

“Pastors in transition” research project: Information sheet

Introduction:

This study was born out of the desire to offer excellent pastoral and practical support to Baptist ministers during the times that they transition from, and between, ministry roles. The research can have immediate and short-term benefits for respondents, as it encourages reflection and potentially provides information enabling the Baptist movement to better care for you now. In addition, ministers who transition in the future will receive better care as a result of the project findings.

To achieve those aims, the research explores Baptist pastors’ experiences as they transition out of a specific pastoral ministry role. As you have recently concluded such a role, you are invited to participate: outlining the reasons why you recently left your ministry position; and advising what you are doing now and what you anticipate doing next. You are under no obligation to take part, but doing so will help us understand how best to resource and support pastors, particularly at transitional times.

Purpose of the study:

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What factors contribute towards pastors’ decisions to conclude a specific ministry role?
2. How significant is each of those factors?
3. How is and how can “healthy” longevity be supported?
4. How can “unhealthy” pastoral attrition be prevented?
5. How can pastors and their families’ best be helped in such transitions?

Your involvement:

You are invited to complete an online questionnaire. Use the hyperlink provided in your email

Benefits of the study:

There are at least four potential benefits of this study.

1. Some respondents indicate that the process of completing the questionnaire is itself helpful and/or therapeutic.
2. If you specifically opt in, your responses will be given to the Kaitohu mō te Hautūtanga (Leadership Co-ordination Director), Karen Warner, helping her provide appropriate support for you and your family, if you indicate the transition has been difficult.
3. Sharing your experiences will provide insights that can improve the quality of the training and support offered to pastors.
4. Publishing the results of this study will enable other denominations and organisations to benefit from insights obtained by the research.

Anonymity and confidentiality (what happens to your responses?):

Information that relates to your new contact details, previous church involvement and qualifications will be given to the Baptist National Support Centre, ensuring your database record is up to date.

If you desire (and opt in), your (identified) data will be made available to Karen Warner. At the start of the survey you can indicate if you want this. At the end of the survey, you are reminded of your initial response and invited to confirm or amend your selection.

Apart from that, your responses will be de-identified, analysed and reported. Because the data is de-identified, no-one should be able to connect your responses to you. Of course, in an organisation like the Baptist Churches of NZ, it is possible that some who know you might recognise your story in the data. While I will make every effort to avoid this, I cannot guarantee complete anonymity.

Data will be stored as a computer file in a password protected computer, held by the researcher.

Potential risks or discomforts:

The researcher anticipates few risks from your involvement in this study. However, even the best transitions can involve grief and loss, and some are very painful. Recalling your experiences may remind you of painful or difficult memories. If you need support, please don't hesitate to contact Karen Warner (karen.warner@baptist.org.nz) or a supportive colleague. (Other support is also available, for example by free calling or texting the national "need to talk" line on 1737.)

Agreeing to participate:

Participation is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any questions and are free to withdraw from the study without effect or consequences. Completing the online questionnaire indicates your willingness to participate.

Sharing findings:

Outcomes from the project will be reported from time to time.

Any questions?

If you have any questions about the project, do not hesitate to contact the Researcher or the Leadership Co-ordination Director.

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