







You are faced with the need to select a new pastoral leader for your church. This is one of the most important tasks a church will face.

The purpose of this handbook is to share the experience gained from the work of Search Teams across many other churches and to acquaint you with resources that can help you in your task.

This handbook takes you through the stages needed for a robust search process. It includes access to an electronic version of this handbook and many other related resources. See page 23 for access details.

Your Baptist Regional Leader is a valuable resource person who can assist you along the pastoral search process. They have accumulated wisdom and experience that you can draw on. The Regional Leaders from around the country form a national team who together will provide you with invaluable advice and assistance.

We strongly recommend that, as you work on your task of selecting a candidate to present to your church, you remain in regular contact with your Regional Leader. Baptist Union National Support Centre staff also have wide knowledge of the pastoral search process and contacts that may be useful to the team. See page 3 for contact details.

EHARA TĀKU TOA I TE TOA TAKITAHI, ENGARI HE TOA TAKITINI

MY SUCCESSES ARE NOT MINE ALONE, THEY ARE OURS—THE GREATEST SUCCESSES WE WILL HAVE ARE FROM WORKING TOGETHER

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PASTORAL SELECTION PROCESS



Stage 1 of this diagram will have been completed by the leadership team when the Search Team is appointed. This booklet takes the Search Team through stages 2 to 7 of the pastoral search process.

Electronic versions of these handbooks are available through the Leadership Hub: leadership.baptist.nz/elders-and-governance/pastorl-search This website includes all appendices mentioned in this handbook.



Everyone in the church family is gifted by God and called to be a follower of Jesus in everyday life. Some are called specifically to pastoral leadership. This often begins with the individual but always needs the recognition of the community of believers to confirm this.

As you go through the pastoral search process you will get to listen to someone's calling; you will need to pray through the confirmation of this for your church community.



Their task is to select a pastor who will lead, support, and guide your church in its ministry for Christ in the world. In Ephesians 4:11-12 we read of the ministry gifts:

"...that some would be prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." (NRSV)

You will need to consider how each potential pastor can work with your church to fulfil its ministry as you look toward the future. It is your team's function to find that pastor and to recommend him or her to your church for approval and call.

Just as God calls both women and men to a life of faith, so both are called by God to positions of leadership within the church. It is important that your team and church be open to receive the names of all candidates whose gifts and skills match the needs of your church. In openness to the Spirit's direction you will want to give equal consideration to all viable candidates without regard to gender, age, race, physical handicap or marital status.

We have observed that Search Teams sometimes dismiss giving serious consideration to a younger candidate just out of training or an older pastor with significant years of service still to give. In doing so, great opportunities are often missed. A younger person brings a freshness and vitality that can be very stimulating. While an older pastor brings a wealth of knowledge and experience. Similarly, be aware of letting gender preferences sway the candidates you consider.

As a Search Team member, you should immediately declare any conflicts of interest, and seek clarification by discussing it with the chair of the Search Team or the regional leader. Likewise, if your time requirement unexpectedly changes such that it will impinge on your ability to fulfil your Search Team responsibilities, you should be upfront about this. Having predetermined procedural processes in place will help the Search Team maintain momentum when unexpected matters such as these arise.



Ideally, a chairperson needs to be appointed at the first meeting of the team. An administrator should be elected at the first meeting. The administrator will be responsible for the correspondence of the team, and will keep minutes. These minutes should be kept confidential to the team, and should only be circulated to the team members and the regional leader.



The first meeting of the Search Team should take time to begin building the team into a team. Everyone needs to be made fully aware of the task ahead, and how they will go about it. We advise having the regional leader present to help inform the group about the process.

Agree on the procedure and processes that lie ahead, for example:

- Confidentiality (see below)
- Reporting to leadership and church (see below)
- The scope of the task—e.g. profiles of church and pastor (see below)
- Advertising
- Decision making—e.g. unanimous?



The confidential nature of the Search Team's work needs to be emphasised to each member of the team. The team will be dealing with records and information about pastors, their families and their churches. All personal information must be treated with utmost discretion, and be kept in confidence within the team. This includes information from the pastors' profiles and referees' reports. It is appropriate for the church leadership to be kept up to date on names, and advice sought where necessary, but specific information should not be shared until the appropriate points in the process.

Keep in mind that some of those expressing interest in the position or that the team has approached, will currently be serving in another setting (either a church or other job) and a breach of confidentiality could jeopardise that relationship.

When the work is completed, all materials about individuals should be promptly destroyed and confidentiality still maintained.



At the beginning of this process, it is good to introduce the team to the congregation. Explain the steps the team will be following and request their prayer support for the team members and the task they are undertaking.

Ideally, the team should bring frequent progress updates to the church leadership, the pastoral staff and the congregation.

Church leadership should guide you regarding their involvement at the interview stage and when other pastoral staff should meet a prospective candidate.



Church leadership may wish to carry out the tasks below, or they may be assigned to the Search Team.



A careful assessment of the nature and needs of the church is an important part of the process. Until this 'profile' is known, it is difficult to establish what type of pastoral ministry is needed by the church over the coming years. The elements of this self-study may include:

- History of the congregation.
- Current mission/vision/values statements and documents.
- Current church ministries—i.e. worship, children, youth, etc.
- Current resources—church buildings, manse, finances etc.
- Community demographics and needs.
- Future vision for ministry—what you believe God wants you to do and be.
 What sort of ministry does the church need in the future? Do you need to continue a previous emphasis, style or doctrinal flavour, or do you need a contrast, or a different one?
- Organisational or leadership style. Are there strengths to build on or weaknesses to compensate?

It is helpful to involve the congregation in this part of the process. (See Appendix 3: Discovering who we are and where we are going.)



The work done in #1 (above) will now serve as a basis for writing the church profile. The profile is a description of the church's history, present ministries, resources, future vision and future pastoral needs. Appendix 3 includes a sample church profile outline.

An information pack to accompany the church profile should ideally be prepared.

Items you could include are:

- The latest Annual Report including the current budget.
- Statistical information regarding membership, attendances etc.
- Samples of church newsletters, website details, social media accounts etc.
- A copy of the church constitution.
- Community information and description.
- Possibly photographs of church buildings and manse.
- Stipend, housing and reimbursements package (see #4 on page 10).

The church profile and information pack need to be ready for distribution to potential candidates (those who request it and those who end up on the short-list).

WHAT YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR IN A PASTOR

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

The relationship between a pastor and the members of the church she or he serves is an important one. No matter what skills and background a potential pastor has, the ability to work with others is crucial. You will need to test this through the selection process.

COMMITMENT AND PERSONAL ETHICS

You desire and deserve a pastor who is deeply committed to Christ, to the church and to the world God created. It's important that pastors are people of moral integrity and dependability. This should form part of any referees' checks you make.

A booklet 'Ethical Principles and Guidelines' for pastors of New Zealand Baptist churches has been prepared by the National Support Centre. You can get a copy on the Leadership Hub or from your regional leader (see contact details on pages 3 and 23). Your team should be familiar with this code of ethics, and you should ask your prospective pastor about his/her attitude towards it during an interview.

QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

Baptists in New Zealand have long recognised and supported the training of pastors for ministry. Since 1925 many pastors have been trained at Carey Baptist College. Across the years a number of students from Laidlaw College and other training schools have also prepared for and entered the ministry of our churches. Whilst we recommend appointing people who have been formally trained and who understand our Baptist ethos, we do accept that some who have done much informal training can also be recognised as pastors. In the case of appointing an untrained pastor we recommend that you include formal training as part of their ongoing professional development. This can be done by distance and part-time.

A careful approach should be taken in considering candidates not resident in New Zealand. This includes good checks into training and qualifications but also consideration of their approach to cross cultural understanding and ministry. How experienced are they in serving and working with people of a cultural context that is not one they know? What do they understand of New Zealand generally, including the bicultural and multicultural nature of New Zealand, along with an understanding of New Zealand Baptists? Can they contextualise their preaching and ministry? If they have a spouse and any children, what does a significant move mean for them? What expectations might they have about work/ministry/life style? It is better to have this clarified early on in the process than for either party to be surprised when close to the end of it. Don't forget to include the international version of police vetting—e.g. a federal check for Americans.

You may also like to consider the continuing education experiences that the candidate has had in recent years. Involvement in continuing education is a strong indicator of an effective pastor.

GIFTS AND SKILLS

Every church would like to have a pastor who is competent in all ministerial skills—preaching, teaching, pastoral care, administration, children's and youth work, and the many other dimensions of professional church leadership. A church, of course, will not find a pastor highly gifted and qualified in every ministry area. The study of your church, mentioned previously, will reveal what kind of gift-mix your church most requires in its new pastor.

BAPTIST ETHOS

It is important that your new pastor be a person who has knowledge of and commitment to the family of New Zealand Baptist churches and the mission for which they and your church exist. We have a statement of faith to which all members of the Baptist Union of Churches must adhere, along with a number of practices and protocols of Baptist church life to which we have agreed—e.g. Te Tiriti o Waitangi, The Treaty of Waitangi affirmations, women in leadership, sexuality and marriage etc. Your new pastor will need to be aware of, and agree with the statement of faith and affirmations. Information on the each of these can be obtained from your regional leader or the National Support Centre.

We do expect that all Baptist pastors will be registered, so it is important when calling a non-Baptist, or an overseas candidate, that they are aware of this. Any Baptist pastor applying to be on the Baptist Marriage Celebrants' Register must be registered. Information on Baptist Registration can be found on the Leadership Hub.

You may receive names from a variety of sources, including from outside our Baptist churches. Your regional leader can assist you in securing background information about the people you might want to consider.

The goal is to make the strongest possible match of the abilities of a candidate with the needs of your church.

CALLING ASSISTANT OR ASSOCIATE STAFF MEMBERS

The Pastoral Search Handbooks have been written primarily for calling a sole or senior pastor, however, they will still be useful when calling other staff. Keep in mind that some parts of the process will not be necessary, and other parts will need to be added. You can discuss the differences with your regional leader.

We advise checking your church constitution regarding the approval process when making non-senior staff team appointments.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF THERE IS AN INTERNAL CANDIDATE?

If a church member, elder, or staff member of the church wishes to be considered for the role of senior pastor, they should go through the same call process as external candidates. In this way, if they are eventually called, they will feel validated by the process. This also helps preserve objectivity.

STAFF TEAM CONSIDERATIONS

The impending change of senior leadership can be a vulnerable time for church staff. It is important that they are kept updated about the call process. Although they are the paid staff of the church, they are entitled to be treated with the respect accorded any other church member. Unfortunately, this is sometimes not the case. An example is when an associate pastor ends up leading the church but no thought is given to what happens to their role and expectations once a new senior pastor is appointed. Sometimes it is untenable for the interim senior pastor to return to their previous associate role, therefore, it is not always helpful to appoint an associate pastor as the interim. Your regional leader can help you to identify and think through issues specific to multi-staff situations.

DEVELOP A PROFILE OF THE PASTOR YOU ARE SEEKING

This can be done in association with the development of the church profile previously mentioned.

Note: If the congregation is surveyed, it may not be helpful to ask what they want in a pastor—this can end up being too inwardly focussed and may set up unrealistic expectations. Ask questions around where ministry is working well and where it needs to be strengthened. It is strongly recommended that a congregational meeting is held to endorse the profile of the pastor being sought. This helps the congregation to have ownership in the call process.

In defining the qualities and gifts you want in your new pastor, consider:

- The primary areas of ministry priority for your church.
- The staffing and leadership patterns.
- The vision and direction of the church.
- The demographic of your community.
- Be careful not to react to the weaknesses of the previous pastor.

(See Appendix 4 and the Pastoral Search Candidate Profile on the Leadership Hub).



While we recommend using a terms of call document when engaging pastoral staff, churches may choose to use an individual employment agreement (IEA). If using a terms of call, the rights and obligations of an employment relationship do not apply. However, if the church uses terms like "employment" in its documentation the legal situation alters. It is strongly recommended that you use the Baptist Terms of Call document as the basis of the terms and conditions that you offer the prospective pastor. While you are able to alter amounts and numbers in the terms of call document it is recommended that you receive advice from legal advisers before rewording the clauses. It is also important to check that the clauses in the terms of call document match your church constitution. Both the terms of call and IEA documents are available on the Leadership Hub and Intranet (See page 23 for access details).

The normal package would include:

- Stipend (normally it will be one recommended by the Baptist Union), and housing provision, or housing allowance.
- Payment of church related expenses, such as ministry enhancement, hospitality, vehicle
 mileage, cell phone, superannuation and KiwiSaver (there is a Baptist Union Superannuation
 Scheme for Baptist pastors), sabbatical leave, holidays, Baptist Hui, Baptist Registration and
 other in-service training expenses, relocation costs. We recommend having a credit card to limit
 administration costs and the need for reimbursements.

We also recommend having a clear understanding of what office equipment and furniture, e.g. computers, will be provided by the church, especially where the pastor's office is at home.

It is very important that you ensure all candidates you interview are asked to complete a Police Vetting form. This ensures that the safety and wellbeing of those in your community is being upheld.

СН	ECKLIST
	Pastoral Staff Appllication Form
\bigcirc	Terms of Call or IEA agreement—including knowledge of the recommendations for:
	Omestic & parental leave
	Superannuation/KiwiSaver
	Sabbatical leave
	Most recent Baptist Union recommended stipends and allowances (Stipends and allowances information are reviewed annually, and updates are sent to all church treasurers. Check with your treasurer for the most recent information. This is also available on the intranet.)
	Completed Police Vetting form
	Fuel card option
	Southern Cross medical insurance
	Ministry reviews
	Ethical Principles and Guidelines Handbook
\bigcirc	Baptist Registration information (see below)

Note: Information about each of the above is available from the Leadership Hub

Information and online application for Baptist Registration is available at: lifelonglearning.nz



COMPILING A LIST OF POTENTIAL CANDIDATES

Establish a cut-off date for receiving names. Invite names from these and other sources:

- The regional leader
- Leaders and members of the church
- Advertising—you can advertise on our website: baptist.nz/resources/vacancies
- National Support Centre (NSC).

If you advertise the church vacancy on the Baptist Union website, you may also receive applicants who come direct to you, including from overseas. Acknowledge all those who have directly applied, informing them of the next step and date in the process. The names gathered make up the list of potential candidates for review.



There may be some names you can remove from the list at your next meeting because they are unsuitable or unavailable.

At this point it is important to consult with your regional leader who will be able to supply information on Baptist candidates (if you have consent to do so from the candidate). We recommend that you don't accept any names purely on 'face value'. It's critical that you do seek references from those you have consent to approach. We recommend using the Pastoral Staff Application Form (see Leadership Hub).

If a candidate does not give you consent to approach their regional leader or NSC staff, please ask them why not and carefully consider their explanation in deciding whether to short list them.

When receiving applications from overseas we recommend you request the following:

- A recommendation from the Baptist Union (if any) in the country from which the applicant comes, unless the church or churches ministered in are not in membership with any such Union, or denomination in which they have been serving.
- A recommendation from the church or body with which the applicant was last in service.

Note: Please do not contact people in the church where the candidate is currently pastoring unless they give approval to do so.



Keeping in mind the church profile, and the criteria for leadership that has emerged, it is now necessary to reduce the potential list to about three people. This part of the process can take several meetings. It will require background checking and ideally, further discussion with the regional leader. We highly recommend including National Support Centre staff in this discussion (if you have consent from the candidate to do so).



GATHERING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Now that you have shortlisted, you need to find out all you can about those on your 'possible list'.

- If distances are not too great, consider some members of the Search Team attending
 a service taken by the candidate, in their present church. Remember this view is based on
 only one service and needs to be done in confidence.
- Sometimes it is possible to invite a candidate to come and preach. Some churches also
 use this occasion as an opportunity to meet the candidate informally over a church lunch.
 Remember, however, that a judgement on the candidate should not hinge on this one
 occasion. An in-depth interview and other enquiries should be made before you reach
 a decision.
- Remember, your regional leader can give further information and advice now that you are seriously considering a candidate.
- Be diligent about doing referees' checks—going back with deeper questions if necessary (see Appendix 5 for suggested referee questions). Remember to ensure you have permission from the candidate before speaking to referees. We recommend using the Pastoral Staff Application Form on the Leadership Hub.



Rank your candidates and set up an interview with your preferred person (some churches may prefer to interview more than one). If you are interviewing more than one candidate be open and let each know that you are looking at more than one person.

This part of the process has several benefits:

- The Search Team, often with the church leadership, gets to meet and talk to the person face
 to face. This is a very good way of finding out more about them, their philosophy of ministry,
 their vision, family etc.
- The candidate has the opportunity to stop you proceeding with their name if they are quite confident that they will not even consider a call at this time.
- Any existing staff could get to meet the candidate in a separate meeting to above (see Appendix 6).
- The candidate gets to assess the leaders and church in a relaxed, open and no obligation way.

Note 1: In talking with the candidate, the Search Team must be careful not to make promises or commitments which they may personally favour but for which they have no mandate from the church to make.

Note 2: The church should be responsible for paying all the costs incurred by the potential candidate. Well-meaning Search Teams have sometimes sought to save costs and extend hospitality by hosting candidates in their own homes. For objectivity sake, this is strongly advised against. Instead, pay for the candidate to stay at a motel or other lodgings in or near the community.

Appendix 6 is an excellent resource to help you prepare for this interview.





When your Search Team (and church leadership) are in agreement on a particular person as the preferred candidate, you are ready to move into the final stage of the process. Check your church constitution. It may require that you present a nomination to the church leadership team, who then bring that name to a church meeting.

After giving the required notice for calling a congregational meeting, the name will be taken to the church as a recommendation of the church leadership and the Search Team. Make sure you know what the quorum is, and what percentage is required for this decision (check your church constitution).

Note: We strongly recommend that under no circumstance should the congregation be asked to consider more than one candidate at a time.



Please keep in mind that unless the person has agreed to their name being openly made known, you should not give the name or details of the candidate you are presenting, prior to the meeting. This keeps confidentiality in the possible case of the church not issuing a call, plus avoids the possibility of people making up their mind before they hear first-hand the presentation from the Search Team.

At the meeting, the Search Team should present the reasons why they are presenting this particular person, their impressions of his/her abilities and skills in ministry, and their convictions as to why they believe this is the person that the church should be calling. The team should describe in a general way, the terms and conditions that will be offered.

Adequate time for question and discussion needs to be given if the people only received the name at the meeting. Voting should be done by secret ballot, to either accept or reject the recommendation. We do not advise admitting new members once an announcement of a special meeting to call a new pastor has been made. You will not want members joining just so they can influence this one decision. As soon as the church has taken the vote, inform the candidate in person, or by phone.

The call of the church must be put in writing, including a restatement of the Terms of Call and any other relevant arrangements. This letter should be emailed as soon as possible after the decision of the church meeting.



The Search Team, in consultation with the church leadership, will need to be able to negotiate with the called candidate, if they would like to discuss or change any of the offered terms and conditions as outlined in the Terms of Call or IEA document that was presented. When agreement has been reached, both the new pastor and a representative of the church leadership should sign it.



WELCOMING YOUR NEW PASTOR (AND FAMILY, WHERE APPLICABLE)

It is important that the new pastor (and family) are given an effective induction process. This process needs to cover introducing the pastor to key people and teams, plus a full briefing on how the church runs and what the issues of the moment are. Done thoroughly, this can take a while.

On a more personal level, your new pastor (and family) will come to your community as strangers. Your team and the church leadership can do much to make them feel at home, and to introduce them to your own congregation, and also to your community.

- Make sure the manse or rental property is in complete readiness. Any redecoration should be done in consultation with the incoming pastor. Repairs and maintenance should all be completed.
- If the new pastor is buying her/his own home, they may need help with overnight or even temporary accommodation.
- It can be wonderfully welcoming to have meals arranged or provided the day they move in.
- If the pastor's office is at the church building, make sure it is all cleaned and ready.
- Arrange an early informal meeting for your pastor with the church leaders.

PLANNING THE COMMISSIONING SERVICE

While the leadership may take over this function, it is good for the Search Team to make sure that the work is done. This service should be a real celebration. You should consider:

- Any special performances or items.
- A speaker to bring an encouragement to the congregation and the new pastor. You might like
 to ask the incoming pastor for suggestions of who could speak.
- Someone to carry out the Act of Commissioning. This would normally be someone
 representing the wider family of Baptist churches—another pastor, the regional leader or
 Baptist Union National Support Centre staff.
- People to bring greetings. The chair of the local ministers' association and/or someone from the regional Baptist Association can welcome them on behalf of the churches in the area.

EXPRESSING THANKS AND DISMISSING THE SEARCH TEAM

When the team's work is completed, it should be thanked by someone in the church leadership at a worship service, and then the team can be discharged. Although, for the sake of continuity, some of the team members should be part of the review process that is recommended to take place after the pastor has been in place for three months.

Note: All profiles and confidential papers used by the team should be returned or destroyed.



The coming of a new senior pastor may cause a variety of issues to surface for existing staff. We recommend putting suitable processes in place for support and to work through any issues that may arise.



The Baptist Union of New Zealand is a collective of over 240 churches and faith communities and has both a national and regional presence and focus. Our goal is for churches and pastors to feel connected to each other and to the collective.

We function nationally through:

- the annual Baptist Hui
- Assembly Council
- the national leader
- the National Support Centre.

We function regionally through our network of regional associations. Each association has a regional leader and a governance board, and some have specialised coaches for ministry with children, youth and families (see contact details on page 3).

We also have two core agencies for the purpose of global and local mission, and pastoral and theological training:

- The New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society, known as Arotahi
- Carey Baptist College.

It is important that pastors, especially those who are new to Baptist churches, know how they can connect with others and receive support and inspiration. Your regional leader is a great contact point and can make sure that your pastor is connected to national emails and websites, and local cluster groups and training events.

We take the professional development of our pastors seriously and the Carey Centre for Lifelong Learning (CCLL) is the place where this is delivered. We encourage you to make sure that your new pastor is aware of CCLL and that they have a ministry development plan in place as part of their registration. More details can be found here: www.lifelonglearning.nz.

Baptist Union websites:

- baptist.nz
- leadership.baptist.nz
- arotahi.org.nz
- carey.ac.nz and liflelonglearning.nz
- baptistcfm.org.nz



These appendices are available for download from the Baptist Intranet:

Appendix 1: Summary of the search process

Appendix 2: Characteristics of Search Team members

Appendix 3: Discovering who we are and where we are going

Appendix 4: What gifts and patterns of ministry are we looking for in our new leader?

Appendix 5: Checking references

Appendix 6: The interview process

Appendix 7: Suggested letter to candidates with whom further contact is sought

Appendix 8: Suggested letter to potential candidates now no longer being considered

Appendix 9: Suggested letter to formally confirm a call to the pastorate

Internet access see the Leadership Hub: leadership.baptist.nz Navigate to: elders-and-governance/pastoral-search For Intranet login access please contact: info@baptist.org.nz



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