we can't expect to get someone with my  
124 experience and to function in the way I did. So, I've said whoever you call be prepared to become  
125 involved in the region's renewal, vitalization group that gets together. They need to plug into that. And  
126 you need to help them plug in Simeon's trust and or the preaching series at Heritage. You can't just  
127 assume that this will happen. So, they need to have the help in a grace plus truth correction to help  
128 them develop their preaching. And you need to give them time to do it. As Elders you need to interact  
129 with them to do that.

130 **Q: So, were there any other priorities for the search committee?**

131 Confidentiality is another priority that they need to have and absolute transparency and the sense in  
132 which everybody spoke their peace but if the consensus of their peace wasn't what the committee

133 agreed to then nobody got bent out of shape. So, nobody has walked away. I told them that we can be  
134 wrongly enculturated in our church. If you don't scratch my back, I'm not going to scratch yours. This is  
135 not a union job. What we sit down to talk everything needs to be on the table and when we form a  
136 consensus and we agree to the consensus and we accept that. So, there is no lobbying. We lobby for  
137 what the church needs. In that realm, one of the candidates that we looked at and from one perspective  
138 somebody ruled him out but they ruled him out because of an external opinion based upon his former  
139 church affiliation. I asked them – how can you rule him out? So that's how I provided the extra basis as  
140 they were going over the profiles. I really think that is the weakness of some search committees. They  
141 do not have the depth spiritually to process things. So, I help them to ask the second and third  
142 questions. I do not normally ask much but once we come to the interview process these are the  
143 questions you need to ask. You went to here and you studied that- how did that impact your life and  
144 how do you use that or not use it? So that is why I think the whole weakness of the search process is you  
145 are at the mercy of the pastor and he is at the mercy of them. So, for those on the search committee if  
146 they lack the spiritual depth then they just do the best that they can. That's why I have said to people at  
147 the denominational office that they need to make the intentional transitional Pastor roll a default. It's  
148 not just for the church that is fragmented or split it's for the church that is good to be better and to be  
149 best. The one that's ailing to come back to life. And this becomes sort of a rite of passage. It's like our  
150 ministry time of having our spiritual physical. There was a church in our association that called  
151 somebody that didn't process the cultural stuff and he lasted a year. Not that he was a bad guy.

152 **Question: What were the considerations as you developed your job description?**

153 That was my work and they looked it over and said yeah that all makes sense.

154 **Q: Where did that come from? How did you develop all that?**

155 Basically, I learned that from experience. I took some other things. Everything that was here was here  
156 for a reason: Hails from outside the denomination - able to be ordained. I think you need to have some  
157 proven sense of leadership. If you can't lead someplace else you can't lead here. We just assumed the  
158 fellow has a valid driver's license and we've added the background check with plan to protect and all  
159 those other things. Cooperative - that's elder leadership. Able to inspire vision, teambuilder, discipler for  
160 discipleship, committed to developing the congregation at the highest level - not just information. I think  
161 the challenge here the scheduling, a lot of pastors really don't work ahead or else they work too far  
162 ahead. Everything here were things I learned from the good or the not-so-good churches across Canada.  
163 Effective communicator, not what he thinks, not what he talks about - he takes the word of God and  
164 shares the word of God. And you've got to have some experience but you don't need to have all kinds of  
165 experience. I could go through any of those and explain why I put them in there. They all had reasons.  
166 Some may be overlapping but they all have reasons. So, this was all developed through my situation at  
167 my previous organization. How am I spending my time? How should a pastor spend his time? And if he is  
168 spending that time in different duties, now you have to give some leadership, you have to give at least  
169 close to half your time to preaching and teaching and how are you going to develop that. Part of that is  
170 you have to meet with your worship director to evaluate are we doing things, okay? And a lot of staff  
171 stuff breaks down that way. You've got to sit back and ensure the worship service is effective regarding  
172 contents, style, structure and design. I think what we need to understand is that when we work with  
173 staff how you set the tone - is it coming together or is there push back if there's pushback, we've got a  
174 problem and that problem often is that we often have a bunch of silos did and they didn't mesh. That's  
175 why you sit down and talk. One of the things that's important for us and we wanted to see but is there a  
176 hospitality there and a lot of people a lot of these guys did not have people into their homes to  
177 entertain. Hospitality is more than Starbucks. If you don't have people over - there is a reason for this in

178 our job description. So, this job would be representative of any job description in any church. I think the  
179 denomination has something on their website but I modified this for what I knew our church needed in  
180 our context since I have been there for a year.

181 **Question: What role does the church as a community have in the hiring process?**

182 I would say, obviously prayer, and being made to feel that they are free to ask questions and make  
183 comment and recommendations as they see fit. When we are in our regular search process which will be  
184 September through to June, anytime there has been a search committee meeting, within a week to two  
185 weeks the search committee chair will give an update and solicit prayer and input or suggestions for  
186 other candidates. Our prayer groups always pray for the search committee on a regular basis and on  
187 Sunday during a regular 15-minute prayer segment that we have. So, I will often also visit people in their  
188 homes, even the elders, and I will say Let me pray for you, and they looked at me and said Well that's  
189 the first time anyone has ever said that. So, what does that tell you? So, I am trying to get in their minds  
190 what they need to expect and they have already said that I need to sit down with his fellow and bring  
191 him up to speed if he has not already been brought up to speed. So, I have said to them we need to be  
192 careful in this process that whoever we talked to doesn't come with the idea of sitting around for 18  
193 months and figure out where we are going. We know where we are going. We are already able to  
194 express where we are going. You just get on the boat, grab the steering wheel and help us keep going.  
195 You are not here to sit down and relax for 18 months. We've got something that is moving and it is  
196 moving very well thank you. And you are not here to just go along for the ride and see where we are  
197 going. We can tell you where we are going, we just want someone to go there with us. And I said that is  
198 unique to most pastors. They think they have to sit back for 18 months and say where we are going to  
199 go. And I think that's the unique thing for the search committee when you have had a transitional  
200 pastor. We've identified where we weren't and we're not going to go back there again. We know where  
201 we're going and if you are going to come you are going to join in that and with that said we are finalizing  
202 the changing of our church documents. We haven't finalized the incorporation stuff and that has scared  
203 one fellow. We think that the fellow coming in needs to have a little bit of a say in some of these things,  
204 so it's not this is the house that I built.

205 **Q: What does it look like for the congregation when you have a candidate and you want to invite**  
206 **them to preach for a call?**

207 So, if we have a candidate who is going to come to preach for a call, the congregation would hear three  
208 or four weeks before to set this weekend aside. The weekend before they would be told that a  
209 candidate is coming to preach for a call. They would be told who was coming and this is how the  
210 weekend will play out. It is understood that I would step aside. I will be there but it will be a full  
211 weekend. This person would already have met with the full search committee. Probably they will be  
212 exposed to as many different groups as possible and probably another meal meeting with, if not the  
213 whole search committee, then at least the elders and their wives. There would probably also be a couple  
214 of in-home things with various groups and then Sunday morning preaching, meeting with a congregation  
215 after a meal and as they walk away there would be a vote. So, it would not be dragging out. Once we  
216 have committed it probably will be about a 3-week process to bring him to the congregation so that's  
217 why we are saying keep yourself available because we will move this quickly once we say we're  
218 committed.

219 **Question: What priorities do you have for your new pastor once they first step in to the role?**

220 I think the main thing would be to re-evaluate from his terms how do we address these four things in  
221 our priorities in my first 6 months, in my first year. So, I think they would want to sit down and think

222 about what will the first preaching series be after the first three or four weeks, what are we going to do  
223 that you put your stamp on this and begin to articulate what we see are our four commitments from  
224 your perspective ideally from the point of scripture that allows him to verbalize it.

225 **Question: Is there anything that you would want to share with churches or leadership regarding hiring**  
226 **processes?**

227 I think the candidates and the churches both have to be on the same wavelength. I think if, in the dating  
228 analogy, I think this analogy is dangerous to be waiting for the proposal from whomever you are dating  
229 seriously. How do you look at three or four churches and pray intelligently focused and say Lord where  
230 do you want me to go? I'm weighing this I'm weighing that - she's handsome, the salary is good there, I  
231 can't function that way. I need to come down to one thing and say does this fit, do I have a sense of  
232 peace, then I need to move on. I think the church needs to do this and the candidate needs to do this.  
233 I'm not saying the other is completely wrong I just think it leaves you very vulnerable to being too  
234 worldly and analyzing things. And I think the other thing that I would say I think every Church should  
235 agree to an evaluation and a transitional interim pastor before they begin the search process. An  
236 objective evaluation, not how do we see ourselves but how are we really here? I think the person who  
237 looks at themselves rather than going to the doctor and says how am I doing doctor and he's willing to  
238 accept what's said and do something about it, that's what we need to do before we embark on the next  
239 process. Those two things are what I think are really important, so much so that I would almost say that  
240 this denomination, if they haven't done it why would you give them a profile? If they do not really know  
241 what they need first then how do you identify what will take you to where you need to be? Where have  
242 you been and what do you need to take to forward? What do you need? The reality is that most  
243 churches cannot identify that. When I was with my former organization a lot of times I was booked in  
244 advance and so I would call the church six weeks in advance and ask based on our earlier conversation  
245 and as you talk to your board how I can serve you well? What do you expect me to do with what we've  
246 already talked about? We will put that in an email so that we both agree what you want me to do. Then  
247 I would within two weeks of having been there write back and ask how did we do? In most cases not  
248 only did we do it but an open invitation was extended for anytime I was in the area.

249 I think we have also lost the ability to express our doctrine in a biblical sense without always thinking  
250 we've got to wear it on our sleeve and berate those who maybe don't hold to all of the same things. We  
251 need to have a perfect balance of Grace and Truth. One size does not fit all. Life is not always perfect  
252 and I quote Sam Albury that 'the fall messed up everything about us'.

1 **C4R2SP1A&B**

2 **Question: Would you please describe your hiring process for me?**

3 Well, the Church Council decided we should have a search committee. The search committee made up  
4 of people and couples that were involved in church one way or another whether in leadership positions  
5 or just involved in the church. It also included different age groups so different demographics the  
6 church. It included all the board members and their wives. And a senior couple and a younger couple.  
7 So, there are 7 couples all together. Ok, and we formed our committee most of our work through our  
8 regional office to see if there are any pastors but needed a congregation. Before that they set up a  
9 guideline of what our church or who are Church is and what our church would require in the pastor. We  
10 considered things like age limits, but we weren't there for that part as we were away. So, considerations  
11 were age - lower to middle age, and we were hoping for a family. I don't think it mattered a lot if they  
12 were ordained or not. We preferred an ordained minister but we would accept someone who had not  
13 been ordained yet. A lot of those details were worked out while we were away. And then we went to  
14 our regional office and gave them our requirements for what we were looking for. They then sent us  
15 numerous profiles of different pastors and their families and then we would get together and study the  
16 profiles and spend a lot of time in prayer that the Lord would just lead us and guide us in this process.  
17 We did that as individuals and together as a committee. We were looking for the person or the family  
18 that God chose for us to have. We wanted His man to be here not our man. We really relied a lot upon  
19 the Lord and we still are to lead us and guide us to that person. We spent a lot of time in prayer asking  
20 the Lord to open doors or closed doors and He has been faithful in doing that. Mostly closing so far but  
21 we feel like we might be getting close.

22 **Q: When did your process begin?**

23 We began our process about two and a half years ago. Our former Pastor retired. It has been a bit of a  
24 journey up until the time when we said OKAY, now we are ready. We knew that our church also had to  
25 make some changes and had to incorporate some new agendas for the furtherance of our church. We  
26 were getting pretty close to being a dying Church and we did not want to be there. It was while we were  
27 away that they organized the search committee so we got notification and were asked if we would like  
28 to be on that committee so we said yes. We are now in our third year. After they formed that  
29 committee and we started getting profiles then we were able to read those profiles online while we  
30 were away and then we came back and we were able to join in with the committee and go over some of  
31 those and make decisions. So, there's lots of conversation at the meetings concerning where they are at,  
32 where they are living now, where they are at spiritually and what kind of preaching also was very  
33 important. It is for us and I know that it is for a lot of our people in our church. If we had opportunity to  
34 listen to one of their sermons then that was important to us and we did that. We evaluated their  
35 preaching, they're content and their style. We studied all the details on the profile form - their style of  
36 worship. So, then we kind of narrowed it down to which one of the profiles seem to work best for us. At  
37 one point we had about 4 at the same time so that is difficult. We would listen to the sermons and  
38 evaluate the profiles and what we did was evaluate them on a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 was high and  
39 we were usually pretty well right on with one another on the committee.

40  
41 **Q: Were there particular elements, or aspects of that form – the profile, that you were concerned**  
42 **with?**

43 On the profile we look to see if they agreed with the statement of faith - that was important that they  
44 agreed with that, how long they had been preaching or how long they had been at their present church  
45 or other churches they had ministered at to show any history. How long their stay at each one was this  
46 is important because we are looking for someone with a long-term ministry. Also, what they had done  
47 previous to or other things besides ministering to a church if there was anything else in their history. So,  
48 their life history as well was important to know how that process of becoming a believer had affected  
49 who they were today.

50 **Q: As you reflect upon your process to this point, has anything changed, or been different from what**  
51 **you expected when you first started?**

52 As a group we agreed on one candidate and it was unanimous and then that fell through although we  
53 came very close but it fell through. Then, second one also we all agreed unanimously and we kept  
54 praying, God, if this is not the one then you close the door. We had chosen from what we had. I think  
55 three fell through. One had an injury that he felt he could not continue to let his name stand and that  
56 was one that we were very excited about. So, things happen and we had to start all over again and we  
57 went through some of the ones that we had turn down or not chosen before. Basically, then another  
58 few came in and we right away zeroed in on one of those. The zeroing in meant considering their  
59 excitement for the Lord, their willingness to be led by the Lord and not just put their name in and say I'm  
60 tired here, I want to move on. This one just seemed like he was looking forward to another challenge or  
61 a different challenge. Also, as those potential candidates didn't work out and we had spent so much  
62 time praying for the Lord to lead us and guide us and close and open doors and when those were closed,  
63 we had a confidence that this was not the man the Lord has for us and that was the end of it. So on to  
64 the next. There was disappointment but it seemed like the Lord gave us a clear answer so we go on.  
65 Show us to be followed through our process we saw a lot of ups and downs. The one thing that we did  
66 change though was we did advertise for a pastor through our regional office. We had not done that in  
67 the beginning. But we had been hunting for 2 years now so we thought maybe that's the way to go so  
68 let's try that. We got some responses from that and I don't know if this last one responded because of  
69 the ad? Also, in our process we have a transitional interim pastor and he is very experienced and he has  
70 a good ear and he knows how to ask questions and so he has also been a major part of our search  
71 committee. His influence, information, experience, his ability to ask questions has been an aide in our  
72 search committee.

73 **Question: How did you develop your selection process?**

74 Well, we talked to one of our board members who's been there for a long time and he has taken the  
75 time to talk to our regional office and different people there. We had the director come and speak to us  
76 to help us develop a process. He also really encouraged us. As far as our process we identified basically  
77 what we had done before with our regional office - ask them to send profiles and that's what happened.  
78 We have been on the committee for the previous pastor as well and we felt after a year-and-a-half that  
79 we were in a bit of a pinch and people were getting antsy and so we rushed. We decided we weren't  
80 going to do that this time. We said we can't rush through this. We can't just settle even if we feel like we  
81 are just hanging by our fingernails. We did not want to do that at all this time. We may be panicked the  
82 last time we used to similar process because of the time that we had been without a pastor. The biggest  
83 thing this time I think is that the majority of us are very much on the same page. We feel that we are  
84 together. We discuss things and there are certainly some differences of opinion but basically there is a  
85 really good process in working together. So, we consider our previous process, got input from the  
86 regional director and from our intentional interim pastor. So it was through these people that we put  
87 together our process. And the board itself put most of it in place.



88 **Question: What aspects of the hiring process do you believe have been the most significant so far in**  
89 **your process as you have been working towards your selection decision?**

90 First of all, reading the profiles listening to the pastor preach and getting together and discussing those  
91 things that are our concerns. And praying and having the Lord leading in this whole process.

92 **Q: Are there any other elements that you think are really significant for the candidates as you**  
93 **consider them? Or aspects of a candidate that you think are really important that you want to**  
94 **evaluate?**

95 I think it was important to determine if this person was concerned with those outside of our church  
96 walls and our community - evangelism is a big thing. Their family dynamics are important too - with one  
97 profile we looked at, they were city people and they had a child who needed extra care and for us the  
98 closest facilities are almost an hour away and when you look at that with the profile and his history and  
99 his story and how their family dynamics are working and it makes you wonder if it will be a good fit in  
100 our community? Should we even consider that because of the reality of where we are relative to the  
101 services that will be required? I really like to read their personal stories and that gives me a bit of feeling  
102 of who they are and how they will fit in. Most of us at the church there are country folk. We are rural  
103 people and somebody's going to come in and someone who is citified is not going to work here because  
104 most of the people in our church are the same. They are country folk. Even our community is country.  
105 One more thing, in our pastoral search, we considered if there was growth in his former congregations,  
106 spiritual and /or numerical.

107 We feel we need a church builder, not just a maintainer.

108 **Question: So how will you ultimately make your selection decision?**

109 Well, it's a two-way street. It's not just us but it's the person that we are looking at. We never really did  
110 get that far with any of them yet. We did come close because we felt he was younger had a young family  
111 and was willing to move at that point but that didn't influence us that he was ready to get away from his  
112 former Church. But what inspired us to take that next step, we actually had a family meeting with them -  
113 our search committee and the family and it was awesome. It was going to work for us. What happened  
114 was he decided at the last minute just stay where he was because they had a vote to keep him there and  
115 it was 100% vote. He had been an associate pastor and they voted to make him their senior pastor. Up  
116 until that point his former church had done nothing, but as soon as we got on the scene, they must have  
117 gotten wind of it and just decided to steal him back. We figured the Lord wanted him there and that's  
118 the end of that.

119 Part of how we make the decision is the excitement of him wanting to come to our church and be our  
120 pastor. On his part, just being excited for the opportunity to minister together with us. A willingness to  
121 move and our age criteria - things we evaluate.

122 **Q: Are there any other factors do you think – this needs to be in place, because you could pick**  
123 **someone off the street who might be excited to come here?**

124 It was important for us to understand in talking to the candidate about his relationship with the Lord,  
125 how he was going to preach, how is he going to reach unbelievers and how is he going to satisfy our  
126 fellowship that we have in our church because we have mostly older folks and we want the younger  
127 folks to come too and stay. We want to reach out to the community and we want to draw them in and  
128 he had some really good answers. You can tell when he was speaking it was his heart's desire as well as  
129 ours. We also are looking for someone who can fill our pulpit and be able to preach to the audience that

130 is there. If we have some community people that stop in who want to see what this church is about that  
131 he can preach to them as well as feeding the old established flock. Being able to grow our church from  
132 the inside and from the outside in our community. That's very important. We've had some preachers  
133 that preach so over our heads - we don't need that.

134 **Q: Are there any other factors? As you go through the profile, are there particular boxes, or things you**  
135 **are looking for?**

136 Style of preaching, style of worship, we are open to contemporary and traditional music. We have  
137 discussed somewhat about education and but you still need to be studying or for sure looking to further  
138 their own education to some degree or just attending courses and workshops and personal devotional  
139 time. We hadn't talked much about any specific educational requirement. So, reading and visiting was  
140 very important for us because we have quite a lot of seniors. It's a lot of work. Even though we are  
141 looking after seniors he needs to know the people in his church too. He needs to have an open home. If  
142 they have regular visitors in that's great and their home is open to anyone that's even better.

143 **Question: How have you evaluated the candidate's possible fit for the position at your church?**

144 I think they have to be open to our situation. We are transitioning from deacons to elders and different  
145 levels of Elders and our deacons are still working through that. That could be a hindrance or a good  
146 thing. We want to understand what role he plays in the leadership and what his expectations would be  
147 for that how he would fit in that. Does he see himself as part of the team or is he more someone who  
148 wants to take charge? We don't need that. We want someone who's part of the team is willing to work  
149 together with the rest of the leaders as a unit rather than, I'm the pastor and this is the way it should be.  
150 We have experienced that in the past too and we don't need that. But they have to have a certain  
151 amount of authority that is his yet being open to discussion - I don't know about them having the final  
152 say, but they work toward the same goal as a board or as a council.

153 **Q: What other aspects of fit do you consider?**

154 There are a lot of things that we look at but it's really guided by those profiles. It's been a while since we  
155 have looked at a profile?

156 **Question: What have been some of the challenges or issues as you have worked to identify and select**  
157 **your next pastor?**

158 One of them is Calvinism from one of the members of our committee who doesn't fully align with some  
159 of our doctrinal understandings in areas like predestination and so we have some differences possibly  
160 from some of our profiles. So, one of our committee is really against anything that relates to Calvinism  
161 so that can cause a problem. So, one of the challenges has been that within the context of the selection  
162 committee there is not a clear theological agreement on positions related to Calvinist theology. There  
163 was only one member that even brought that up but that was his concern and it was rooted in maybe a  
164 little different perspective or understanding of some of our theology as a Church. So, just one did and it  
165 has been addressed and we move forward. Hearing and seeing a preacher preach there is a difference.  
166 Some people like the pastor moving all over and some people don't. We like the in between stage.

167 There were some that....no, I don't think that is going to be a good fit. Whether it's a gut thing, or  
168 whether it's a real true message from the Lord... We didn't judge solely on that, but that was one of the  
169 little things that this guy really comes across as excellent in the pulpit, so there's a real plus for him  
170 there in his preaching. But it's not that this guy is reading all his notes - he won't work - that's not the  
171 way it was. But it was just a little part of our sorting it out.

172 Another challenge is we are a small congregation and an older congregation and so who can we afford?  
173 And more established guy who has been in ministry forever or a younger man that's got a young family  
174 and of course who is going to need more money perhaps, plus housing in our area is also a concern. It is  
175 expensive and not readily available. So, we did come to the conclusion and we all agreed on that but if  
176 the Lord wants our man to be here than he is going to provide for that man financially and otherwise.  
177 We are all content on just letting that go. If the Lord wants him here, which we are really praying about,  
178 then He will provide. Are we going to see someone from one of these mega churches coming to a poor  
179 country church can we could we even meet those needs? So, some of the challenges are funding and  
180 expectations based upon the pay scale that they were on. They may have been at the top of the pay  
181 scale and not where we are at today. Another challenge is that this person is going to be the lead elder  
182 or the teaching pastor - there is no associate pastor, there is no youth pastor, and there is no other staff  
183 but they are accountable to the board. He is not going to run the show. It is a challenge for a pastor  
184 coming in.

185 **Question: Do you have any other things that you would like to share or any advice that you would like**  
186 **to offer to other hiring committees?**

187 For me, spend a lot of time in prayer that the Lord would just walk you through the process - to not run  
188 ahead but to wait for the Lord and on the Lord and to trust that He already has this guy picked before  
189 our last Pastor left us. He knows who it is going to be. We pray that the God would lead them to the  
190 man of his choosing. We do our best with the profiles and do our part and to listen. Also, we have a big  
191 search committee and I have appreciated every one of them but sometimes I think it is almost too big  
192 and we have meetings sometimes in the evenings and often after church on a Sunday and we bring our  
193 lunch and sit together and have fellowship, but it is a lot of people. It doesn't matter where we meet.  
194 Sometimes I think it's almost too many, but on the other hand I guess we're all needed but I know we  
195 have had meetings where one or two families weren't there and it has felt nice to not be as crowded or  
196 busy. So, it can be too big and too organized but I think it is important to have a good mixture of people  
197 from the congregation to serve on this committee - age-wise and that all ages are represented, and all  
198 different stages spiritually maturity could be on there too. It should be a good mixture of what our  
199 church is made up of to serve on this committee. It can be a challenge but they will also ask questions  
200 that we maybe hadn't thought of. I think it is important that all of those groups have a say in who our  
201 next pastor is. I think we are doing better this time in our search for our pastor. Another challenge that I  
202 feel is that there are not as many pastors available to receive a call. There are no pastors out there who  
203 are desperate for a job. I do not like that word desperate but. I think that is in all church organizations.  
204 There are just not as many coming out of seminary wanting to be pastors. There is a shortage of pastors  
205 I know within our region because there are a lot of churches in our area who are looking, who's pulpits  
206 are empty.

## C4R2SP2

### **Question: Could you describe for me you're hiring process?**

We've just passed the two-year mark I guess for our search committee. We put together a committee to represent a broad range of ages as well as ministry leaders from the church. The result is, I know what most people would consider a very large search committee and so we work primarily by getting profiles from the region and I guess before getting the profiles we went through some material from the region that helped us identify what we are looking for in potential candidates and we were able to identify that very pretty quickly in the process based on where we're at.

### **Q: What were those materials, and what did you do with them?**

We received a one- or two-page document from the region that I guess they use at the regional office for sorting the profiles in order to forward them to a church. So, they had questions such as age of a candidate; married or marital status; education level; doctrinal preferences on certain issues; as well as I think ...I can't remember now all that included but we were able to put that together early on, right at the start of the process. Then we received a batch of profiles from the region that matched the criteria or were close to the criteria that we had laid out.

### **Q: How did you actually determine your criteria?**

So, before we got into the hiring process or the process of looking for a lead pastor, we had gone through about a one-year gap from when our previous pastor had retired. During that time, we did an evaluation with the region that helped identify both strengths and weaknesses within our church. Many of the things that were identified in the process with the region were things that we were already aware of but they just kind of helped confirm where we were at. In many ways the church was on a decline. A primarily older congregation with a few young families and young couples coming up, kind of dwindling attendance and it was getting to the point where we realized that without some changes, we were 5 to 10 years away, if the pattern continued, of being able to just even being able to financially support our facilities here. Our previous Pastor retired because he was older and so we have heard and I guess we believe it to be true that in many ways the lead elder or Pastor leading the church is probably going to attract people similar to themselves and so that's kind of where we started, looking for someone in a younger age group possibly or probably with a family, younger children - someone that could connect to a type of people we are hoping to reach in our community and attract to the church to help with growth. Also just looking at the strengths and weaknesses that we were able to identify within the church - obviously wanting someone preferably with expertise or experience that could come in to kind of shore up the areas that were lacking. Back to the process. Once we had gone through all that coming back to where we receive profiles from the region we then as a committee, as individuals on the committee would go through the profiles, generally as couples because the committee is made up of couples, and usually identify the top two or three that we felt best fit what we had laid out. The next step was to try it to gather a little more information beyond the profiles - mainly just seeing if we could get things like messages from church websites and that. Once we had kind of done that, we would narrow it down to one candidate that we thought would be the best fit and then begin pursuing that candidate by contacting the candidate to find out if they were looking to make a move and if so, were they available or were they in discussions with another church already. If they were available and interested there would be an initial meeting with just a few people from the committee as kind of a meet-and-greet to get to know the people. If both our committee and the individual we were looking at were interested after that initial meeting, we went through the process of inviting them to come and visit the town, take a look at the church. Depending on the situation maybe we would do an interview at

45 that time or maybe the interview again would come after that if both parties remained interested. In  
46 and around that we would be contacting the references for the individual but that has varied a bit  
47 depending on the situation as to whether the individual is okay with the church knowing that they're  
48 looking to make a move. In some cases, the individuals we have looked at have not made it known that  
49 they are considering a possible move.

50 So, the profiles that we receive are from those who are not presently pastoring and from those who are  
51 looking to move. My understanding is, there seems to be a couple different opinions. Some guys always  
52 seem to keep an active profile on file with the region just in case and then if they are contacted then  
53 they would just re-evaluate and consider whether this was something they were looking for. The others  
54 are those who are actively looking for a position either currently employed at a church or maybe in  
55 transition, whether that's out of school. If we made it through the interview stage, the committee would  
56 follow up the interview with a meeting at which point we would discuss the interview and vote on  
57 whether or not we would be interested in having this person come as an official candidate and preach  
58 for a call. Our committee has not gotten to that point with any of the candidates. We have interviewed a  
59 couple but for various reasons they turned us down at that point in the process. So, no one has actually  
60 come to preach for a call.

61 **Question: Reflecting on your process to this point has anything changed or been different from what**  
62 **you expected when you first started?**

63 At the start of the process, we felt it was important to focus on one individual at a time and sort of give  
64 that person our full attention until we either found out one way or the other if we were moving ahead  
65 with that person. What we discovered as we went through the process is that while we would hold to  
66 looking at one person at a time, most of the people we were looking at would be considering multiple  
67 offers at one time. So, about 6 or 8 months ago we determined that we did not need to solely focus on  
68 one person in that we could at least be in contact with other potential individuals at the same time. Our  
69 understanding from speaking with our transitional interim pastor and some other older pastors is that  
70 traditionally in the search process, it would be that the committee would focus on one person at a time  
71 and also most of the individuals who are being considered would only consider one offer at a time. And  
72 maybe it comes more into play with the age group that we are looking at with candidates. It is a younger  
73 generation and a lot of these people seem to want to keep all options open. So that's probably the  
74 biggest shift in our thinking. It hasn't changed a whole lot in how we've done things but it has changed  
75 how we have thought about the process. While we have primarily gotten the names and profiles from  
76 the region, there have been some that have been submitted to us by individuals and we did about 6  
77 months ago go the route of putting an ad up on the region's website just because they thought that  
78 would be helpful. There have been profiles and applications coming other places as well. When I refer to  
79 profiles, I mean the official denominational profile but if it's an individual coming from outside the  
80 denomination, they may just have a resume or something like that. What we've done if the person  
81 appears to be someone that we are interested in we will actually ask them to fill out the denominational  
82 profile. Whether or not they put it on file with the denomination - they don't have to do that, but at  
83 least in doing that they answer the same series of questions and provide the same information that we  
84 are using to evaluate everyone so it keeps the process more straightforward.

85 **Question: How did you actually develop your search process?**

86 A lot of it came from our transitional interim pastor, who has been the pastor here for most of the time  
87 or for the whole time during the search process. I believe we were his fourth transitional ministry that  
88 he has done in helping a church find a new lead pastor. So, he brought experience from the committees  
89 he has been on over the past couple of years. Also, just discussions with leadership at the regional office

90 as to how to go about this process and also just things that we have learned from the last time that we  
91 went through this process, which would have been 10 to 12 years ago now. Some of the same  
92 individuals who were on the search committee 10 or 12 years ago including myself, are back on this time  
93 and learning from some things that maybe weren't done the best way previously also factored into how  
94 we are trying to do things this time.

95 **Question: What did you consider as you developed your job description?**

96 We had never had a job description for the lead Pastor position here, which proved to be an issue in the  
97 past. The role for that position was not clearly defined by the church so people had certain expectations  
98 maybe for the position although they were not in writing and so it resulted in questions at times as to  
99 what was the responsibility of the pastor versus the Board in certain situations and that kind of thing.  
100 So, we did feel it was very important to have all those things clearly defined going into the process. The  
101 job description was actually developed prior to the search process beginning. I can't remember exactly  
102 how that was all put together. I believe it was a combination of getting a few job descriptions from other  
103 churches as well as the advice of our interim pastor again, who has been helping us. And then kind of  
104 taking the general outline from those things and then specifically tailoring it to our Church and the key  
105 areas that we felt we needed to be strong in, in order to be growing as a church. Trying to make sure  
106 that the person who would be filling that position clearly knew what was expected of them in those key  
107 areas, but at the same time trying to lay out a workload that was not unbearable or going to be too  
108 much. The job description was viewed for the benefit both the church and of the individual who would  
109 be coming so that everything is clearly defined and hopefully a manageable workload.

110 **Question: What aspects of the hiring process do you believe have been the most significant so far as**  
111 **you have been considering a selection decision?**

112 As we have gone through the process, we have been able to identify several individuals over these years  
113 who fit what we are looking for. Unfortunately, none of those relationships actually develop. I think that  
114 there has been the temptation to maybe alter what we originally felt we needed at the beginning in  
115 order to perhaps broaden our scope and maybe get a wider field of candidates, but after some  
116 discussion and meeting of the committee we felt very strongly that we should stick to the original  
117 qualities that we had identified at the start of the process as far as being what we need. We have looked  
118 at several individuals who fit so we know that the individuals are out there, it's not that we are looking  
119 for something that does not exist. We just haven't seemed to find the right individual so far.

120 **Q: Are there any other aspects that you think are really important or significant?**

121 I guess what's become apparent more recently in the process is the need to identify whether the  
122 candidate is actually willing to make a move. Through the first year maybe a bit beyond that in the  
123 process we spent a lot of time on certain individuals only to find out later in the process that, for one  
124 reason or another, they weren't willing to come to our position. So far in all of the positions it had  
125 nothing to do with what was going on within the church or the direction it was heading but we would  
126 find that the candidate would consider us but then decide they would rather just stay put or they would  
127 rather, after looking at us for a while, maybe not want to be in a small town - maybe I would rather just  
128 stay in the city. That has become a bit of a frustration, I guess. So, we are trying to determine that  
129 quicker now so that we don't waste time and energy on candidates who aren't actually going to come.  
130 At the same time, we have also found it is very difficult to necessarily find that out until you get later in  
131 the process. But I know that going forward from where we are now, just even with our most recent  
132 experience that it is something that we are going to try and determine earlier in the process is whether  
133 the candidate is actually willing to consider our situation seriously.

134 **Question: How will you ultimately make your selection decision? What are the most important**  
135 **factors?**

136 Experience and track record I guess are two of the big things that we are looking at. Because of the  
137 situation that our church is at, in many ways we approached this time since our previous pastor retired,  
138 almost as a replant of the church, where we kind of stepped back from it. We went through an  
139 evaluation process looking at every aspect of the church and then seeking to change that as necessary.  
140 In some cases, things remain the same but, in most cases, it resulted in either a minor change or a  
141 significant change into the look and the process of what we are doing here. We are looking for someone  
142 who has experience in the areas that we feel we are weak so that they can hopefully bring that  
143 experience to us and take us to the next level. In some of these cases we do not have the people within  
144 the congregation who are may be knowledgeable or experienced in the areas that we are looking to  
145 grow. So, I guess the experience and the track record go together. As we are looking at candidates, we  
146 are evaluating their current or previous ministry to see if they have seen growth in the areas, we want to  
147 grow in. Have they let a church through or have they lead ministries within the church in a way where  
148 growth is happening, so that we can hopefully expect them to come and do the same here?

149 **Question: How have you evaluated candidate's potential for possible fit for a position at your church?**

150 We don't really get to the fit - that is how well does a candidate and their family going to fit until we get  
151 to the in-person meetings. And that starts with the initial meet-and-greet. Do the individuals who are on  
152 the search committee, do they feel this person has the potential to be a good fit? A lot of times that is  
153 just evaluating their personality, the conversation that takes place - are they relatable and that sort of  
154 thing. If they get beyond that to the interview stage, then it's taking in the whole package. So, the first  
155 meet and greet just focuses on does this person and family appear to be a good fit with us, personality-  
156 wise and that. When we get to the interview it becomes a lot more detailed: doctrinally, philosophy of  
157 ministry, philosophy of leadership - how do those things fit in with where we are headed as a church?  
158 Again, if at the end of that someone appears that they would still be at good fit then we are likely to  
159 move forward from that point. We are probing these things at different levels through our process. Style  
160 of worship and other things all get factored. Usually some of that kind of stuff, whether it's music style,  
161 visitation, counselling philosophy - those things are all laid out to some extent on the profile. We  
162 generally have some idea from the profile if we think that person would be a good fit. Those things are  
163 definitely considered. Those things are almost considered even prior to the in-person meetings to the  
164 extent that if a person says for example with visitation, they don't do any visitation, home is not open to  
165 having visitors and that sort of thing, probably we would just reject them at that point. There are always  
166 questions that come up. We always ask those questions in the interview but usually at that point we  
167 already have some idea of what the candidate believes in those areas. We don't spend as much time on  
168 that because we have done that through the initial screening.

169 **Question: What have been some of the challenges or issues as you have worked to identify and select**  
170 **your next pastor?**

171 The biggest ones I guess on the challenges I've already alluded to, just with getting into the process with  
172 certain candidates only to have them say no. I think to this point we have identified five or six that we  
173 believe fit what we are looking for. Only two of them have actually made it to the interview stage. But  
174 there were at least initial meetings with four or five, and those would be in person or Skype meetings  
175 depending upon where the individual was located. The challenge or the frustration has just been that at  
176 the start of the process the candidate would give the indication that they were very willing or open to  
177 making a move. We actually just wrapped up or had a candidate wrap up our process a week ago who  
178 would have been one of the best fits that we felt as a committee. This one was frustrating because the

179 individual approached us, submitted the profile to us, told us that they believe God was moving them on  
180 from their current ministry so that they were ready and willing to make a move. So, we did some  
181 conversations just between our search committee chairman and the individual. They seemed very  
182 interested so we had them down here to the town just for a meet and greet and they liked everything  
183 that they saw. They said the church was going in a good direction and then they told us that they felt  
184 God was now telling them to stay. It's hard to argue with that, but it is disappointing and frustrating. We  
185 also had a similar experience with the first candidate we looked at right at the start of the process who  
186 also would have been, in our opinion, an excellent fit. The situation there was a little bit different in that  
187 the individual was in the assistant pastoral position at his current Church, with the senior pastor having  
188 recently moved on to another church. So, he was the sole pastor but had not been given the senior  
189 pastor role. He had indicated that he was looking for a senior pastor role because he had been in an  
190 assistant role at a couple of churches for 6 or 8 years. His church had not offered him that position so it  
191 seemed like he was actively looking. We got through the process and got all the way near to the end of  
192 the process. Obviously, we had to contact references, so his church became aware that he was looking  
193 for another position. We interviewed and we like the interview and then their current Church offered  
194 him the senior position, which he took. We have just run into a few candidates where we haven't gotten  
195 as far in the process but we again still identified them as possible individuals and then just having them  
196 say they were actively considering us only to find out that they had decided, just for reasons such as  
197 location or something that they did not want to make a move or that sort of thing. Which, we  
198 understand them wanting to be close to family or close to a city, but it would be nice if some of these  
199 candidates had thought through these things prior to. It seems like a lot of them had not thought  
200 through these things until they get into the process with the church and then they are kind of forced to.  
201 So, if some of these people had evaluated these things ahead of time it may just have saved us time and  
202 effort.

203 We have a meeting this coming week. This will be our first meeting since the last candidate said no so,  
204 we will probably be talking about what if any changes can be made moving forward to help identify  
205 those things. Again, we know that there may not be a way to be one hundred percent sure but even if  
206 it's asking a candidate very pointedly at the start have, they considered what a move means for their  
207 family, how close they will be to their extended family, are those factors that they've actually considered  
208 ahead of time and if not, would they please consider them before we get too far into the process.

209

210 **Question: Are there any final things that you would like to share or advice that you would give to**  
211 **anyone else who would be hiring a pastor?**

212 I think that in general our committee has done a really good job as far as the process. I think especially  
213 being such a large committee, maybe 14 people, it is a lot of people but we are always on the same  
214 page, you're always wanting the same thing. There hasn't been conflict on the committee. I think taking  
215 the time to do some of the pre-planning before you actually start to consider the profiles. Our church  
216 did have a gap from the time when our previous Pastor retired and we started searching - it was about a  
217 year. We took that time to do an evaluation of the church. To nail down the job description. And then to  
218 give some serious thought to what we were looking for in a candidate. I think there is value in doing  
219 that. It's not that a church necessarily has to take the 10 months to a year that we took doing that, but I  
220 think that taking that time saved us a lot of time and effort later. Some of that stuff was done, a lot of it  
221 was done by the church board even before the search committee was put together.

222 The other thing is sticking to what you believe God wants as far as the qualities and what you need for  
223 your congregation to move them forward. There is a temptation for sure, if you do not find someone



224 quickly or if you are getting a limited number of applicants or profiles depending on how you're sourcing  
225 them - I'm sure there is a temptation there to just expand you are pool one way or the other. In some  
226 ways I think that is what we felt like we did last time where we could not find maybe a great fit within  
227 the guidelines that we had set and I think we were starting to feel some pressure due to the amount of  
228 time it was taking so we may be stepped outside of that to get the individual that we did have. The  
229 other thing that has been very helpful this time through the process has been having our transitional  
230 interim pastor. The last time we went through this process we had a variety of guys coming in, doing fill  
231 in pastoral work anywhere from one month to three months at a time it would be different person so it  
232 really did not allow for any growth or anything to take place in the church during that time. The church  
233 was basically in a holding pattern, waiting until the next permanent guy could be hired and then looking  
234 to grow from there. Whereas having the interim pastor here, in the specific role to help us through this  
235 transition time, and just the fact that we know it's the same person, we're not trying to bring a new  
236 person up to speed every 3 or 5 months. It's been really helpful because it has given the church stability  
237 during the search process and actually allowed the church to grow at the same time. So, if there is  
238 another church that is considering this, one way or another finding some stability for the church just  
239 really helps things. Without that the church is in danger of losing people, things maybe falling apart a bit  
240 if there is not steady leadership in one form or another through the transitional process. I think those  
241 are the things that we have found most helpful.

1 **RL1**

2 **Question: How would you encourage a church to select their pastoral candidates?**

3 One of the things is I'm a big proponent of is seeing the resources that are available through your  
4 denomination or group. And in the case of US, it's through the various regions of US, their ministry  
5 centres. And in our case, it was with OUR REGIONAL OFFICE. One because I just think that just brings a  
6 cohesiveness, there's an awareness, I would hope, by the staff in a regional office or many have a  
7 denominational board so only have one office but there would be a knowledge of potential candidates.  
8 Even some vetting ahead of time. In our context, through our office, it's still up to the individual church  
9 to make their decision because of the value of the autonomy of the local church. But it sure is nice to  
10 know that there are some people that've done some vetting ahead of time. That any of the names that  
11 they do end up sending you, depending whatever process that is with our office, it's through the  
12 minister's profile, that there has been at least some initial vetting done.

13 **Q: So that the initial vetting is done through your office?**

14 That's correct. Through the regional office. By the staff there. So, for example, whenever I had whatever  
15 profiles came in, it went into my box. I got an email copy and a hard copy but I would contact the pastor.  
16 Whether I knew them or not or whether they were involved already WITH US or not. And I would say,  
17 "look if geography allows, let's go grab a coffee or lunch together. And if it doesn't allow, let's do a  
18 skype meeting. And it just allowed me to hear their heart and especially if I didn't know them at least  
19 gave me a chance to get to know them, to find out where they might be a fit, to ask them, so they do  
20 sign off on our statement of faith. But for some reason if they haven't or there's a box on there you can  
21 say "Yes, I agree but with the following reservations". So, before we ever sent that out to the church, I  
22 would want to know they are in tune, they are on line with our denomination. And not only that with  
23 the statement of faith there is also a code of ethics. And I just think that is absolutely vital as well. I know  
24 a pastor's answer yes should be yes and you would hope for that but sadly that has not always  
25 happened. Believe it or not. That way at least the church has something in writing so that if they end up  
26 choosing a guy, they will have a copy of his profile as well as it would give the regional director peace  
27 that if a guy suddenly, it says clearly in the code of ethics that if my doctrinal convictions change while I  
28 am pastoring my church, I will notify my board by way of resignation. That's it. No questions just you are  
29 done. What happened in years past, guys would not sign off on anything or a church would just hire  
30 someone from anywhere without any vetting initially. And then the guy's doctrine would change or it  
31 was not what he said and then he would flip the church. That happened a whole lot. So, this could give  
32 some tightening to that. Like going through, but then again you have to realize in the context of our  
33 group, the way it works a church doesn't have to use the regional office to help them find a pastor.  
34 They're free to do their own thing. Out of relationship with our churches, that was the goal. We wanted  
35 them, their first stop, to be "our pastor's leaving or we're looking for a staff person", contact the region.  
36 Because I think that does help with some initial vetting but it says clearly on the profile you know even  
37 though we have done some initial vetting, it is still up to the church to do their homework. They cannot  
38 get back to us and say why did you send us that guy? Ummm, no. You have to do your homework, you  
39 know? And we even would say that, I mean this is part of the vetting, but we could not even guarantee  
40 accuracy of all their answers on the profile. We would hope they are saying what they meant but I  
41 remember one profile, and I think this is the value of, I mean, through a regional office just because we  
42 know these things, one guy said his church attendance was 280. We'd asked for average Sunday  
43 morning attendance. Well, that sounds pretty impressive right? A good-sized church. Well, I had  
44 preached in that church about 6 months previous. Guess how many people were there. About 100. Now  
45 he was basing it off of well that was what the church was once when I was there. We were asking for the

46 average attendance now. So, you know it is pretty misleading right? So, we would just have to say to a  
47 church, we cannot sign off on the accuracy of every statement or everything that has been recorded on  
48 this profile. We will do our best but that is just the way it is, you know.

49 **Yes, I understand**

50 The church has to do their homework you know. That's where I would say it starts or that was my  
51 experience. Start there. Secondly in looking, obviously, a lot of time to pray by a search team. And not to  
52 rush the process. Not to feel like there's panic here but just say, ok God's giving us this time. You know,  
53 you would think from start to finish of the search process, I've found the average was about one year.  
54 So, from the time a search committee is formed through to the time when they have a new pastor up  
55 and preaching, is about a one-year process. That's a good timeline. It gives some time in between as well  
56 for people to kind of mourn or celebrate the loss of the previous pastor depends on their perspective.  
57 So, taking prayer as a huge part of that, I think really the committee, even the church putting a  
58 committee together, it's just so important to have an age, a range of age and stage of life on a  
59 committee as well as gender. I would say have at least two women on your pastoral search team. I mean  
60 at least two because it's hard for one woman to sit there with a group of men so have at least two but  
61 also, we men tend to miss some things. I don't know if your wife has ever told you that once in a while.

62 It's really good because sometimes women just pick up on things. I know my wife just picks up on things  
63 and sometimes I think "I didn't even think about that". Especially in this kind of a journey, their views  
64 and that, they just...God's given them that intuition. Women's intuition they call it. I really believe that  
65 it's there and it's just something special and really helps the search team. Plus, I think it's representative  
66 of the congregation where over 50 percent of our churches are ...sorry, over 50 percent of the people  
67 attending our churches are female. So why not make that representative on your search team.

68 **Sure. And that's good.**

69 And age, have those who are younger. Have some who are in their twenties, if you have them in your  
70 church of course.

71 **Oh of course.**

72 Then another aspect is garnering some input from the total congregation. Like in our context, usually six  
73 to eight people who are elected onto a search team. Often two of those are board members and then  
74 the rest are kind of at-large from the congregation. Depends on the bylaws of the church but that's the  
75 most common kind of set up. But still garner input from the congregation, even though these people are  
76 representing the congregation. I always found it was just helpful if the church did a brief survey, then  
77 everybody can kind of put on their wish list for a new pastor but reminding them, they won't all get their  
78 wish list.

79 **Q: Right. So, when you talk about a survey and them wanting their wish list, what kind of weight do**  
80 **you give to that and how do you encourage them to draft their survey because even how they ask**  
81 **their questions or the type of questions they ask, you can get...you know, what do you...you ask a**  
82 **congregation, "what do you think should be the top three priorities for our new pastor", you'll get a**  
83 **lot of different opinions won't you?**

84 Yeah, what we usually put or encourage churches to put on their surveys, and I have some copies from  
85 different churches to share with other churches, was instead of saying what top three things, here's a  
86 list of what we see as kind of the eight priorities for a pastor. Like preaching obviously would be one of  
87 those, counseling, visitation, those kinds of things. Circle your top three, top four. It's amazing though

88 how often similar things came back. Again, often that depends on the age of the person filling in the  
89 survey. Again, we've encouraged, in the context of our churches only members who vote which could be  
90 a small percentage of a church, but we've encouraged have everyone in the congregation fill out the  
91 survey.

92 Whether they were members or not. One it makes them feel included. And even have your teenagers fill  
93 it in. That was a good thing. So, one thing to have to give is an age range, you know, 20-30, 30-40, 40-50,  
94 50+ kind of thing. You know, what's your preference. Those results then come back to the office and  
95 those are helpful when you're picking profiles to send to them. I always encourage with the  
96 congregational survey, hand it out one week then of course encourage people to bring it back the next  
97 Sunday and then how many do you normally get back? 25 percent, maybe a third. Then what you do is  
98 the next Sunday when you've asked them to bring it back, have extra copies and say, "you know what  
99 we're just going to, because you know we got some back but in case you forgot or you weren't here last  
100 Sunday, we're going to take 10 minutes right now in the service." And hand out surveys and get them to  
101 fill them in right then. Get a far better response. So then again, it's up the church, it was just a  
102 suggestion as to what they should be doing. Always encourage them to do a lot of homework. Once  
103 they've got names of candidates and they've kind of narrowed it down to two or three, maybe do an  
104 initial interview with those two or three and let them know that others are being part of this initial  
105 interview. It's more of a getting to know you kind of interview. And it could be via skype or if possible, in  
106 person if the distance isn't too great. And then from there encourage the search team to narrow down  
107 to one. Start running with and let the others know, "hey we've decided on someone else at this point.  
108 We may come back to you but we're going to follow through with the one until God opens or closes the  
109 door." And then check the references for that one. And always ask for secondary references because  
110 everybody has four friends who will say nice things about them.

111 **Yeah usually**

112 We use to have only three but we upped it to four and at least one of those references had to be from  
113 their most recent or current context. Whether they're pastoring a church and still pastoring that church,  
114 it had to be someone in leadership from that church. Or if they had recently resigned for whatever  
115 reason, someone from their most previous experience.

116 **Q: Ok so in terms of the priorities that they would have for their churches, you encourage them to do**  
117 **this survey and include everybody, diligence in their interviews, references going forward, a lot of**  
118 **prayer. Now when you say a lot of prayer is that is something you encourage within the whole church**  
119 **to be formal in that regard or...**

120 Yep, I would always say to their team, make prayer a priority for every meeting. Number two is the  
121 board, make it a priority. And then number three with your congregation, make it a priority. And so  
122 really in every service there should be prayer for the pastoral search process, for the search team.  
123 Minimum once a month some kind of an update, not that they'd have much to update but at least give  
124 some update so we don't leave people in the dark. And of course, pray. But just keeping it, you know,  
125 forefront in front of the people that in every public service there should be (phone was moved and hard  
126 to tell but I believe it is "they should be in prayer") for the pastoral search team I just think. And that  
127 helps people to buy in to the whole process right and realize, "hey we have an important part in praying  
128 about all this that is going on behind the scenes".

129 **Q: Ok what as you are interacting with the church and encouraging them in their process and selecting**  
130 **their candidates, what types of things do you encourage that they consider at least as far as the**  
131 **regional involvement?**

132 Yep. One I'd always say is that once a pastor resigns for whatever reason, good, bad, or ugly, I would try  
133 and meet with the board. I would invite myself to come, say "look, I'd like to come meet. Spend an hour,  
134 and hour and a half. Here's five things I think you need to be doing as a board now that your pastor is  
135 finished or soon to be finishing. One of those obviously includes getting a pastoral search team in place.  
136 And then I would say once you've got the team in place, we would offer to come. We have a search  
137 committee manual that we would walk you through. Is it perfect? No but it really gives some good steps.  
138 I discovered in my time there that churches that kind of followed it, not the letter of the law but the you  
139 know, basically followed the steps that we outlined, those churches were what I would call for lack of a  
140 better word, very successful in their pastoral search process. Those who didn't started getting off the  
141 rails. It just gives good tracks to run on. Then I'd say we'd be glad to come back, spend an hour and a  
142 half with your search team, walk them through the manual, answer their questions. Then my  
143 commitment was always at least once a month, I will be in touch with the chair of every pastoral search  
144 team. If I haven't heard from you, you will hear from me. And again, that might have some say you've  
145 been a bit pushy. No that's what we're here for. It's your ministry center. Why not use the resources  
146 that are there? You're paying for it if you donate to the region so why not? Why wouldn't you take full  
147 advantage of what's available to you? At the time I would always say, "if need be, via skype or I need to  
148 fly back up somewhere, I'll just do other meetings while I'm up there. Flights or drive. Just say half way  
149 in the process you are kind of getting bogged down and you need me to come back and meet with you  
150 again as a search team, I'd be glad to do so. And then when they were ready, we would provide profiles  
151 that could be a fit, what they're looking for based on kind of their search parameters (age, education,  
152 experience, those kinds of things).

153 **Q: Now as far as that profile, how do you use it and how many profiles might you typically send to a**  
154 **church?**

155 Depending on the church, usually anywhere from eight to twelve. Some larger churches, I had limited  
156 profiles to send them because most of those churches were looking for someone with large church  
157 experience. And we didn't have a lot of guys. We have guys serving in large churches but they weren't,  
158 they didn't have profiles active. We only send names. Sometimes church teams would ask, "don't you  
159 got any other names?" and I would say, "I do but I can't give them to you." I said if you want to go ask  
160 others for names, go right ahead. Our churches would have hung us if I passed on the names like you  
161 know a specific person at a large church for example. You know, a large church and maybe a said, "well  
162 you got any other names?" If I pass on someone's name without him having a profile in, his church  
163 would hang us right. Now if his church said, "how come we are or you passed our pastor's name on?" I  
164 say he gave me his profile. By giving me his profile, he gave me permission to forward his name. So that  
165 was the difference. If I don't have a profile for the guy, I'm not giving you, his name. Or even if they  
166 asked me about a guy, I say, "you know what? No comment." You go ask anybody else but we can't do  
167 that because you lose trust with your churches. This kind of, you know, handing out names all over the  
168 place.

169 For larger churches it was more difficult and usually I only had one or two to send them to be honest. I'll  
170 be honest with you, a lot of those churches found someone from somewhere else but if they were  
171 looking somewhere else for someone, I always encouraged them...say if a guy coming from a different  
172 group completely, still have them file in the profile. One so we can do some vetting for you and two so  
173 they sign off on the statement of faith and the code of conduct and ethics. If they're saying no, I don't  
174 really want to do that, well that's a red flag in my mind. Now again some churches went ahead and hired  
175 a guy and never had them fill in the profile. And some of those churches ended up with problems. Some  
176 of them didn't you know what I mean? Some of them certainly did there's no doubt about it and you  
177 think ah why didn't you listen? You know what I mean?

178 I'd always say to a church as well, have them all fill in a profile no matter who you're looking at. Even if  
179 it's a name from somewhere else. Because then you can also compare apples to apples. They're all  
180 answering the same questions so you can compare their answers. And so that really helps in your  
181 assessment.

182 **Q: So, you use that profile then for just, you're able to more readily compare various people. So how**  
183 **has that profile changed over the years or has it?**

184 It certainly has. We did at least two revisions of it while I was there over those seven years. One was we  
185 added a reference. The code of conduct got tweaked. And it used to say on there "if I resign from my  
186 church, I will not take a position in another church in the same community." Well here in the city of  
187 Toronto, that could be a little tricky. You can't take another position, hopefully you're not going to go  
188 down the road to the church you know, you might end up taking half your people with you. But you  
189 know, if it's on the other side of Toronto somewhere, it still could happen but that's not your incentive  
190 in doing it.

191 Or we had one guy, he was at a church in a town. He was the senior pastor and he resigned and then he  
192 was called to a church, asked to be congregational care pastor at another church in Brantford. So totally  
193 different role right. So, before he even started at (church name), he called Bob and I and said, "look, are  
194 you ok with this?" We said absolutely. You wouldn't want to go there as their new senior pastor but as a  
195 staff pastor doing congregational care, no problem whatsoever.

196 So, we kind of tweaked the document that way. We adjusted some of the questions. It used to ask for a  
197 birth date which is illegal so we took that off which then makes it difficult to assess a guy's age,  
198 especially when churches are looking for 35-50 age range. But it does ask on there for age of children  
199 and your graduation date from Bible college or seminary. So, I believe that helps a little bit plus I could  
200 give a general kind of feel for where a guy is at.

201 So, we took that off of there. There were just some questions we adjusted. Then the second time  
202 around we adjusted a few more questions but we also put these, we got our lawyer to look at it and give  
203 us some good legal statements. For example, WE, or something along the line, does not guarantee the  
204 accuracy of all the numbers and statements on this profile form. Because we just couldn't. We wanted  
205 that and the other part was really, and I made this very clear to guys, just because you put it in a profile,  
206 there's no expectation that we're going to send it out. We will do our best. I had guys who'd call me, like  
207 one church was looking for a pastor. It's a church of 800. They want a guy, and I know this, they want a  
208 guy who's pastored a larger church. I had a guy who's pastored a church of 50 saying "oh can you send  
209 my name to that big church?" I say no. They're going to wonder why am I sending it. It makes no sense. I  
210 said if you want to send it yourself, feel free to do so. If I send it, they are going to think "He is not doing  
211 his job. Do not waste our time." I am not taking anything away from the guy. It is just that he does not  
212 have the experience they are looking for.

213 If you want, the profile form is on the OUR website. Because it's got the full statements now in black, in  
214 the bold letters that are the extra things we added. You'll see those on there that our lawyer gave us  
215 and we put on just to make sure we were saying it the right way.

216 **Question: So, what observations have you made over the years about how your churches actually hire**  
217 **senior pastors? And then what are some of the challenges you've seen?**

218 I would say as far as, I think I'd mentioned this already, those who had a good level of success, they  
219 followed the process that WE provided for them. And again, it's not perfect but it really does give some  
220 good tracks to run on. And I think just churches, I've found, churches that just the search chair, and I

221 think the search chair is really key, was in regular contact (again I did it once a month regardless) but  
222 those churches seem to move along much better.

223 I would also say in a church that was looking where they would allow SOMEONE, from the office to  
224 preach as pulpit supply for a Sunday that was really helpful as well because it gave the people in the  
225 congregation a familiarity with US as well as with the process. And of course, we could mention from the  
226 pulpit, you know before I would preach, I would mention, "hey were glad you're a church as a part of  
227 our family across Canada. We're privileged to journey with your pastoral search team and be praying for  
228 them." So, we could build up the search team as well kind of from the pulpit before you'd preach. If I  
229 was able to get into a church like that and pulpit supply for them, that was really helpful.

230 The frustration point came when churches didn't follow the process.

231 **Q: Ok were there any specific, I mean not following the process. Were there particular consistent flags**  
232 **that you observe that say oh "I've seen churches and they go and do this and it just never seems to**  
233 **work out"?**

234 They would sometimes bypass some of the steps. Or you know, "we kind of want to move this along  
235 quicker so we will skip some steps". We found that did not work so well. I found that when they were  
236 not good at communicating to candidates where they were at. I said, "If you contact...you don't have to  
237 contact every candidate whose profile we sent you but if you contact any of them, say two or three you  
238 want to have an initial interview with, close the door with them if you're not going any further. Don't  
239 leave them hanging." And our frustration was sometimes, both for the guys who had been contacted as  
240 well as for me was churches didn't do that. That was a frustration just to be left hanging.

241 Well, no I'd send them 8-10 profiles and they decided they'd narrowed it down to three they're going to  
242 have an initial interview with. Then they would do that initial interview and they'd choose one to run  
243 with but they'd never get back to the other two. You close the door with anyone you've made a  
244 personal contact with and that's really on the search chair.

245 Another frustration was when they really didn't do their homework with references. I say please at least  
246 make sure the four that are listed, that you're contacting them and have a really solid interview. And  
247 here's the way I suggested they do it. You know how often one will go away and contact all the  
248 references then bring a report back? You've only got one set of ears listening. So, I would say book a  
249 night, set up three or four appointments that night, set aside 45 minutes, and as a team you're sitting  
250 with a speaker phone in the middle of the table and you're calling a reference. Now only one person is  
251 asking questions but everyone else is listening and taking notes. And if the person on the other end who  
252 is the person doing the reference, they know everyone is listening. It's not just one person calling. And  
253 again, that really helps because everybody is listening at the same time. They can jot down notes at the  
254 same time. And as soon as you're finished that call, leave a 15-minute window before the next call to  
255 debrief. And then move on. You might have to do it over two nights just because you can't do 4 in one  
256 night. But I find churches that bypass that step of really contacting references just then they ended up in  
257 trouble. They just didn't do their homework and you got to do your homework. You've got to go visit the  
258 guy in his context. Not just to hear him preach because you're probably, with the internet today, you're  
259 not sending cassettes anymore. Remember what those things were? I don't know what those things are  
260 but I've heard about them. You'll have to explain it to me.

261 Exactly. The Smithsonian probably. But that day is gone. You can listen to most guys preach online  
262 whether, at least audio, sometimes video as well. Even with all of that you've got to see the guy in his  
263 current context if possible because not only to hear him preach live but also to see how he interacts  
264 with people before and after the service. How his wife interacts. How his kids interact. You can just

265 watch but it's really important. Again, some churches just “well we don't really want to travel that  
266 distance. We don't want to bother.” But my goodness, I always say to the search team, “Look if it's in  
267 Hawaii just draw straws to see who gets to go listen to the guy preach in January. It's ok. I'm sure the  
268 budget covers that.” If possible but send at least two people if not everybody can go. And just go hear.  
269 You've got to see them in their current context. It's going to cost you some money but it's well worth it.  
270 So, churches, I would say a frustration was, if they tried to do it on the cheap, that's a frustration too.  
271 They ended up in problems because they weren't willing to spend a bit of money to really do their  
272 homework.

273 And then I would say another frustration would be unless they had one candidate that they were  
274 journeying with, sometimes they would play the field. I would say to them, “once you narrow down to  
275 one candidate, you're committed to journeying with one candidate until God opens or closes the door.”  
276 You can't just suddenly say, “oh we just got another name”. No, put it to the side, finish out with this  
277 one person and then go from there. But I would say the same thing to the candidate. That's a real  
278 frustration to a search team. And he's said, “yeah I'm going to journey with you”. In the mean time he's  
279 playing the field and like dating two churches at one time. You do that with women it doesn't go over  
280 really well I understand. Never tried it personally but that's what I've heard. But to me it's the same  
281 thing and you can't do that to a church. We had some guys do that and that was a horrible frustration,  
282 especially when they get down the road a little way. I would say the frustration just not following  
283 through properly with candidates one way or the other. Not reimbursing them for expenses if they're  
284 coming to meet with you and they have to stay in a hotel overnight and they put gas in their car. You  
285 just give them a cheque; you know what I mean. You just cover those costs. It's very unfair. Plus, if you  
286 don't do it, you're sending a message to the candidate. If you do it, you're sending a message to the  
287 candidate. What message do you want to send? We're cheap or no we're generous. We treat our  
288 pastors properly.

289 **Q: So, here's a question for you. In your interaction with churches over the years, as you've observed**  
290 **how they're going about hiring their senior pastors, can you make any comment on I'll say the**  
291 **spiritual maturity of those engaged in the search generally? You say when you're picking your search**  
292 **committee you're going to try and get a pretty broad section of the church but what is the framework**  
293 **that a lot of times they're using or coming from in their search or have you had opportunity to notice?**

294 Regarding the makeup of the search committee, I would say to be honest, you could tell a few times it  
295 was a bit based on the popularity of the person in the context of the church or people's thinking well  
296 just because he is a successful business person, they will be successful on a pastoral search team. They  
297 could be but I do not think that is your only criteria. I would say it really worked well when there were  
298 people who were really committed and involved in the life of the church. Who really had a pretty good  
299 knowledge of the church. They'd already proven themselves, being servants in the church, very faithful  
300 and consistent. I always told them, “Look for people like that”. I think the spiritual maturity piece, you  
301 know I think you could have a 22-year-old who's very spiritually mature and you can have a 60-year-old  
302 who's been a believer for 30 years who is not very spiritually mature. They should be.

303 Not so much weight maybe on the spiritual maturity part but evidence of maturity is your willingness,  
304 am I plugged into my church, am I serving, faithful and consistent. You do not want someone who is only  
305 there every two weeks or twice a month.

306 **Q: Have you observed in a hiring context those kinds of differences played out perhaps in a hiring**  
307 **process?**



308 I guess I really didn't observe that. I think churches knew who they put on the search team and I  
309 wouldn't necessarily know where those people are at. I can pick up some things pretty quickly once you  
310 start meeting with them, where their hearts are at. It doesn't take a whole lot to pick up those things  
311 when you start listening to them and hearing their answers, how they're interacting with you when  
312 you're going through the search manual with them. You can tell for some people this is "ho hum/I just  
313 got to do this" where other people are really keen and really want to be immersed in it. That's what  
314 you'd look for, right. Now we'd always provide as well, you know, some people might think "I don't  
315 know how to ask questions" or what theological questions do I ask, I've never done this before. So, we  
316 would provide some examples of what good questions they could ask a candidate. That way they didn't  
317 feel like I've got all the theological ins and outs. Here's some questions I can be asking. Most search  
318 teams found that very helpful.

319 **Q: When you talk about, you say often in terms of how churches hire senior pastors over the past few**  
320 **years, you say those who kind of stay with the process are more successful and those who tend to**  
321 **deviate from the process sometimes have more challenges. Is it just process oriented and you think**  
322 **"well just follow this process because we've thought about a lot of this stuff" or are there any other**  
323 **aspects about how the churches go about it that you've seen that may in terms of even how they**  
324 **select, recruit, or try to find potential pastors? One, they're obviously coming to you and they're**  
325 **looking at profiles. Are there other things that they're doing that meets with some levels of success or**  
326 **not? You think, "oh we've seen a church try this or do this and that's really not a good thing".**

327 Well, I would always say to a search team, "where do you get names from?" And that's right in the  
328 search committee manual. By the way that manual is on the web as well. So, I would say to them, "here  
329 are some ways". One is the profiles obviously. Another way is you can just get unsolicited resumes. As  
330 soon as people know church is looking for a pastor, people will just send you resumes. They'll find an  
331 email address somewhere on your website and get it to the church or they will send it in the mail or  
332 whatever. So that's another way you'll get names. Again, I would always say to them, "any names that  
333 you get that you have interest in, have them fill in the profile. Don't just go off their resume". Another  
334 way is you can place an ad. But I always say, "if you place an ad on the internet, just be ready for a  
335 plethora of resumes and they will literally come from all over the world". And which they did. Even in a  
336 small church they come from all over the world. And some churches, if you go on the OUR website, I  
337 haven't looked recently, but there might be 10 churches have ads on there looking for senior pastor. But  
338 there might be 25 OF OUR churches looking for a senior pastor. So, I said, can that be helpful? Yes,  
339 because you know there will be names coming to you that no one knew or thought about. And  
340 sometimes that's great. And I said you can place ads on OUR REGIONAL or NATIONAL website, Christian  
341 careers Canada, that's out of Tyndale. They have a very extensive kind of career website. Then even  
342 Heritage has one as well. So, I said you can place an ad in all those places and that's fine and some  
343 churches end up finding their pastor that way. So that could be a good thing. I just say be ready. I  
344 appreciated what some churches did and I thought this was a great idea which was they put their ad but  
345 said "interested candidates, if you've not done so already, please go" and they put the link to the OUR  
346 website and to the profile. "Please fill in the profile, submit it to US, and they will forward it on your  
347 behalf." So again, that search team then knew we're going to get this and we can do some vetting ahead  
348 of time for them. Again, that was another place to get names or we would say, "look if you want to,  
349 don't ask us for other names but if you want to go ask other area pastors, they might have some good  
350 names for you. So, you know, feel free to do so. It's really up to you. But I would say in my time there,  
351 the majority, I would say probably 85% - 90% found their new pastor as a result of using the regional  
352 office, the profiles we sent them. Larger churches not so much. They usually had to look elsewhere and I  
353 understand that.

354 **Question: What is the typical duration of a senior pastor's tenure within your denomination?**

355 Well, it has become longer during the time I was there. So, I would probably say right now it's, I can only  
356 say ballpark, 7 to 10 years which I think is pretty healthy. Most will tell you it takes 7 years before you  
357 really start to see stuff happening in a church and they're really getting going in the direction the church  
358 should be going. It depends on the church right. Some are already moving in the right direction. A lot of  
359 our churches need to be what we call revitalized. So that is a tougher work, almost tougher than  
360 planting a new church. At least with a new church there are no preconceived notions or traditions. You  
361 can do whatever you want whereas you go into an established church whether it's little or big, is like an  
362 ocean tanker and it takes a lot to turn one of those ocean tankers right. 18 miles it's got to travel to turn  
363 180 degrees. So, a church of 50 can be an ocean tanker, an established church. But I would say it's  
364 probably in that range. You might want to contact the office there and they might give you a more  
365 accurate number. It's pretty hard to determine. I certainly saw it say during the time I was there; we saw  
366 that number extended. Not only for senior pastors, also for staff.

367 Before it was probably 3 - 5 or 5 - 7 somewhere in there. For staff, pastors it was even less.

368 **Question: What priorities do you feel a church within your region should have when they are seeking**  
369 **to hire a new senior pastor?**

370 I think the church should have a clear vision of the future and from that a clear mission. I always  
371 encourage churches to develop that ahead of time, work with the board, work with your people. Vision  
372 is what we believe God wants us to become. Mission is what we believe God wants us to be doing so we  
373 can become what we believe God wants us to become. Mission helps fulfill the vision. Then I would also  
374 say have some good core values, like this is what we believe, these are things that are not going to  
375 change so to me obviously being Biblically based is a core value of one of our churches. Have 4-5 others  
376 that are just like these are the non-negotiables. Those things also help you evaluate your ministries. So,  
377 is our youth ministry Biblically based if that's a core value? Is our youth ministry geared towards  
378 missions and outreach? Or is it just a holy huddle you know. We believe that's a core value. Is it helping  
379 young people develop strong relationships because we want to be relationally strong? That's a core  
380 value. What are you doing to help develop those relationships? Like small groups or whatever you're  
381 doing. So important, I think, for a church even before they start looking for a pastor is to have those  
382 things in place as best as possible. They can be fine-tuned once the pastor comes. Because I know if I go  
383 somewhere, I'm going to be asking those kinds of questions. What is your vision? I want to hear from  
384 everybody around the table because I don't want competing visions either. I want to know everybody's  
385 on the same page here.

386 **Q: Are there any other factors the church should have or consider even as they're trying to put those**  
387 **things together?**

388 I think history comes into play. I think, and sometimes history can be very difficult but I think they need  
389 to look at it and deal with it. I think another factor the church needs to deal with, "are we ready for a  
390 new senior pastor?" And in some of our churches we knew there had been such ill health and by that, I  
391 mean they had a quick turn over of senior pastors. And for a lot of churches that is cyclical. If you are not  
392 going to deal with the problem, you can gloss over it and make it look really nice but eventually it is  
393 going to rear its ugly head again. So, we would encourage those churches, "you know what? Don't look  
394 for a new pastor for two years. Allow us to help you find an intentional interim pastor rather than...a  
395 traditional interim pastor preaches and is maybe there two days a week, does visitation, kind of keeps  
396 the church going until they get a new pastor whereas an intentional interim pastor goes in for two years  
397 almost full time. Obviously preaches but helps the church navigate their health issues. Takes them

398 through a process which Outreach Canada provides. Help them become healthy before they start a  
399 pastoral church. I think that's absolutely vital. Because I would say to a church, "let's be honest here.  
400 You have ill health. Look at your history with pastors. That says something." And I know that's not, it's  
401 never one side. It's pastor and people. So, the bottom line is you have some things you've got to change  
402 here before you call a new pastor otherwise in 2 -3 years' time, guess what you're going to be doing?  
403 You're going to be calling me looking for a new pastor. So why not deal with it now, you know? Take a  
404 couple of years. I know that's hard to wait but your church can still grow during that time. I think it's  
405 absolutely important that a church be honest in looking at itself and say we are unhealthy. We need to  
406 do something. It's hard for a church, I can tell you that. Really difficult for them to admit that. There are  
407 those that have and we find them an intentional interim pastor. Those are all success stories; I can tell  
408 you that. It's a hard pill to swallow.

409 We've got to get back on track here. That's our priority. And I think a lot of people would say that but do  
410 you really mean it? Because it's going to hurt. It's painful. You're going to have to go through some, it's  
411 not just knowing that you have cancer, now you're going to have to go through some chemo treatments  
412 here and it's going to be painful.

413 **Question: What kinds of support does the region provide for churches or candidates who are seeking**  
414 **to fill senior pastor ministry role positions?**

415 Well for the church again there's commitment to journeying with that church from start to finish. And  
416 whatever time is needed and whatever energy is needed to help resource that church. Now the cool  
417 thing that we got going over the last number of years is an association shepherd. So, within US, because  
418 it's so large geographically, there's 19 geographic associations which are really designed for pastors to  
419 be able to connect with one another. Because you know the guys in Thunder Bay aren't connecting with  
420 the guys in Toronto unless they've got a buddy that they call on the phone. But they're not meeting face  
421 to face regularly. Associations allow for that. We put these shepherds in place one to just be there to  
422 support and encourage pastors but it also kind of expanded our ministry. So, say they needed, it was in  
423 Thunder Bay, and I just couldn't get there a second time. I can send the association shepherd. He can be  
424 me; you know what I mean? It's like the apostles. He can have all the authority. And he can be there as a  
425 resource. To me that has expanded the ministry of the resource centre. So that resource is available as  
426 well for the church during/through this process. Helping them find interim pastors or helping them find  
427 an intentional interim pastor. We helped with that. If they needed pulpit supply because they didn't  
428 have an interim pastor yet, we'd help them find pulpit supply. But I think the biggest thing is almost like  
429 the hand holding from start to finish in the process both with the board and with the pastoral search  
430 team.

431 As far as for candidates, again it's you know, chatting with them about where they're at, where they see  
432 themselves going, what their vision is for their life and ministry, where their family's at, getting them to  
433 fill in the profile and then meeting with them to go through the profile, you know, talk about the various  
434 opportunities that are out there. Some people, you'll see it says right on the profile, that on there I think  
435 it says city, suburban, rural, small town, you know, those kinds of categories. Some people do not want  
436 to be rural. Even on there is northern. Everybody's definition of northern was different. Some people  
437 didn't want to be north of highway 7. I think for most people Huntsville is kind of that dividing line. The  
438 guy in Thunder Bay will tell you, well that's not north. But some people don't want to be in the north  
439 right. It's just too far away for them. They want to be in the GTA or they want to be in Southern Ontario.  
440 And that's fine. I would always say to guys though, "I think you really have to be open to wherever God  
441 might want to take you", but obviously they've got their wife and family to consider.

442 **Q: Did you notice any difference between the rural and urban settings in terms of how the churches**  
443 **searched for a pastor or their processes? Were there any differences between those two cultural**  
444 **groups?**

445 You know what? Not really because I think when you go through the manual, you'll see it fits any  
446 context. It really does. And obviously the city context, especially some cities, a big factor for them is  
447 what can we afford to pay? Because a guy could be making \$50 000 in a rural context but he's not going  
448 to survive in Toronto. But then that's tough for those churches. I would always say, if you can, you want  
449 your pastor to live in the area. You don't want a guy pasturing in Etobicoke who lives in Oshawa just  
450 because that's the only place that's affordable. You know somehow, you've got to do whatever you can  
451 to make it work because most of our churches even in Toronto, they're not regional churches. Some  
452 churches are a regional church. Others are a community church. It serves that community. Now some  
453 people travel a distance to get there but if that church is really going to grow, they've got to impact their  
454 community of Toronto. They don't need to worry about Scarborough. That's a big challenge to be  
455 honest and even for guys considering where they want to go, it is a cost factor. You can't afford a house  
456 in Toronto but you can afford a house in Brockville. Just different contexts so those things always come  
457 into play as well.

458 And the other thing I found some guys sometimes, you know what, maybe should be considering church  
459 planting. And then I would steer them towards someone to have a conversation. Even to have a  
460 conversation about it and then go from there.

461 **Question: Any final things that you would want to share or any advice you might want to offer to**  
462 **churches who are going through a search process or to a hiring committee?**

463 One thing I always said and I think this is so important. Don't leave finances to the end. Somewhere in  
464 the process, especially after you've called references if you want to keep going with the guy, that's the  
465 time to talk about the whole salary package. Don't make a guy, a candidate, bring it up. You have  
466 something ready to go. Obviously, it's negotiable but let them know what you're looking after, salary,  
467 benefits, health and dental, pension, ongoing education, moving costs, those kinds of things. The worst  
468 thing is to be sitting there as a candidate, they're ready to have you called to preach and you haven't  
469 talked about money. That's a big thing. And again, if you're the one that brings it up first, that says  
470 something to a candidate as well.

471 Just use the resources that are available to you and that's absolutely vital.

1 **RL2**

2 **Question: How do you encourage a Church to select their Pastoral candidate?**

3 Well, we go in and do a search presentation with them that shows them how to go about a process for  
4 selecting a candidate. It's one that's been honed over the years. Lance Johnson was a key architect of  
5 that and we are always updating it. Basically, it trains them how a search committee goes through and  
6 does an interview process, finds a good candidate, interviews them, and eventually calls them to be the  
7 pastor. We've been adding to that. I like to meet with the board prior to the search committee and  
8 basically making sure they have vision, direction of where they're heading because it makes it a lot  
9 easier to find the right pastor if they have an idea of where they're going. And so, if they don't I give  
10 them some basic tools to determine Vision Direction and values of the church. So that's been a new  
11 thing we've added in the past year I've been developing even in the past 6 months. Part of what we do is  
12 even to show them how to do a search process because I'll joke with them and I'll tell them I hope  
13 you're not good at this because it would imply that they've been searching for pastors all the time. And  
14 that's primarily talking about smaller to mid-size churches in the process because they're the ones who  
15 especially need the training. The larger ones often do too but especially the smaller ones.

16  
17 **Q: Are there any other pieces that you want to emphasize as you teach them?**

18  
19 Yeah, we teach them to pray but the search committee hopefully they're praying anyway. But we tell  
20 them to really make that an emphasis. We ask them to appoint one of the committee members, the  
21 search committee members, as the communications person. And their job is to communicate all things  
22 search committee including prayer. So just ask people to pray regularly and remind them of this by  
23 bulletin or email or whatever. The pastor profile is a key piece that we use and I'll reference that later.  
24 That direction of where they're going is a big one. We basically show them how to find candidates and  
25 what documents do you need to produce before you do and you need to have what you want in a  
26 pastor and a list a qualifications or things that you want for your pastor. A job description - a lot of  
27 churches don't have a very good job description and so I can give them a kind of a template of what that  
28 would look like. Just make sure they have a job description. Pastoral selection guide is something we use  
29 which they go through and just check off some things that they would want and that's in this document.  
30 We're in the process of updating some of this stuff but it's there. (4:16)

31  
32 And I suggest that they put together their community profile their Church profile just a paragraph about  
33 their church and community to introduce prospective candidates to it and I always encourage them to  
34 be positive about it and to think of it as if they were the tourist bureau for their community and church.  
35 Because you're trying to attract somebody and you want it to sound nice and there are nice things about  
36 most communities. Then to develop list of names what we do is we give them several sources and tell  
37 them to ask their congregation but always qualify that we are not promising to take them because your  
38 cousin's a pastor. It's amazing how much of that you get. OUR profile system we receive profiles here at  
39 the office so we keep a database of names who are interested in moving or who are interested. So, we  
40 offer that to them. When they send us their selection guide then we respond and start to send profiles  
41 to them. We encourage them to talk to their local Association. We have 19 associations in OUR REGION,  
42 that would be a regional group of anywhere from 5 - in Toronto it would be closer to 50 churches but it's  
43 a whole group of churches. We have Association Shepherds who helped in the associations. We have a

44 moderator who is like the chair of the association. And so, with the pastor's as they talked with those  
45 people, they often know somebody who is interested but that person hasn't declared. They are friends  
46 and they know and can tell you I know a guy. Internal applicants - often there maybe somebody in the  
47 church who is a potential candidate, not always but often. We really coach them to be careful with  
48 those because that is obviously sensitive. Sometimes they are very qualified and sometimes they are  
49 sort of, they are not ready and you don't want to push them out of the church because they feel hurt  
50 that they were not considered properly. So, you always give them Fair consideration but always be clear  
51 with them. And then resumes once you lose a pastor, you'll get resumes from people who just figure  
52 you might need a pastor. Then of course we have a website that a lot of people check so we post job  
53 descriptions on there too.

54 And so, they get a list of names and then we teach them how to interview or pick 3 is what we suggest  
55 of the best candidates and then do phone or video interviews. If they are close you can bring them in  
56 but often, they will do a phone or video interview first just to get to know them. And then pick the one  
57 you think is number one. I know this goes with prayer and check the references because you are crazy if  
58 you don't check references and really dig in. I give them this other document with a whole list of  
59 suggested questions. That's just something I put together. The selection guide is just a two-page thing  
60 that can help but it's out of date because it asks for example are you okay with drums. You know, KJV  
61 only and they may think what are we because that is not an issue for us but it was written probably 20  
62 years ago when it was for the churches. This is on its last cycle. In the next few months, it will be  
63 updated. The key thing on this document is that - you can ask some personal information, but preaching  
64 teaching evangelism leadership, visitation, counselling, administration - this is probably the most  
65 important thing they check - whether they want a lot of that or not. I usually encourage them you  
66 probably want a good leader you want someone who can speak because you're going to have to listen  
67 to them all the time and you want them to be, if they're not an evangelist, to be at word focused. It's not  
68 that you don't want the others, but you can often train the others. Depending on the size of the church  
69 some Administration is needed especially if it gets to be about 150 to 200 people.

70 **Question: How do you encourage them to use the selection guide. Is it the board that would do this or**  
71 **the church and how do you encourage them to use it?**

72 Usually, it's the search committee that would use it but usually there's someone on the board on the  
73 committee. Usually, key influencers will have a say as well. I tell them too that while I use this if I see a  
74 candidate that doesn't quite fit their profile but I think they're good I will send them to them still.

75 I tell them to make sure they plan on salary stuff and they're going to want to tell the candidate. Once  
76 they're working with one candidate, they will want to let them know, not too late in the process because  
77 we don't want them to get to the end and the guy saying no because it's not enough money, which  
78 happens and guys are interested until you tell them the salary is 50000 a year or something and the guy  
79 is expecting seventy and so we have a salary guide, I have actually been working on a new one, we give  
80 that to them and they can put together a salary. I'm finding that most churches realize they have to pay  
81 a guy properly and they're trying to. Sometimes they can't, they just can't but they are trying. That  
82 would be a big point though. Then I encourage them to have a time period, typically a weekend where  
83 the guy comes in and then preaches. I am trying to train them that preaching is one part you need but  
84 you've got to make sure that you interview and the rest- you can't see leadership you have to figure it  
85 out if they are a good leader or not. You can figure it out it's not just hearing A good sermon though.  
86 That's the main stuff.

87

88 **Question: I am aware that you have this pastor's profile. How do you utilize the pastor's profile for**  
89 **selection and recruitment?**

90 Well, the profile is just basically a standardized resume is what it is. So, it's 10 page and the guys fill it  
91 out, basic information their name a bit about their family what roles have had in the past, what type of  
92 position they are interested in, what geography they might be willing to go to; and most guys are willing  
93 to go where the Lord leads them but at the same time they want to be in a city or rural or north or  
94 south. They all have families and preferences and that's fine. Where they went to school; so just basic  
95 information like that. I find the most important is just what they have done their work experience,  
96 because if they have pastored 3 churches of 60 people for the last 20 years that is something different if  
97 they were a youth pastor at a big church and then became the associate or the lead - you know it tells  
98 what their scope of ministry is. It doesn't necessarily say they are a good leader but typically you want to  
99 see some growth and development in a church and you also want to see them there for a length of time.  
100 And you know 3 years 3 times is too short, five or six years is all right and anything above 5 years that's  
101 fine because you understand. You just don't want to see short stints all the time. Part of what's  
102 important is we ask them to sign off on three things. 1 is a code of ethics and a key one in there is  
103 basically they won't leave their church and go next door to start another one next door and take half the  
104 people, so they have to agree to that. Our statement of faith they have to agree with and they can make  
105 a note, occasionally they make a note about the Lord's Day or the wording or something occasionally,  
106 basically half of our guys agree with them anyway but it's not an issue, but they have to sign off on our  
107 statement of faith. And then towards the back they have to agree that their references will not be seen,  
108 they won't get to see their references because otherwise by law I would be able to ask for what their  
109 references said and if references thought that would happen, they wouldn't give a reference. So  
110 sometimes churches get profiles directly from a candidate or get resumes and that is fine, but we think  
111 there is a degree of protection in this that if they waive the right to see these things or signed off on our  
112 statement of faith or our code of ethics, then whenever a guy gets out of line, we can say well you have  
113 actually submitted to this and you have signed off on this. And so, we encourage churches to use the  
114 profile even if they do not get them from us - a guy just fills it out and gives it to them. It is still better if  
115 they give it to us though because we make sure they have checked the things they should and a church  
116 doing that may miss that. We see it as a key piece. It asks a bunch of questions, some of them more  
117 useful than others in my mind like what is your philosophy of developing leaders. I don't care what they  
118 write because any college student could write something half respectable about that. I care if they  
119 actually do develop leaders so I am much more interested in their history then their philosophy on these  
120 things unless they write I think I should be the boss of everything or I will just sit in my office all week  
121 and weight for people to and get my blessing. Obviously, no one is going to write anything ridiculous like  
122 that. I want to hear how they've actually led because I find any of these questions about philosophy  
123 anybody could write something half good. What their spiritual gifts are - that's an important one to me.  
124 It's a self-assessment it still is helpful how they think of themselves. I don't find these pages that help  
125 like check off what is your devotional life like, your hospitality your missions your view of missions your  
126 style of worship. Maybe churches find it helpful but I really don't read that page. And then any issues of  
127 did something criminal happen or any major issues that we should be made aware of you would want to  
128 explain what it was. You know like someone may have been divorced and they want to explain what  
129 happened my wife ran off on me and I've been married for 20 years now to another woman you know  
130 something like that but that may be only one in 15 that we hear of them.

131

132 **Question: So how do you use this profile then as churches would come to you what is your process for**  
133 **sifting through these preferences. How do you try to marry these profiles to churches?**

134 Half of how I figure out what to do is I go to the church and I see them and I get to know them, and I do  
135 still reference the guide and what the profile says but I get to know some of the guys and I get to know  
136 the church and so when I go to the church, I'm sharing with them how to do a search but I'm also having  
137 my eyes wide open and just trying to understand the place. Because you walk into a place fresh and you  
138 learn a whole lot about it just by being there - it tells you how it's been lead, what they've been doing,  
139 and who they are and you see the community around you. This is city is it rural? What does it feel like  
140 here and so from that it helps me to think about what does their Building look like? Like all these things  
141 you see. In seeing all that you get a sense of what the church is and I don't have a defined list of what  
142 I'm checking off but I think who would be a good fit for this place and what do they need here? Do they  
143 need a guy with a proven track record or an experience? Everybody's going to want that but not  
144 everybody is going to get one. Is it a Congregation of seniors? Does it have families? What is the board  
145 like? Is there's someone on the board who's obviously going to run everything, who is going to cause  
146 challenges for somebody? Trying to figure all that out and then I look at the profiles and my assistant  
147 helps me. I keep a list of the profiles with key points about their gifts and things on the profile. It's not  
148 like we have so many profiles that I can't keep track of them personally. We might have 70 or 80 in the  
149 database but we will only have 20 to 30 that are what we call Hot ones that are active. They probably  
150 need to be culled. We don't have a standard time frame for how long we keep them but in my mind  
151 about a year, sometimes longer. Some of these guys put their name in and they're not desperate to  
152 move but they are thinking about it so it's kind of a feeler they put it in for. I've been on a year and a half  
153 and I basically know who those are and there are some that are in there but we will move them to the  
154 archive and eventually remove them all together. Obviously, we hold that confidentially.

155 If churches get someone directly, I encourage them to send the person to our site and use the profile.  
156 Some of them do and some of them don't, but I think just for the waivers alone to me that's the biggest  
157 value. It gives our whole movement a bit of protection of who's coming in. I will send churches maybe  
158 five or six profiles. In my mind I have a group of guys who I know in our profile system are stronger  
159 candidates so they are often going. I will not say no matter what the selection guide says because we do  
160 care what the selection guide says but the five or six strong candidates, the churches tend to pick things  
161 in their guide that they should be anyways which is what I pick the candidates to be. Again, the guide  
162 helps, I think it helps the church as much as anything to think about what they are trying to find, but it is  
163 likely that the guys I think are the five or ten strong candidates are going to match a lot of the profile  
164 anyway. So, I'm already thinking in my mind when I visit a church who in our system might be good for  
165 this church? I tell them that churches pastors do at least three big things which are shepherding  
166 preaching and leading and I encourage them that they need somebody who will be a leader. We need  
167 pastors who will lead. It's not to say we don't, we obviously need good teachers and shepherds too but,  
168 in the past, I think we've been understated on the leadership and we end up with churches that aren't as  
169 well lead or it's kind of lead by committee by the board and that's why many are struggling because they  
170 didn't have good, strong, gifted leaders. And so, I encourage them to look for somebody who has a  
171 leadership gift, and not to say they're going to be the boss of everything but you want a guy who's going  
172 to lead forward in a team way. And so, when I'm looking at who do I think would be a good candidate I  
173 am looking for guys who either are that or have potential for that. Ideally that are already but you don't  
174 always have enough strong candidates. So, I send that but I don't care if they get it from me or not. I  
175 don't care if they find it somewhere else. That's not what matters. What matters is that they find a good  
176 candidate. Some of them find it from our system, some find it from outside, but they all appreciate our  
177 input I would say because it helps them train them, whether they get one from us or not it even helps  
178 them sometimes to find the guy they do find because they see what's out there and the guy they find,  
179 you know you're comparing and it helps them.

180



181 **Question: What observations have you made about how your church's hire their senior pastors over**  
182 **the time that you have been here and what have been some of the challenges that you have noted?**

183

184 One thing I will say is we might have close to 10% of our churches at any time looking for a pastor which  
185 to me is about right. That's actually not bad because I would suggest that we are keeping guys for 10  
186 years, maybe we're not but I would suggest that we are, which is a pretty good run I would say. Of those  
187 10%, for us would be about 20-25 or something, only about half are actually looking at any given time.  
188 They typically spend months figuring things out internally. It could be that they have some people  
189 internally who can preach and so they don't even begin. The immediate needs are covered. If a pastor  
190 leaves badly, they have to work through any relational things or if they're just at the end of a pastor,  
191 who's been there awhile and nothing's bad but they are figuring out who they are so it just takes them  
192 some time to figure out who they are and talk together what do we want to be, kind of thing. Or just for  
193 a variety of reasons they just don't get going that quickly a lot of them. So, I have observed that  
194 although they are without a pastor, only about half of the ones that are without a pastor are actually in  
195 the act of a search and it takes time to get the committee together and just get ready to search. That's  
196 an observation. Here's something. Initially, when I started, I was encouraging them not to post it on the  
197 website first and the reason for that is we felt it was better for them to look at internal candidates from  
198 the profiles or other internal ways that I was mentioning earlier. But I am getting to the point where I  
199 and moving towards recommending they just put it on the website as well because it draws a wider pool  
200 of candidates ultimately and I was a little concerned about getting so many resumes and you get a lot  
201 from overseas when you publish it online and they appear to be just people looking for a job. But within  
202 that you do actually get some good resumes too, and so I'm leaning more and more towards doing that  
203 and not just relying on our profile system. Because again, it does not matter whether they get them  
204 from our system what matters is they get a good candidate. And, within the denomination, it seems to  
205 me, we are developed or have developed a good reputation as a conservative theological group, but still  
206 moving forward on how we do things. Some Churches have room to grow but we generally have a good  
207 reputation as a solid conservative group that, if you are complementarian, somewhat reformed, this is a  
208 good place to be. So, we attract people like that too and not all of them, I don't mean they're hyper-  
209 conservative, probably on the right half of the evangelical Spectrum. Some close to the middle some  
210 closer to the right, I guess. When people who are applying to us, sometimes you will get guys who are  
211 not quite a fit, but often you are because that's what you call our brand, I guess. That's what we're  
212 known for.

213

214 **As a secondary question: When you get people from outside of the denomination, how do you deal**  
215 **with issues of transfer of credentials or license or things like that? Is that even an issue or do people**  
216 **come from outside and they're like I can get hired and then just keep going?**

217 Well, our churches can hire whoever they want because they are independent, so really - but they  
218 typically want their pastors to get credentialed with us so the way they do that if they haven't been  
219 ordained, they do a full ordination Council. We do ordination and marriage credentials together. If they  
220 want to get credentialed, again if they haven't been ordained, they have to go through a full ordination  
221 process, which involves a council of their association pastors, a pre-council to make sure they are ready  
222 and they have to write a paper about their doctrine, their calling, their testimony, and I'm missing  
223 something in that. If they are already ordained, they can transfer it but our director has to approve that  
224 they are from a denomination that is in line with us. From many groups is not really that hard and some  
225 it would be mixed. Part of it is knowing the guy in the church - it might be solid; it might not be - and

226 others it's too far from us. It wouldn't be an automatic thing. We do have some more charismatic guys in  
227 our group too - it's not as big a deal as it might have been 20 or 30 years ago. And Wayne Grudem I think  
228 has had a lot to do with that, conservative, reformed, charismatic, Baptist theology. If they were an  
229 Arminian charismatic that would be tough. We don't demand people be five-point Calvinist, you know  
230 RC Sproul books on their Shelf - we don't insist on that, at all. But if you were strong Armenian and  
231 strong charismatic expressive then there would have to be a talk for sure to see if the fit was right or  
232 not. But, most of our churches know enough that if they hired somebody like that they are going in a  
233 different direction.

234 One thing is that many churches would benefit from an intentional transitional interim. We do some  
235 training with a guy named Cam Taylor and so I think that would be really helpful but I see most churches  
236 say no, they just want to get their next pastor. So, I would like to see them do more of that because  
237 really to me that is strategic that would set them up for years to come. But nobody wants to wait that  
238 much of a wait because it takes about a year or two to find somebody anyways. So, that's a bit of a  
239 challenge. It's not huge but it's a bit of one.

240 The challenge of just having enough quality leaders. I have names, I have lots of names but having guys  
241 who are gifted to lead the church - we have to work on our pipeline of leaders. The churches are fairly  
242 good to work with though.

243

244 **Question: What is the typical duration of the senior pastor's tenure at a Church?**

245 I don't know what it is I think a little better than 3 to 5 years. Got to be at least five or six years. There  
246 are some shorter ones but we don't have a lot of crash and Burn outs in two to three years, we don't  
247 have a lot of those. And we have quite a few guys who are in long term, successful pastorates, so I think  
248 it is 7 on average, because I think we have a lot of ten to 12 year, even twenty-year guys who would  
249 really skew it.

250 There is something to that I've noticed especially in the bigger churches, there aren't a lot of  
251 opportunities in those ones because the guys who are there tend to stay a long time when you are a  
252 pastor of you know 800 plus church because you tend to be a decent leader and you've got a good thing  
253 going. Why would you leave when it's going well and people are happy and you are happy?

254 **Question: What priorities do you think a church within your denomination should have when they are  
255 seeking to hire a new senior pastor?**

256 The number one to find a leader. Number two to find somebody to be an evangelist and outward  
257 focused, they don't have to be an evangelist gift wise but they need to plan for outreach and be able to  
258 do that. And they need to be a good preacher. I am assuming base level stuff of doctrinally and  
259 theologically sound. They aren't people who are going to lead in some liberal Direction. But, those three  
260 in terms of what we need are the top three for sure: Strong leader; outward focused; and a good  
261 teacher or preacher/teacher. I am not differentiating between that.

262

263 **Question: So, as a denomination, what kind of support do you provide for churches or candidates who  
264 are then seeking to fill those senior pastor Ministry positions?**

265 For the churches it's the whole system that I have described. For candidates I talked to many, not all  
266 who submit their profiles and some of them I will meet with personally. I really don't have enough time

267 to meet with them all and I have to limit myself to the ones who either I have a relationship with or I just  
268 meet with them because - all of them I want to help. I talked to them, coach them a bit, sometimes they  
269 ask me things about salary not because they are money hungry but because they just want to know how  
270 much to expect and can I support my family. And, they don't feel they can ask the church that so I fill in  
271 a lot of that because I am telling the church and them the same thing so if they listen to me, the church,  
272 it will end up being what I'm telling the candidate and if the church doesn't listen to me then the  
273 candidate might have to have second thoughts about going anyways because they won't be able to  
274 afford to. So we talked about that and we talked about where they would want to go what their gifts are  
275 and what would be a good fit and the big thing - with guys that are in their twenties and thirties  
276 especially there's kind of the decision track for them or a position point of whether they go to be a lead  
277 pastor in a smaller Church, often a smaller church, or go be an associate in a mid to larger church and I  
278 think most of them I would say 75% would be better to be the associate first under a good leader  
279 because to me that would be great leadership development for them. Let's say they're 31, when they  
280 are 36, they go and become a lead pastor. There is nothing wrong with that at all. You've still got 30  
281 years of your ministry career left. But guys they really want to preach a lot of them because what  
282 inspires a lot of guys is they love the word of God and they want to get in there and preach and  
283 preaching is a big deal and you don't get to preach all the time as an associate normally. So, they would  
284 rather go and fast track it and I understand that. I think looking at it now, most of them would benefit  
285 from the associate so I nudge them in that direction but they don't all listen and the reality is if they are  
286 a 1/2 good leader and we need them in the church anyway so we can use them. But I know that it would  
287 be better for them to for the most part to learn in a bigger Church and gain a bit of experience and age.  
288 What it does is give them a credibility because they come from a larger Church and right away it tells  
289 when the church that's receiving them, the smaller one, it puts a bit of respect in that they are getting a  
290 guy from there and gives him a bit of credibility and leaving things forward and he also has a vision of  
291 what he wants to get to. It might not become the same larger Church but it could become a church of a  
292 few hundred people and two services and its own smaller community. So, it helps a guy. Also, we run  
293 revitalization Networks for pastors and so if it's a church that needs revitalization that they're going into,  
294 if there's a network starting near them, we can invite them to come in to that. That's not going to be  
295 everyone but that is something that we have available. I am started giving them a book by Charles Stone  
296 called "*every pastor's first 180 days*". It's an onboarding book for pastors there's a secular book and I  
297 think it's 90 days that I read when I first got here it's a secular book but it was still helpful. Basically, the  
298 idea of this book is what to do in your first 6 months and he does it longer in the church than in business  
299 because he finds churches move slower and that time frame makes sense and I think he's right. It's not a  
300 theology book it's a practical book about practical leadership and systems steps and wisdom and dealing  
301 with people's staff it's gold. We are going to use it in our revitalization Network because it's not just your  
302 first 180 days that's the theme but really, it's just full of smart leadership principles. So that's an example  
303 of what we do. And our guys are readers.

304

305 **Q: Can you comment on second career pastors?**

306 Yeah, we have some and we encourage it but I would say that most of our guys are long-term that  
307 started young. Yeah, second career is fine they need some theological training typically which is a big  
308 deal. They often will have some of the leadership stuff that many of our pastors could be stronger in but  
309 they need the theology side I'm learning how to lead in the church it's a little different from business.  
310 Some similarities but. I don't have too much to say about that. Typically, they're coming out church and  
311 if they've had a good pastor in their Church, he will Point them in some theological training Direction  
312 and help them out.

313 **Final question: Is there anything else that you might like to share or that you would want to share**  
314 **with churches or that would benefit the research that I am doing as far as this whole selection**  
315 **process?**

316 I've mentioned about leadership. I see that as the fundamental issue of our system and our movement.  
317 We need gifted leaders - godly people of character is foundational of course, but we need them to know  
318 how to lead things because we are asking them to lead significant organizations with hundreds of people  
319 and the church is more than an organization but certainly it is an organization of some kind or an  
320 organism as we often say. We need people with wisdom to know how to lead that forward because the  
321 post-Christian culture we are in you have to be a strategic leader, you can't just open the doors and  
322 hope people come and hear you preach. And we all know that but often we still don't lead and we just  
323 expect people to come and everything to work out and that's not how it works. That would be the  
324 biggest thing we need we need good leaders and we need to be developing those within our movement  
325 and other movements I would say need to be doing that too in that you're identifying people in your  
326 church and saying that guy could be a pastor or that young guy or second career businessman or  
327 whatever