



*Guiding a Church Through
Pastoral Transition*

HANDBOOK

Prepared by

**Pastoral Committee, Baptist Union of Tasmania
(Based on Material from the Baptist Union of Victoria)**

Revised 2005

Baptist Churches of Tasmania

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We're Here to Assist You

One of the key functions of Pastoral Committee is helping churches to find a new pastor when a vacancy occurs as well as working with pastors in identifying fresh possibilities for ministry in other places. In both instances the Committee sees itself as a service group to pastors and churches.

The Committee is appointed by the churches through Assembly. Effort is made to maintain a balance of lay members and ordained pastors.

The Committee undertakes a number of tasks with pastoral search committees in particular, usually (but not always) through the involvement of the Superintendent:

- * offering support when an impending pastoral vacancy is notified*
- * appointing a moderator upon request to assist the church through the interim period and to give easily accessed assistance to the pastoral search committee*
- * suggesting lines of inquiry to committees as they ponder the best ways forward on the basis of information provided by pastors about themselves.*
- * assisting with shaping a pastoral profile as well as identifying the needs of both church and community*

In every respect it is an advisory role only. Each search committee is left to make its own decisions and, of course, the church membership itself has the final responsibility for the issue of a call.

There is also a similar level of assistance offered to pastors seeking fresh opportunities for ministry. While no guarantees can be offered with respect to outcomes, every effort is made to alert churches to the availability of pastors who have indicated their desire for such a move where their gifts and experience are seen to be appropriate to the needs of a given congregation. The Committee depends heavily on information provided by pastors about themselves and makes comprehensive (and confidential) use of resumes provided by pastors. The co-operation of pastors in the provision of resumes is always eagerly sought.

If you are a member of a pastoral search committee, be aware of the energy and enthusiasm of the Pastoral Committee to help you seek the Lord's guidance as you ponder the best way forward for the filling of the pastoral vacancy in your congregation. If you are a pastor feeling that the time may be right to be open to other possibilities in ministry, remember that the Committee and I are here to help you also. Hopefully, as often as is possible, the needs of both pastors and churches can be happily matched in order that the Kingdom may continue to be extended. These resources are offered to you warmly with the assurance of our thoughts and prayers.

Rev. Garry Billing,
SUPERINTENDENT

When the Pastorate Becomes Vacant

A Suggested Plan of Action

1. The Leaders/Deacons of the church meet with the Superintendent. (The Superintendent may also wish to meet with the church members).
2. A letter is received from the Pastoral Committee offering their assistance.
3. The church responds by accepting the offer from the Pastoral Committee.
4. The Pastoral Committee provides the Church Leadership with a copy of the "Handbook" and recommends a person to be their Moderator.
5. The church appoints the Moderator and the Pastoral Search Committee. The members of the PSC are nominated by the church leadership.
6. The Pastoral Search Committee meets to:
 - 6.1 consider the Advisory Board "Handbook" manual
 - 6.2 determine the procedure the PSC will follow to carry out the task given them by the church, making use of the booklet, "Church Reflections" available on request from the BUT Office.
 - 6.3 decide the format of a Special Church Members' Meeting to be called to determine the church members' preference regarding the profile and role of their next pastor. It is recommended that the PSC use the material in the booklet, "Church Reflection" as the format for that meeting. (It usually takes several meetings to complete these tasks.)
7. The leadership calls the Special Church Members' meeting for the purpose above. It is advisable for the meeting to be chaired by an independent chairperson such as the appointed Moderator or Superintendent. At this meeting the church members also approve the "call" details recommended by the leadership. (Stipend, allowances, leave entitlements, time of a Church Review etc.)
8. The Pastoral Search Committee prepares a "Pastor Profile" and/or Role Description" from the information gathered from:
 - 8.1 the Special Members' Meeting
 - 8.2 the completed assignments contained in the booklet, "Church Reflection."

The Pastoral Search Committee discusses and agrees on other relevant details:

- * Age, experience and gender preference
- * Arrangements in place for present and future members of the Ministry Team and how their roles will compliment the role of the new pastor.
- * Available housing for the pastor's family (manse), etc.

The Pastoral Search Committee completes the Questionnaire entitled "Pastoral Priorities" contained in the Church Reflection booklet. (These matters usually take several meetings of the PSC.)

9. The Pastoral Search Committee forwards the completed questionnaire and the Pastor Profile to the Superintendent. His role, on behalf of the Pastoral Committee, includes supplying the names of possible pastors.
10. Church members are also asked to suggest names.
11. From the complete list of names the Pastoral Search Committee decides:
 - * the pastor to be interviewed
 - * the appropriate material to be sent to the pastor to be interviewed
 - * the venue, interview format, questions to be asked and issues to be raised at the interview.
12. The moderator arranges the interview.

THE INTERVIEW (There may be a need for more than one interview).

13. After the interview the Pastoral Search Committee meets to decide whether to recommend the name of the Pastor to the Church members.
 - * If the decision is a unanimous "yes", the pastor is asked by the moderator if he/she is willing to allow his/her name to be brought to the members.
 - * if the Pastoral Search Committee cannot agree, or unanimously agree not to proceed with a call, the moderator conveys their decision to the pastor.
14. If the pastor's response to the Pastoral Search Committee is negative, an interview with another pastor is arranged.

If the pastors response to the Pastoral Search Committee is positive, a Statement of Understanding is prepared and agreed to by both pastor and the Pastoral Search Committee.
15. The leadership is asked to call a Special Church Members' Meeting, normally chaired by the Moderator, Superintendent, or Superintendent's appointee to receive a report from the Pastoral Search Committee.
16. The name of the pastor recommended by the Pastoral Search Committee is presented to the Church Members with the agreed Statement of Understanding.

THE CHURCH AGREES TO CALL THE PASTOR

- * Two offices of the church are appointed to sign the Statement of Understanding on behalf of the church.
- * The leadership is instructed to make the following arrangements with the pastor:
 - the date and other details regarding the Induction Service
 - housing and removal arrangements
 - other relevant matters.

Guiding a Church Through Transition

1. When the Superintendent or Pastoral Committee is officially made aware of a pastor's intention to move on, initiative is taken to contact the church, offer assistance and explain recommended procedures.
2. The Pastoral Committee can begin to help when it is formally requested.
3. It is strongly recommended that the Church appoint a suitable Moderator to chair Search Committee meetings, Church meetings, and to offer objective guidance through the search process.
4. The church should be encouraged to understand 'where they are at'. This will help them to clarify their needs in the selection of a new pastor and If they are unsure of the direction the church wants to go the Superintendent or the Moderator should be able to assist them to tap into the resources of the Baptist Union. (A separate document entitled "Church Reflection" is available from the Baptist Union Office.)
5. The Moderator needs to be aware of the emotional tone of the church after the departure of a pastor. In some cases there may be a need to help a church work through its grief at the loss of their pastor. (The same goes for a moderator working with a pastor who may be considering a call to another church). Elizabeth Kubler-Ross identified five stages of grieving: Denial, anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. The length of time these stages last varies from person to person, but it seems best that the congregation as a whole should be at the stage of depression or acceptance before it is ready to call another pastor. Those who will probably take the longest to recover from grief will be firstly, those who were especially, close to the pastor emotionally, secondly, those who have not necessarily appeared to be close but have deep feelings because of something or someone the pastor symbolises in their lives (eg. a father figure) or thirdly, those who have often opposed the pastor during the pastorate. (These can sometimes have feelings of guilt.)
6. A consultation, using the resources of Church Consultancy Tasmania can be a very helpful process during pastoral transition. Another valuable approach can be to have an intentional interim process led by a trained, experienced person who can lead the church through a series of developmental tasks over a period of months. The Superintendent is always willing to discuss the advantages of these approaches with the Church and to provide further information as required.
7. Pulpit supply or an Interim pastor? This is the decision of the church. If the church chooses to continue without an interim, the leadership should have a workable contingency plan in the event of a crisis where a pastor may be needed urgently. The advantages in having a suitable interim pastor are:

It takes the pressure off the need to find a pastor really quickly.

It gives continuity to the preaching ministry.

It relieves the leadership from having to search to fill the pulpit week by week.

It provides someone to fill the leadership gap which can help stabilise the church.

An interim pastor can give encouragement to the total program of the church.

An interim pastor can have a sustained knowledge of the needs of the congregation.

The interim pastor can try to address areas that need healing in the church through sermons, individual contacts, and meeting with various groups.

He or she can be a 'spiritual bridge' between pastors. It has been suggested that three kinds of congregations always need a trained interim:

- (a) those who have just passed through exceptional crises or conflict with their previous pastor,
 - (b) congregations which have just concluded a long pastorate, and
 - (c) large congregations with multiple staff arrangements.
7. The Moderator and leadership should decide whether there are any issues concerning the pastorate which should be dealt with during the interim period.
 8. Decide the nature and role of the Interim pastor and then empower him/her to fulfil that role.
 9. Divide and delegate pastoral responsibilities.
 10. Help to promote a sense of optimism in this period between pastoral settlements.
eg. Good worship services, invite really good guest speakers, plan special events.
 11. Talk about the future of associate pastors if the church is seeking a new senior pastor. It is usually advisable to alert associate pastors to the fact that a new senior pastor may change the climate of the pastoral team and it could be advisable to look to their own future ministry at the same time as the church is in transition.

Guidelines: Moderators and Churches

Whenever a vacancy occurs or is about to occur in the pastorate of any of the Union's churches, the officers of the church should communicate with the Pastoral Committee through the General Superintendent and, in consultation with him, nominate a Moderator for appointment by the church.

The Pastoral Committee suggests:

1. As the Moderator has a confidential resource function to fulfil he/she should preferably be a member of the Pastoral Committee, or failing this, a person trained and closely liaising with the Committee.
2. It is highly desirable the Moderator be nominated by the deacons on the recommendation of the Superintendent or Pastoral Committee for appointment by a church meeting.
3. An immediate past minister or pastor should not be appointed as Moderator, or endeavour to exercise the functions of Moderator. Appointment of interim pastors during a pastoral transition period should be made with the full knowledge and co-operation of the Moderator who will have kept the General Superintendent informed of such appointments. Clear terms and conditions for the interim pastor should be the responsibility of the Moderator in consultation with the diaconate.
4. The Moderator should chair all search committee, deacons' and church meetings when the pastorate is under discussion. Where there is no interim minister or experienced chairman of deacons, he/she may, by mutual arrangement, chair other church business meetings when the pastorate has become vacant.
5. The Moderator should exercise an impartial chairmanship and should maintain contact with the church secretary and Advisory Board by way of a monthly report made prior to the Superintendent concerning proposals. He/she should respect, and urge upon the search committee a like respect for the confidential nature of considerations and negotiations particularly as these relate to any names of ministers considered suitable for the pastorate. If the search committee is a group of people different from the diaconate, lines of communication and procedure to do with the call of a minister should be clearly understood. It is the role of the Moderator to facilitate this.
6. It has been found helpful for the sake of harmony within the search committee and in relations with the Moderator to minimise discussions about the call of a new minister outside recognised diaconate meetings.
7. It is essential that the pastoral search committee should meet with a potential nominee for the pastorate. Such an interview is customarily known as a "conference without prejudice" and should be conducted under the chairmanship of the Moderator in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The Moderator is responsible for arranging such a meeting.

8. To preserve confidentiality, such conferences are best held on neutral ground away from the church premises and not concurrently with any other meeting, formal or informal, on those premises.
9. The "inviting church" would be responsible for all costs of travel and, if sufficient distance is involved, of suitable overnight accommodation, preferably at a motel.
10. Costs incurred by the Moderator in the course of his/her duties should be borne by the church.
11. While it is to be clearly understood that a "call" is extended to a pastor as distinct from a pastor and his/her spouse, there is considerable value in the participation on the part of the spouse both in visiting and viewing church, manse and district and in sharing in the "conference without prejudice".
12. When the search committee come to a decision concerning a minister, inquiry is made by the Moderator after informing the Superintendent to ascertain the pastor's willingness for his/her name to be presented to a church meeting with a view to a call being extended.
13. Unanimity in the search committee is highly desirable, but it may be necessary in exceptional circumstances to proceed without this.
14. When the pastor's permission is received, a Special Church Meeting is called under the terms of the church's constitution.
15. At this meeting the search committee presents its recommendation and the meeting decides whether a call should be extended. As a second motion, the terms and the conditions of the call should be presented to the church for acceptance. In the unlikely event of the recommendation being rejected by the meeting, the matter should be referred back to the diaconate for further consideration. Under no circumstances should the name of more than one pastor be discussed at a church meeting at one time.
16. It is desirable that the Minutes of the recommendations and decisions by the church should be written up as the meeting proceeds and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman before the meeting concludes.
17. The call is then extended through the Moderator and with the knowledge of the Superintendent on behalf of the church.
18. Care should be taken to announce the acceptance of the call at a mutually agreed time and date in order to coincide with the minister's public resignation from his/her present pastorate.
19. After acceptance by a pastor of a call to the pastorate, the Moderator should continue to serve until the induction of the incoming pastor. He/she could assist in planning for the Induction service and public welcome and may well be invited to share in some way in the induction of the new pastor.
20. For the most effective service of a Moderator there must be adequate co-operation by the church secretary who should maintain a close contact with the Moderator in all arrangements and, in particular, should consult with the Moderator before calling meetings of deacons or church at which it is desired the Moderator should preside.

21. It is highly desirable that the Moderator maintain a non threatening interest in the progress of the church and its new pastor in the first few months after the settlement and be ready to offer any assistance which falls within the Moderator's role.
22. It is in the best interests of all concerned that regular reports be given to the Superintendent (and through him to Pastoral Committee) while a Moderator is working towards a pastoral settlement with a given church.
23. If it is thought necessary to keep a record of Search Committee meetings, it is essential that the minutes remain absolutely confidential and are destroyed at the end of the process.

PROVISIONS FOR A SPECIAL CHURCH MEETING

Arrangements Required by Most Church Constitutions are as follows:

- (a) Two Sundays' notice are required to be given.
- (b) Voting qualifications are:
 - i. Membership in the church for at least six months.
 - ii. Age not less than 18 years.
 - iii. Attendance at a communion service at least once during the preceding six months.
- (c) The first business of the meeting to be the appointment of a Chairman. (Deacons should nominate the Moderator.)
- (d) To be effective the motion must secure the support of at least two thirds of such members present and voting.

Benefits of an Independent Moderator

Some of the difficulties encountered when a church has not used the services of an independent Moderator:

- * Internal tension has arisen when the church has tried to use the services of a person from within the congregation and there has resulted in a perceived or actual alignment of that person with a faction within the church.
- * Unsatisfactory or incomplete arrangements made of the terms and conditions of the call.
- * Areas of vital concern to both church and pastor which are overlooked in the process and which cause angst at some time after the settlement because of lack of clarity or even differences of opinion about issues which can be quite vital. This has led to misunderstandings and false assumptions made by the church and/or the pastor.
- * Processes associated with transition which have been poorly handled simply due to lack of knowledge and experience on the part of those involved in decision making.

Some reasons put forward by churches who decide against using the services of an independent moderator:

- * An independent moderator does not understand the special situation we have at our church
- * We had a bad experience with a moderator last time
- * There is an unspoken lack of trust in anyone from the BUT
- * The church thinks it has all the resources it needs to "go it alone"
- * We might get a moderator who will try to foist their theological position on us
- * Because this is a team appointment we don't need to seek the help of anyone from outside the church. The senior pastor is able to act as moderator.

Reasons why an independent moderator who is trained, experienced and a good facilitator can help a church affect a good pastoral settlement:

- * An independent moderator brings impartiality
- * He/she knows the procedures and pitfalls to avoid in pastoral settlements
- * He/she is able to bring a different perspective from the "locals"
- * The independent moderator does the "leg work" for the church leadership in a period when with no pastor there are already extra responsibilities on lay leadership
- * He/she has easy access to key people and can get discreet information more readily
- * Independent moderators are already part of a group of experienced people in whom they can seek advice if a difficulty should occur. e.g. Pastoral Committee, Superintendent.
- * He/She has usually brings a broader knowledge of churches and pastors
- * An independent moderator is not emotionally involved in the life of the church as are the church leaders

- * He/she comes into the situation without prior knowledge of the dynamics of the church. If it proves necessary for the moderator to know more he/she is able to find out through the accepted channels
- * He/She gives support to the pastor being interviewed as well as the church. It is difficult to do this well when the pastor being interviewed is the only "outsider" in the situation
- * Independent moderators can often "read" an interview situation more objectively and identify areas which may be overlooked by the church leaders and the interviewed pastor
- * He/she has access to information for the church and the prospective pastor to help make the interview more meaningful
- * An independent moderator is able to help lead through the post interview discussion with the church leaders and separately with the interviewed pastor.

Avoiding Common Mistakes

1. Try to make sure that the Pastoral Search group is representative of the **whole church**. The two most overlooked groups appear to be older Christians and women.
2. Take care in the selection of the Pastoral Search group. People chosen for this group should have concern for the whole church, and be strong enough to not yield to pressure groups that may exist in the church. Their judgment should be respected by the whole congregation. They should be able to work as team members and be aware and available for the 'long haul' of pastoral search should this be the case. Availability for meetings is a pre-requisite. They should be willing to serve. They should be able to keep confidences. They need to be willing to re-examine what they've always thought about their church's ministry, or how they've always done things. Given the special requirements it is necessary for recommendations for suitable members to go to the church for ratification by the church meeting rather than to have nominations from the floor of a church meeting.
3. The church should do a self-study before calling a pastor. This will help to get a good 'fit' of pastor, congregation and community and establish what kind of pastor will challenge the people and the church to grow. It will help to establish whether present programs might need redirecting. A self study should include the whole congregation as this will help members to personalise the mission of their church. Area Superintendents and Field Advisers are able to help churches to do this if the Moderator and the church feel this is necessary.
4. Avoid the trap of making a choice of the next pastor based on the reaction of the last one.
5. In looking for consensus, be careful to 'hear' everyone to be sure that consensus really does exist.
6. Make sure that the prospective pastor and the calling group have clear and realistic expectations of each other. ie. Check the 'shopping list' of both church and pastor. A longer more thorough process of getting to know each other is preferable.
7. Search committees need to have a clear charge of their role - what their duties are, what authority it has, whether it is the body to draw up terms and conditions. Their relationship and lines of communication with deacons and elders need to be agreed upon from the outset
8. Don't be afraid to call on the 'experts' outside the local church. Within the denomination there are people who have developed expertise in the process. The Superintendent, Administrator and others are there to help.
9. Approach the task in an organised and professional manner.
10. If the church is using the services of an interim pastor, clarify with the church and the interim pastor the parameters of the interim's role. It is best kept completely separate from the pastoral search. However it can be very helpful for the Moderator and the Interim to work together for the benefit of the church.

11. Clarify the lines of communication with prospective pastors. Except in rare occasions, communication is by the Moderator with the knowledge of the General Superintendent.
12. The ability to think laterally and bravely will help the group to look beyond the known pool of possible pastors.
13. There is a need for the pastoral search group to be honest about congregational problems, firstly within the group and secondly with a prospective pastor.
14. It is helpful if the church can provide a church and community profile for prospective pastors.
15. Pastoral Search groups need to be prepared to do their homework on prospective pastors and not rely solely on hearsay.
16. Pastoral Search groups need to be well prepared for interviews, as do prospective pastors. A Moderator's role is to help both parties to be well prepared.
17. If a group is considering a pastor from interstate or overseas, be sure to enlist the help of Baptist Union staff to help get the necessary information. The same applies with pastors who may be considered from other denominations. The Moderator can do this for the church.
18. Always consider the spouse and children in the call process. In almost all interviews with prospective pastors it is recommended that the spouse be invited to attend the interview.
19. If search committee members visit another church, be discreet.
20. Look at the full range of gifts and talents when considering a pastor.
21. Don't hasten the process to suit a time frame if moving more slowly and carefully is going to achieve a happier, if later, result.
22. Don't panic if there is disappointment. This can sometimes lead to calling a pastor on the rebound.
23. Keep the interim pastor, (Moderator's job) other staff and the congregation (church leadership's job) informed of progress without divulging confidences. It is suggested that the church be given a brief report after every pastoral search meeting.
24. Allow grieving time after the former pastor leaves for the congregation. This varies according to circumstances.
25. Use the interim to address needs issues within the life of the church.
26. Expect that the Moderator will have adequate communication with prospective pastors on behalf of the search committee.
27. Let the Moderator be the guide, but remember that Moderators aren't perfect either. Any problems in this regard should be referred to the General Superintendent.
28. Be sure that terms and conditions are clear and all in writing. Government legislation in recent days has highlighted the importance of this. (See under "Checklist.")

29. Many churches have among their leadership very able people who could act as moderator. However, experience has shown that an independent moderator can often steer a church through the process better than someone "in house."
30. When appointing a Search Committee in a church which may end up interviewing someone from within the church, be sure not to have Search Committee members who are closely associated with prospective interviewees (e.g. spouse.)

Interim Pastors

DEFINITION:

An interim pastor is one who is called for a specific time and usually for a specific purpose to assist a church when the church is waiting to appoint a permanent pastor. An interim pastor may or may not be an ordained minister. He/she is expected to work under the supervision of the leadership of the church, in conjunction with the Moderator. It is not expected that the interim pastor will take initiatives to do with the goals and ministry of the church without the direct invitation of the church leadership.

ROLE:

The role of the interim pastor will vary according to the specific needs of the church. These needs will usually be identified by the church leadership in conjunction with the moderator. This could vary from, for example, preaching once or twice on a Sunday only to taking the total responsibility for the pastoral needs of the church which would cover all aspects of the life of the church on a full time basis. It is the responsibility of the church leadership with help from the moderator, to decide on the church's particular needs in the period of the use of an interim pastor. These responsibilities should be set out on paper along with financial and other arrangements and be fully understood and approved by all parties. Uncertainty of the role of an interim pastor can lead to misunderstandings which can impinge on the longer term stability and effectiveness of the church. The approval of the church through a church meeting (in accordance with Schedule B) should be sought before an interim pastor commences.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS:

1. It is helpful to seek the services of an interim pastor through the Superintendent and Pastoral Committee who are aware of the availability of pastors for interim ministries. There can be some pitfalls in using a willing person who offers their services as an interim.
2. Sometimes there will be a person from within the congregation who will seem to be a suitable interim pastor. One word of warning. It is usually difficult for a new incoming pastor to feel absolute freedom in their new role if a former pastor (even an interim) is in the congregation. Such suitable people would be better serving as interim in another church and then returning to their own congregation.
3. Some interim pastors are really anxious to obtain a full-time ministry in the church and will do interim work while they are waiting. It is most important that in such cases it is made very clear that the ministry being offered is purely interim. Pastors and church leaders need to be aware of accepted pastoral ethics in these matters.
4. It is often found helpful to make interim appointments on a short term basis, say, three months, which can be reviewed and renewed if necessary. This gives flexibility to both the church and the interim in the event of circumstances of either party changing.

5. Interim pastors are never expected to attain the criteria which the church may have established for the appointment of a permanent pastor.
6. It is absolutely essential that the interim pastor be quite clear that an interim call comes with no expectation that it may easily become a permanent call.
7. Should it happen that the interim pastor be considered by the church to be a possibility as a permanent pastor, he/she should be treated in exactly the same way as any other pastor being considered for the call. This means an interview without prejudice, etc. Being the interim pastor does not in any way mean that they may be the most likely permanent pastor. In fact it is rare that an interim is even considered for the permanent position.
8. An interim pastor can be called on to perform a variety of functions while interim. This can vary from chairing deacons meetings, helping the church treasurer to work out the books, to visitation, conducting funerals, etc. An interim pastor will usually be appointed according to the particular needs of the church in the short term and this is matched with the particular gifts for ministry the interim pastor may exercise.
9. In the event of an interim pastor causing any kind of difficulty in the progress of a settlement of a permanent pastor, it would be appropriate for the church leadership to address the matter and seek help from the BUV through the Moderator.

Advantages:

Some interim ministries can prove to be vital to the long term health and spirit of the church that is served. The BUV is grateful that there are a few pastors who find being an interim pastor is both fulfilling and strategic in the life of the church. In some situations an interim ministry might be the best option for the church. Interims can be for as long as 12 months or more or just for two or three months, according to the specific needs of the church.

Suggested Questions to Ask a Pastor

Some general principles:

Give greater weight to the pastor's demonstrated abilities than to his/her ability to engage them interpersonally in the interview.

Be aware of the tendency to make premature decisions based on the first few minutes of the interview. Consciously try to suspend making decisions about the applicant until its end.

Develop an organised plan of how the group will ask the questions so that they discuss all essential topics in depth. It is kind to allow the early questions to emphasise the pastor's strengths and successes. After the group has built up some rapport then it is easier to deal with the more difficult questions.

Be sensitive to the pastor and his/her spouse. It is not easy to talk in depth to a group of relative strangers. Deal with the pastor with the same degree of gentleness that you would like for yourself in the same situation.

Here are some possible questions which might be asked:

1. Tell us about your childhood. What are some memories of your parents and peers which significantly shaped your attitudes towards God, toward work, toward the values which you hold today?
2. When did you first feel God's call on your life? How and why did you decide to enter the ministry?
3. Can you identify some of the people who had a significant influence on your life? What impact has each of them had on your thinking and methods of ministry?
4. Describe the various ministries you have had to date. Talk about some of the successes you have felt and some of the difficulties. What have you learnt through your mistakes?
5. How would you describe your style of leadership?
6. What do you believe is the healthiest relationship between a pastor, the church leadership, the congregation and the denomination?
7. How have your faith and theology changed since you first considered entering the ministry?
8. What is the process you go through when you prepare a sermon? What goals do you strive to achieve through your preaching?
9. What emphasis do you place on pastoral counselling? Describe your training and experience in this area.
10. What is your philosophy regarding hospital and home pastoral visits?

11. What approaches to a congregation's financial stewardship do you prefer? What methods do you use to appeal to people about their giving?
12. What is the ministry that you would call your specialty?
13. How much do you like to be involved in denominational affairs?
14. What issues do you see as being the most important ones facing Christians, particularly Baptists today?
15. Explore any issues which are of particular importance to your own congregation. (theological or social issues)
16. By what title do you prefer to be called?
17. (Naming one of the issues identified) how do you think you might go about resolving it?
18. How do you maintain your spiritual, emotional and physical health? How do you like to spend your free time?
19. How do you allocate time to spend with your family?
20. What are your plans for personal and professional growth?

Questions you might ask of a Pastor's spouse:

1. In what ways would you like to be involved in ministry, if any?
2. What is your attitude to your husband's/wife's vocation?
3. Tell us about your children. Do they have any particular needs which should be considered in relation to a possible call to this church?
4. What are your concerns about a possible move?
5. Are there any things about our church or community which would cause you apprehension if you were called to come here?

Some Questions a Pastor May Ask

There are three types of questions which it is useful to raise.

1. **Questions of census such as:**

What are the talents, skills and interests that the congregation bring to the church. Questions about the area in which the church is situated. Do church members live locally? Have there been any major demographic shifts in the area in the last ten years? How has the church addressed these?

2. **Questions about issues such as:**

Is the church inward or outward looking? Have changes in worship practice disrupted the congregation? Is there/ was there any contention over the previous pastor? Have there been any theological or other divisions within the congregation? Has a building program alienated anyone? Are there any issues which affect the local community which could impinge on the church?

3. **Questions on structures** - discover the formal and informal networks within the congregation. How are relationships with the neighbouring churches? Ecumenical relationships? Relationships with other churches of the denomination? Ministers fraternals?

Let the church ask their questions first. Then there may only need to be some follow-up questions asked. The primary purpose is to learn from the church its attitudes and expectations. It can be far more helpful to understand their likes and dislikes than, say, the financial condition of the church in the last ten years.

SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK.

1. What gifts for ministry is the church desiring in a new pastor? Why am I of particular interest to you?
2. What do the leadership perceive to be the special strengths in ministry in the church at the present time? What ministries are being exercised effectively?
3. What is the potential for outreach within the local community?
4. What is the most significant event in the life of this congregation since you have been a member?
5. Aside from the upheaval of looking for a new pastor, what has been the most upsetting event in the life of this church? Are there any issues/ conflicts from the past which remain unresolved? What still needs to be done? Are there any specific expectations of the new pastor as far as sorting out is concerned?

6. In your opinion, what areas of concern need to be addressed by this congregation? What special needs are there in the church which the new pastor would have to address? Are there any special crises in the church at present? If so, what are they, how are they being handled and what progress is being made?
7. What special needs are there in the local community which the church should be addressing?
8. What kinds of things did your previous pastor do particularly well?
9. What were the circumstances surrounding your previous pastor's departure?
10. In what areas do you wish your previous pastor had more expertise?
11. What formal and informal methods of support have you used in the past to help your pastor to become a better minister?
12. In what ways do the leadership and the pastor work together? ie. Is there teamwork at the leadership level and if so, how does it work and what are the expectations?
13. Tell me about the deacons, elders etc.
14. Has the pastor's family traditionally taken an active role in the church? In what ways will the church provide opportunities for the pastor's children to find their niche?
15. What specific expectations does the church have of the pastor (in the first place) and his/her spouse (in the second)?
16. How should your pastor spend his/her time? In the course of a week, how much time should be spent in prayer? Personal study? Sermon preparation? Administration? Individual and family counselling? Visiting? With the family?
17. In what ways does the church relate to other churches and what are the expectations of the church regarding the pastor's relationship with other clergy?
18. Is the pastor expected to be involved in Religious Education in the local school?
19. What organisations in the congregation are the most active and successful?
20. Beyond calling a pastor and its related concerns, what is the highest congregational priority for the next twelve months?
21. What goals have you established to grow the church? What methods can be used to achieve these goals? What is the vision of the church for its ministry in the future? i.e. Where is the church headed? (If there is no answer start getting nervous.)
22. How open is the church to change and innovation in order for the congregation to fulfil its ministry in the most effective manner?
23. Have you any plans to expand staff or buildings?
24. How financially stable is this congregation?
25. What programs do you plan to implement in the next ten years?

26. Are there any specific emphases in doctrine or style of ministry which a new pastor would need to be aware of, including attitudes towards (for example):
 - 26.1 The charismatic movement
 - 26.2 Women in ministry
 - 26.3 Biblical inspiration and related matters
 - 26.4 Contemporary hymnology.
27. What is the attitude of the church to growth in all its many dimensions including numerical growth?
28. What provision does the church make for :
 - 28.1 Mentoring, Ministry Supervision or Spiritual Direction.
 - 28.2 In-service training for the pastor through conferences and other similar events?
 - 28.3 Further education of a more comprehensive kind.
 - 28.4 Attendance at events conducted for pastors by the BUT including the Pastors and Families Annual Conference?
 - 28.5 Ministry beyond the church in other places which may even include overseas travel?

At some stage of the interview process, probably towards the end, it will be necessary to address the following matters:

1. Stipend (is it adjusted automatically according to BUT recommendations?)
2. Allowances (which ones are payable?)
3. Superannuation
4. Arrangements of a special kind if this is a part-time pastorate.

TEAM MINISTRY MATTERS

If you are being interviewed with a view to being called as the senior pastor of a team already in place in the church, the following will need to be explored:

1. What are the job descriptions or ministry roles of the present staff? (If so, ask for copies, if not, request that this be done and start to get nervous again)
2. To whom will staff be accountable? To the Senior Pastor, the diaconate, or a mixture, or unknown? (They should be accountable to the diaconate through the senior pastor)
3. What tenure do existing staff have?
4. How will the diaconate respond if, in establishing new directions under your leadership, it becomes clear that one or more positions either need to be reworked (with the same personnel) or significantly changed (with different personnel)?
5. Further, will the diaconate accept responsibility for working with the senior pastor to bring such change about if deemed necessary, including helping existing staff find ministry opportunities elsewhere?

6. Will the diaconate acquaint existing staff with the possibility of such changes as part of the call arrangements (ie. ensure that they are forewarned of possible changes as outlined above)?
7. If more than one staff member preaches, will the senior pastor be in charge of pulpit arrangements? (A positive answer is expected)

If you were being interviewed for an associate role, the above questions can be easily adapted giving careful attention to :

1. Ministry responsibilities and how these relate to other team roles (a written statement is essential)
2. Lines of accountability need to be clearly established
3. Relationships with the senior pastor need to be clarified.

BUT HOW DO I KNOW WHETHER TO ACCEPT A CALL?

Before beginning the process, ask yourself the following questions:

- What are the non-negotiables?
- What are the things I would be willing to wait for?
- What are mere preferences?
- What are my particular strengths, weaknesses?
- What family needs will shape my decision?
- Will my spouse expect or need to work?

Sometimes, though, a sense of God's call overpowers so that there is a compulsion to follow. In that case these questions are not to determine the call but to understand how to enter it.

Check List

MATTERS WHICH NEED CLARIFICATION BEFORE A CALL IS ISSUED

Has the church agreed in principle that it will automatically follow the recommendations made by the Assembly of the BUT in respect to salary, reimbursements, superannuation and similar matters? If not, what variations will be made? It should be noted that a number of churches vary the recommended stipend by an agreed percentage.

Basic salary (BUT recommended amount) or.....	\$		pw
House allowance if rent free manse is not provided	\$		pw
Superannuation provision	\$		pw
Reimbursement for: travel including depreciation (or provision for replacement) and running costs	\$		pw
purchase of books, magazines, journals cassettes and library related expenses	\$		pw
provision of hospitality including entertainment of visitors	\$		pw
phone rental and official calls		actual costs	
petty cash provision (stamps, stationary etc.)		actual costs	

Annual recreational leave of at least four weeks, the church to accept responsibility for pulpit supplies.

Consideration for the occasional weekend off.

Note how long it will be before pastor is due to take long service leave.

If a rent free manse is provided, the church is responsible for its maintenance including floor coverings, regular painting and insurance.

The extent to which the church prepared to contribute to the costs associated with the pastor attending the Annual Pastors and Families Conference and/or Renewal Retreat Group ?

The church's attitude to the pastor pursuing further in-service education, and is it prepared to share the costs?

Does the church recognise the value to itself if the Pastor has some denominational involvement?

Is there an agreement to an annual review by both pastor and the church with a view to:

enhancing both the ministry of the pastor, the leadership team and the effective working of the church as a whole? The Superintendent has resource materials and can recommend trained personnel to facilitate such reviews.

(If not annually, how frequently? It is a good idea to settle on a date and adhere to that time. Never wait until there is some concern which could precipitate a review.)

What are the details of study commitment if the pastor is a student?

From what date will the call be effective? Is the call for a fixed term or open ended?

The church is expected to meet removal costs. In the event of a very expensive long distance move, advice is available from BUT to help make arrangements about costs. Some assistance might be available.

Who will arrange the Induction service? What role will the Moderator be expected to fulfil? Will the time and date chosen allow participation by other churches and neighbouring clergy? It is recommended that the Superintendent be consulted and that in most cases that the Superintendent be invited to preach in his capacity as the appointed pastoral leader of the denomination.

Will there be a public welcome other than in association with the Induction service? What should be the extent of the guest list? Denominational and community leaders?

It is strongly suggested that the terms and conditions agreed to should be couched in a Letter of Understanding which is signed by the church secretary and the pastor. This letter should contain any other relevant agreements which have been reached. A copy of the letter should be held by the Superintendent. This aspect of the call of a pastor is of greater importance in recent days and should be regarded as of great importance in the settlement of a pastor with a church.

Appendix A

Policy on Continuing Education For Pastors

Affirming the importance of personal growth and continuing education in ministry it is recommended that:

1. Pastors and churches be committed to the in-service training of pastors.
(Certificates for Pastoral-Committee approved in-service training are normally presented at Mid-year Assembly)
2. Churches encourage their pastors by including a minimum at least 12 days per annum (in addition to holidays) provision in the pastor's terms and conditions and by contributing to the cost of those courses chosen by the pastor and approved by the diaconate.
3. Training courses, retreats, conferences and learning experiences are organised by the Union each year and details of courses covered by or recommended by the Union will be made available to pastors.

Appendix B

Documenting the Terms of Call

What should the Statement of Understanding contain?

1. **The Pastoral Profile**

Sample profiles or a checklist can be provided by the Superintendent or Moderator. (See end of this booklet for a sample)

2. **Salary, Benefits and Leave Entitlements**

(It is recommended that figures be based on the latest copy of the document "Recommended Stipends and Allowances" as approved by Assembly, and available from the Union Office. The Union Administrator is available to advise on salary packaging, exempt benefits, superannuation requirements, annual leave loading etc.)

Leave

Annual Leave:	four weeks (cumulative)
Sick Leave:	ten days annually (cumulative)
Long Service Leave:	6 weeks after 7 years of service in Baptist ministry with any entitlement to be satisfied by the Baptist Union of Tasmania Long Service Leave Fund
Parental Leave:	where relevant, in accordance with the operative legislation

Public holidays

Where the Pastor needs to work on a gazetted public holiday, the Pastor is encouraged to take an alternative day off in the same week

Part Time Ministry

The recommended stipend package is intended to apply to pastors working full time - a five day week. Churches engaging a pastor part time should adjust the package on a pro-rata basis eg. a three day appointment will carry three fifths of the full package.

Appendix C

Sample Statement of Understanding

This Agreement is framed in accordance with the Guidelines and is made

BETWEEN:

THE *[insert name]* **CHURCH of** *[insert address]* ("Church")

- and -

[insert name] **of** *[insert address]* ("Pastor")

on the *[insert date]* day of *[insert month]* *[insert year]*

THE CHURCH AND THE PASTOR AGREE as follows:

1 THE FRAMEWORK OF MINISTRY

- 1.1 This Statement of Understanding addresses some of the practical aspects of the relationship between church and pastor, whilst recognising that this relationship is essentially spiritually formed and nurtured. Developing a common understanding will enhance the mutual trust and love which is vital to the ministry partnership between church and pastor.
- 1.2 This agreement is not intended to limit the flexibility of the church and pastor in responding to the leadership of the Holy Spirit as they exercise ministry together. It seeks to establish a framework which is mutually understood and accepted by all concerned, in which decisions should be made.
- 1.3 The church and pastor, in establishing this agreement, recognise and affirm the call of God to share in ministry together in this way, recognising that this is a formative step in the ongoing ministry partnership, during the term of this agreement.
- 1.4 In acknowledging the call of God upon the pastor to minister within the church and the community, pastor and church agree to enter into a covenantal relationship of mutual trust and cooperation through open and honest communication, spiritual discernment, and courage in facing change, undergirded with ready forgiveness for human frailty.
- 1.5 At a properly constituted Church members meeting held on *[insert date]*, the Church approved this Statement of Understanding and authorised _____ and *[insert names and positions]* to sign this Agreement at the direction of and on behalf of the Church.
- 1.6 The Church is not a separately incorporated entity. The Church is a member constituent of the Baptist Union of Tasmania which is itself incorporated by Act of Parliament known as *The Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1902*.

2 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

- 2.1 "Diaconate" means the Diaconate of the *[insert name]* Church from time to time.
- 2.2 "Guidelines" means the "The Baptist Union of Victoria - Guidelines for Churches and Pastors - Stipends, Conditions and Statements of Understanding" as published from time to time.
- 2.3 This Statement of Understanding is to be read in conjunction with the Guidelines. However, in the event of any inconsistency, the terms of this Agreement prevail.

3 THE CALL TO MINISTRY

- 3.1 God calls the Pastor to minister within the Church and the community and the Church affirms God's call to engage the Pastor. In acknowledging the call of God to a specific ministry, the Pastor and the Church agree to be guided by the terms of this Statement of Understanding.
- 3.2 This is an open-ended call and engagement, commencing *[insert date of commencement]*.
- 3.3 The pastoral profile prepared by the *[insert "Pastoral Search Committee" or name of similar group]* is Schedule One to this Statement of Understanding and is to serve as a guide to the Pastor and the Church in the exercise of ministry within the Church and local community.

4 STIPEND, BENEFITS AND LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

- 4.1 The Pastor is entitled to the stipend and benefits specified in Schedule Two. The Pastors stipend will be paid to the Pastor monthly or otherwise as agreed.
- 4.2 The Church will pay superannuation to the extent required by law, currently at the legislated rate of *[insert percentage]*.
- 4.3 The Pastor's stipend is deemed to include:
- 4.3.1 all entitlements to leave loading, overtime loading, weekend or public holiday loading and any other form of stipend loading to which the Pastor may otherwise be entitled; and
 - 4.3.2 all service by way of overtime or attendance at functions or training outside the Pastor's usual working times.
- 4.4 The Pastor's leave entitlements will be annual leave, long service leave, sick leave and parental leave together with gazetted public holidays.
- 4.5 Where the Pastor is to be provided with a manse, this shall be done in accordance with the Guidelines.

The Church will meet the following expenses;

- 4.5.1 the reasonable costs of the Pastor attending conferences, seminars, training courses and study as may be approved by the Diaconate for assisting the Pastor in the exercise of ministry within and through the Church;
 - 4.5.2 all telephone rental charges for the Pastor's home telephone, as well as all charges for calls in relation to the Pastor's ministry within and through the Church;
 - 4.5.3 other reasonable costs necessarily incurred by the Pastor as a result of the Pastor's ministry within and through the Church, to such limit as the Church may determine from time to time. The Church may require reasonable documentary evidence and reasonable notice of expenses before meeting any such costs.
- 4.6 The Diaconate will review the Pastor's stipend and benefits annually. Any recommended changes will be brought to a properly constituted Church members meeting for approval.

5 REVIEW OF MINISTRY

- 5.1 The Pastor and Diaconate agree to institute review of the overall life and witness of the Church on an ongoing basis to assess:
- 5.1.1 the ministries of the Church;
 - 5.1.2 pastoral needs;
 - 5.1.3 lay participation in relation to the goals and objectives established in the Church vision and mission statements; and
 - 5.1.4 the pastoral profile.

Such a review will be initiated by the Diaconate at least every three years.

- 5.2 The Pastor and the Church agree to use their best endeavours to deal with matters of review and coping with conflict in accordance with the Guidelines. Seeking early assistance from the Superintendent is recommended.
- 5.3 The terms of this Statement of Understanding will be reviewed at least every three years.
- 5.4 Any change to the terms of this Statement of Understanding, including the pastoral profile in Schedule One and the stipend, benefits and leave entitlements in Schedule Two, must be approved by a properly constituted Church members meeting.

6 CONCLUSION OF MINISTRY

- 6.1 The Pastor may at any time conclude the Pastor's call and engagement by giving three months written notice to the Diaconate. The Church may accept less than three months notice.

6.2 A properly constituted special Church members meeting may conclude the Pastor's call and engagement effective allowing three months notice to the Pastor. The Pastor may accept less than three months notice.

6.3 For the purposes of clause 6.1 or 6.2:

6.3.1 this Statement of Understanding continues to apply during the actual notice period;

6.3.2 at the end of the actual notice period this Statement of Understanding ends and the Pastor is only further entitled to be paid any accrued entitlements to unused annual and long service leave; and

6.3.3 the Pastor agrees that he or she waives all and any right to, and undertakes that he or she will not bring any claim, dispute, action or demand in any jurisdiction alleging that the conclusion of his or her engagement was wrongful, unlawful, unfair or unreasonable.

6.4 A properly constituted Church members meeting may conclude:

6.4.1 the Pastor's call and engagement; and

6.4.2 this Statement of Understanding;

without notice and with immediate effect **only** for serious misconduct on the part of the Pastor as expressed in the Guidelines.

7 **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Pastor, the Diaconate and the Church agree to act professionally and with integrity in confidential matters.

8 **THE COMMITMENT OF THE CHURCH**

In making this call, we the members of this church, dedicate afresh our time, talents and financial resources to work with the pastor in the service of our Lord in this church. Indeed, we pray that all children, young people and adults who support the work of this church will do likewise.

SIGNED as an Agreement by the Church and the Pastor on the date set out at the beginning of this Agreement.

..... On behalf of the [insert name] **Church**
Name: Position:

..... On behalf of the [insert name] **Church**
Name: Position:

..... **Pastor**
Name:

Appendix D

Checklist for Induction Service

It is the role of the incoming pastor in conjunction with the church leadership and the moderator to make the arrangements for a service of induction. The moderator should take responsibility to check that this happens and to be a resource person should this be necessary.

An induction service is a highlight in the life of the incoming pastor and the church, so it is important to make the service one of celebration. A full church of happy people is a great encouragement to a new pastor and the church.

Planning the Service

If the Superintendent, President, or another guest speaker is to be invited, it is wise to check first on their availability on the suggested date.

There is no set protocol as to when an induction service should be held, except that it is usually within the first couple of weeks of the new pastor's starting at the church. Some services are held during the week, others at the weekend. It is kind to consider the needs of any people who may want to come some distance for the induction. It may be appropriate for the church to offer overnight accommodation for guests.

It is up to the incoming pastor to suggest who will take part in the service in consultation with the church leadership. Again, the moderator can be the resource person to help here. There are sample induction orders of service available to assist in arranging the induction service. Contact the Union Office for details.

Who should be invited? This is really up to those arranging the service but here are some suggestions:

- * The people of the church should be kept fully informed and be part of the welcoming of the new pastor and any visitors at the service
- * members of the pastor's previous church
- * representatives of the BUT
- * any individuals who have played a significant part in the process of the call
- * the family of the incoming pastor
- * leadership and members of the neighbouring churches, both Baptist and others
- * In some cases, key people of the community in which the church is set
- * It can be an appropriate time to invite the local press or at least ensure an article and photo is submitted to the local press for publication.

Invitations to special guests should have an RSVP to help with planning for the service. There is often a time in the service when apologies are read.

Careful preparation of all aspects of the service will enhance the celebration. This includes orders of service, flowers, special music, refreshments. It seems traditional that there be flowers for the pastor's wife or for the lady pastor.

On the Day

Make sure there are welcomers to receive those who have come to the service and to show them to a seat. If there are special guests, arrange for seats for them to be reserved at the front of the church. Those with reserved seats should know in advance as should the people on the door so that they can be taken to their seats.

Special guests, particularly community leaders and representatives from the BUT, should be welcomed at an appropriate point in the service. If there are to be refreshments after the service, significant leaders from within the church should be briefed to conduct the special guests to the right place and care for them for the duration of their stay at the church, introducing them to the new pastor and to members of the church.

There is a part in the service when the history of the call is recounted to the congregation. This is usually done by a lay leader of the church but can be done by the moderator. The incoming pastor is also offered the opportunity to tell of his/her response to the call.

There is also the laying on of hands. Make sure the people know who is involved and when in the service this is and they are seated in a place where they can take part easily.

This is an appropriate time to formally recognise the part that the moderator has played in the call, and sometimes to thank those in the church who have played a significant role in the life of the church leading up to the call of the pastor. It is generally wise through to have already publicly acknowledged the part that any interim pastor/s might have played in the previous months.

Appendix E

Comparing Traditional and Multi-interview Procedures

This appendix offers an initial statement of the benefits and deficiencies of the traditional call process (one pastor at a time) and the more recent trend towards the multi-interview approach (several pastors at the one time). Underlying this statement is an appreciation of the nature of the Call which lies at the very heart of a pastoral settlement. The importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in guiding both pastor and people is paramount and the issue of process should be regarded as secondary to this.

1. **The Traditional Process: The Benefits**

The traditional process does have a number of clearly understood benefits for both the Pastoral Search Committee and the pastor being interviewed:

- 1.1 The Committee remains clearly focussed on its task.
- 1.2 Pastors have indicated a strong preference for a non competitive procedure as there appear to be strongly held reservations about comparisons being made with other pastors. These reservations arise from a deeply felt need to be open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in considering an invitation from a church and the notion of being in "competition" with others runs counter to such an understanding.
- 1.3 The Pastoral Search Committee concentrates its efforts in a definite, ordered process clearly understood by all members.
- 1.4 The process has shown a very high level of effectiveness over the years although by no means fool proof.
- 1.5 The clear focus on one pastor at a time provides for a much more easily managed procedure with regard to information gathering and priority setting.
- 1.6 The Committee has the benefit of the services of Advisory Board in refining the pastoral profile, being offered lines of enquiry in keeping with that profile and the establishment of priorities in the search to be undertaken.

2. **The Traditional Process: The Limitations**

- 2.1 The process can be very slow if the pastor being approached takes too much time in responding.
- 2.2 There is a requirement for very high levels of patience and very good organisational procedures.
- 2.3 If an approach to a pastor is unsuccessful, the process has to start all over again.

3. The Multi-Interview Approach: the Benefits

- 3.1 The Pastoral Search Committee may derive a sense of security from being able to give simultaneous attention to a range of options.
- 3.2 Approaching several pastors at once might give a heightened sense of making progress.
- 3.3 Interviews with several pastors at once will provide a range of responses which in turn may help the Committee to sharpen its aspirations and hopes and better identify its needs.
- 3.4 The pursuit of a number of interviewees at once will give a clearer understanding of the range of personalities and leadership styles available.
- 3.5 There is the possibility of a faster outcome being achieved provided priorities can be clearly identified.

4. The Multi-Interview Approach: The Limitations

- 4.1 The knowledge that a multi-interview procedure is being pursued by a church may well discourage suitable pastors from responding to the invitation through a reluctance to be compared with others.
- 4.2 The approach may have an underlying assumption that, through many interviews being undertaken, the right person will be found somewhere. This may not necessarily be the case.
- 4.3 There is the ever present risk that the person who interviews best may be more attractive when compared with others but this is no guarantee that they are the best pastor for the church. Again, the issue of Call cannot be emphasised too much with the focus being on the ministry of the Holy Spirit to pastor and people rather than an unthinking reliance on good procedure alone.

Suggested Protocols For Multi-Interview Procedures By Pastoral Search Committees

Unlike the secular workplace, when a pastor considers an approach by a church implicit in the decision to be interviewed is some sense of call. (If there isn't, no interview will take place.)

This raises the expectation of pastors in a multi interview situation so that should the pastor be unsuccessfully interviewed, there can be a sense of great disappointment and even confusion if he/she felt there was a sense of God's call in the interview.

This creates even further complications for the moderator who, in conveying a search committee's decision to a number of interviewed pastors, will find it necessary to offer simultaneous support to, on the one hand, a pastor being asked to enter into further discussions with the church and, on the other hand, one or more pastors who have to be told there is no further discussion to take place with the church. There is an obligation to all pastors being interviewed to offer support and pastoral care regardless of the outcome. This can place great pressure on the moderator at such times.

1. In the event of a Pastoral Search Committee approaching two or more pastors at the same time, it is essential that each pastor be advised of this simultaneous process.
2. It is incumbent upon Pastoral Search Committees that, where there are conversations proceeding with several pastors simultaneous, the procedures should be as even handed as possible and according to an agreed set of criteria to be determined by the Committee prior to conversations being undertaken.
3. It is recommended that a moderator (or other person exercising a similar role) when inviting a pastor to participate in an interview with the Pastoral Search Committee at the same time as other pastors, should not reveal the identity of the church making such a request. The reason for this is to help the pastor reflect on their openness to a change in ministry without being influenced by the identity of the church making the request or the procedure being followed.
4. Initial interviews should be at an exploratory level only for the purposes of establishing with clarity broad details of background, experience, doctrinal perspective, gifts for ministry and so on. Such a procedure will assist the Committee in establishing a priority for the conduct of interviews at greater depth. We would suggest that initial interviews be conducted in the same manner for all pastors interviewed, i.e. limited to say, 1½ hours, be formally structured and be an information gathering exercise.
5. Pastoral Search Committees should be encouraged to recognise that the conduct of several interviews in-depth simultaneously is inadvisable as such a procedure may unnecessarily raise expectations which will then be proportionately diminished when it is known that a number of such interviews are being pursued at the same time.
6. When a Pastoral Search Committee determines that a particular line of enquiry will not be pursued further, the pastor in question should be advised of such an outcome by the moderator without delay.

7. In a situation where the moderator knows that a pastor on the interview list of the Pastoral Search Committee is in conversation with another church, no approach should be made to that pastor until the outcome of such a conversation has been finalised.
8. A greater responsibility rests on the moderator to keep the Superintendent or Pastoral Committee informed of all lines of enquiry to avoid multiple approaches being made to the same pastor.

Appendix F

Sample of Pastoral Role Description

The Baptist Church believes that with God's leading, and at this stage in its life, it is the will of God that be called to be the pastor, serving it and the people of the community.

The following statement is therefore presented as guidance for both church and pastor:

1. The church believes that the pastor and members have a mutual ministry to fulfil and the ministry will be a shared responsibility. The members of the church, together and individually, commit themselves to work with the pastor offering him, and his family, friendship, spiritual and material support, fellowship and a willingness to explore with him God's will for the work and direction of this church.
2. The pastor will be a servant-leader who will seek by word and example, and with others holding leadership responsibility within the church, to promote the spiritual well-being and growth of all those gathered as the church.
3. Beyond being the servant-leader, there are many other elements of the mission of the church which will rely on the pastor in some areas for prime responsibility, and in others for leadership and encouragement. These are referred to below with the additional encouragement for him to be innovative in any areas of church life he touches:
 - 3.1 The pastor will assist the church in developing and following a revised vision and direction for the future. He will work with the other church leaders in the practical management of the church and take an interest, where appropriate, in the work of various committees.
 - 3.2 The pastor will assume responsibility for Sunday worship, encouraging others to be involved. If and when the pastor is to be absent, he will provide assistance in alternative pulpit supply.
 - 3.3 The pastor will, with the support of the pastoral care committee, care for and visit members within the church community where appropriate.
 - 3.4 The pastor will provide leadership and encouragement in programs of Christian education for children, young people and adults.
 - 3.5 The pastor will assist in and support the building of cell groups and/or small group networks.
 - 3.6 The pastor will support and encourage an effective youth program, youth leadership and youth outreach.
4. The pastor will encourage the church to reach out into the community, ministering in Christ's name to meet people's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. The pastor will encourage evangelism within and through the church membership so that Christ is presented as Saviour and Lord.

5. The reference to a call as pastor in the introductory paragraph of this Terms and Conditions document provides for such a time that the church may consider an associate pastor. In this case, the incoming pastor would be accountable to the senior pastor.
6. The appointment will be on a full-time basis and will be an open ended call. To help both pastor and church fulfil their respective ministries there shall, at the end of each three years of the pastorate, be a review of the life and ministry of the church, with an intermediate review after 1 year. This shall be undertaken by a committee comprising the pastor and three members appointed by a church meeting and chaired either by the General Superintendent of the Baptist Union of Victoria or by a person nominated by him and acceptable to both the pastor and the church. The assessment of the review committee shall be presented to a church meeting which shall consider and act upon it as it deems appropriate for the continued proclamation of the Gospel and the advancement of the Kingdom of God.
7. The conditions of employment in regard to stipend, allowances, leave etc. will be based on the recommendations of the Baptist Union of Victoria. Increases will be made automatically upon advice from the Baptist Union of Victoria and reported to the church. (See Appendix A for details.)
8. If at any time the pastor feels the need to terminate his call or resign, then an appropriate committee of three (3) from the leadership will be set up by the deacons to confer with him and discuss the issues involved. Under normal circumstances three months' notice of any resignation is required.
9. The pastoral call and agreement to become effective from
10. The pastor, the diaconate and the church agree to act professionally, compassionately and with integrity in all confidential matters.

Signed as an agreement by the church and the pastor on the day of 19....

Name:

On behalf of the Baptist Church.

Position:.....

Name:

On behalf of the Baptist Church.

Position:.....

Name:

Pastor