
STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR CHURCHES SEEKING A PASTOR

The questions below are designed to help a Session and/or PNC to prepare for a successful search for a new pastor. These are the kind of questions that will be asked by potential candidates seeking a call. This process is intended to create an opportunity for creative, extensive dialogue. You may need the input of the congregation or other resources available in your community to determine the answers to these questions. Doing this preparatory work will promote meaningful discussion with pastoral candidates and give them a realistic picture of your congregation and ministry.

1. What does your church have to offer that the world cannot live without?
2. What sets your church apart from other Presbyterian churches? What sets it apart from churches of other denominations in your area?
3. What demographic information about your community will shape the next five years of ministry?
4. Why do people join your church? Why do they stay? Why don't they join? (If you don't know, what is your best guess?)
5. Who is your target audience? Who is your ideal new member?
6. What issues of faith are engaging the congregation? What is exciting people theologically?
7. What do you see as the role of the pastor? Describe your previous called pastor—what were his/her strengths and weaknesses? How did he /she divide time among such things as worship, teaching, pastoral care, administration, and church growth?
8. Who are you as a church? What are the demographics of age, gender, race, education, etc? How would describe the culture of the church?
9. What is the current relationship among staff, session and congregation? Would you like those relationships to change with a new pastor? If so, how?
10. What do you see as areas of growth and challenge in the next few years?
11. What programs/areas of your church life are calling cards for your church? Which programs/areas need to be ended?
12. What has been your most energetic dispute?