

The Regular Church/Pastoral Review

Preparation materials for pastor and church board (v. 2)

Kansas City District Church of the Nazarene
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The following materials are for the pastor and members of the church board to use in preparation for the regular review (*MANUAL* paragraph 122). The following steps will be followed:

- The District Resource Center will initiate scheduling of the review.
- These materials are sent to the church office/pastor and should be distributed to members of the church board at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.
- On the appointed date, the pastor and church board will meet with the district superintendent in executive session (elected members only, including *ex officio* officers). Each participant should bring their completed materials to the meeting.
- On the Sunday prior to the meeting, a public and/or printed announcement should be made informing the congregation of the review and explaining the purpose (a sample announcement is included in this packet).
- During the meeting, the pastor will be asked to leave for a few moments while the district superintendent and church board discuss the continuation of the church/pastor relationship. *The objective is to discover consensus without the need of a formal church board vote.*
- The pastor will be invited back into the meeting and informed of the results, along with any recommendations of the church board or district superintendent.

As we work through this evaluation process, the key question for consideration will be, "Is this body healthy?" Like a physical examination, it will require considering the health of several different body life systems. May this process honor the Lord and strengthen the ministry of your church.

Here are the official MANUAL paragraphs that we are following:

J. Renewing the Church/Pastor Relationship

122. The Regular Church/Pastoral Review. The church/ pastoral relationship shall be reviewed by the church board, meeting with the district superintendent, or an ordained minister or layperson appointed by the district superintendent, within 60 days of the second anniversary of pastoral service and every four years thereafter. The district superintendent, or an ordained minister or layperson appointed by the district superintendent, shall be responsible for scheduling and conducting the review meeting(s) with the church board. The review meeting(s) shall be scheduled in consultation with the pastor. The review meeting(s) shall be conducted in executive session (church board, including pastor). At the discretion of the district superintendent, a portion of the review may be conducted in the absence of the pastor. In case the pastor's spouse is an elected member of the board, he or she shall not participate in the review.

A public and/or printed announcement explaining the purpose of this church board meeting shall be conveyed to the congregation the Sunday before the church board and district superintendent meet for the regular church/pastoral review.

At this review meeting, the question of continuing the church/pastoral relationship shall be discussed. The objective is to discover consensus without the need of a formal church board vote. If the church board does not vote to present the question of continuing the church/pastoral relationship to the church membership, the church/pastoral relationship will continue.

The church board may vote to present to the church membership the question of continuing the pastoral call. The vote by the board will be by ballot and require a majority of all church board members present to carry.

If the church board votes to present the question of continuing the church/pastoral relationship to the church membership, the matter shall be presented at a church meeting duly called for this purpose and held within 30 days following such action. The question shall be presented, "Shall the present church/pastoral relationship continue?" The vote shall be by ballot and require a two-thirds majority to carry, except where civil law of a given country requires otherwise.

If the church membership votes to continue the church/ pastoral relationship, the church/pastoral relationship shall continue as though such a vote had not been taken; otherwise, the church/pastoral relationship shall end on a date set by the district superintendent not less than 30 nor more than 180 days following the vote. If the pastor chooses not to proceed with the vote of the congregation, he or she shall submit a resignation. In such case, the church/pastoral relationship shall end on a date set by the district superintendent not less than 30 nor more than 180 days following the pastor's decision not to proceed with a congregational vote. As a part of the regular review, a report will be made to the district superintendent by the pastor and church board regarding progress toward fulfilling the mission, vision and core values of the church.

122.1. The chairperson of the Board of Tellers shall personally inform the pastor of the results of a pastoral vote before any public announcement is made.

—Nazarene Manual 2005-2009

Sample Announcement for the Congregation:

On [date] our district superintendent will be meeting with our pastor and church board for the Regular Church/Pastor Review as required by the *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene. This review is for the purpose of assessing the health of our congregation and the health of our pastoral relationship. The goal is for the church board to gain consensus regarding the ongoing service of Pastor [Name] to our Church. Please be in prayer for this important time in the life of our congregation.

STEP ONE: Evaluating My Personal Spiritual Health
 (each board member assesses his/her own spiritual health)
 (based on Ephesians 4 and 5)

Rationale: The spiritual health of the congregation is not only linked to pastoral leadership, it is also linked to the spiritual health of lay leadership. Before we turn our attention to the church generally or to the pastor specifically, we should conduct a personal spiritual audit. **Rate each area, 1=low; 5=high**

UNITY: "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."	1	2	3	4	5
USING MY GIFTS: "To each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. It was he who gave some to be . . ."	1	2	3	4	5
STEADINESS: "We will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching . . ."	1	2	3	4	5
MATURITY: "Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ."	1	2	3	4	5
HOLINESS: "You were taught to put off the old self . . . to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."	1	2	3	4	5
TRUTH SPEAKING: "You must . . . speak truthfully."	1	2	3	4	5
RECONCILIATION: "In your anger do not sin . . . do not give the devil a foothold."	1	2	3	4	5
CONVERSATION: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, only what is helpful for building others up."	1	2	3	4	5
FORGIVENESS: "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."	1	2	3	4	5
LOVE: "Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us."	1	2	3	4	5
PURITY: "There must not be even a hint of sexual immorality."	1	2	3	4	5
WISDOM: "Be very careful how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity."	1	2	3	4	5
SPIRIT-FILLED: "Do not get drunk on wine . . . be filled with the Spirit."	1	2	3	4	5
JOY: "Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks."	1	2	3	4	5
SUBMISSION: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL SCORE _____ (75 total possible points)

Board Member Accountability

(this completed form will be received from each board member by the district superintendent)

The Manual of the Church of the Nazarene is quite clear regarding the qualifications and expectations of local church officers. Please complete the following accountability worksheet based on these qualifications.

39. We direct our local churches to elect as church officers only persons who profess the experience of entire sanctification and whose lives bear public witness to the grace of God that calls us to a holy life; who are in harmony with the doctrines, polity, and practices of the Church of the Nazarene; and who support the local church faithfully in attendance and with tithes and offerings.

Please respond to each of the following questions:

1. Is it your testimony that by faith you are living in the grace of entire sanctification and that your life, both public and private, bears witness to this grace? (1 Peter 1:13-16)
2. Are you in harmony with the doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene as expressed in the Constitution under "Agreed Statement of Belief" in the Manual?
3. Are you in harmony with the polity of the Church of the Nazarene as expressed in the Constitution of the Church of the Nazarene under "Form of Government" in the Manual?
4. Are you in harmony with the practices of the Church of the Nazarene as expressed in the Constitution under "Covenant of Christian Character" in the Manual?
5. Please describe how you support the local church faithfully with your attendance:
6. Please describe how you support the local church faithfully with your giving:

STEP TWO: Evaluating Our Corporate Christian Character

(each board member assesses the health of the congregation)

(based on Galatians 5:22)

Rationale: Before we can review the practical aspects of our ministry, we need to gain an assessment of our spiritual health as a body. There are many ways to do this, but perhaps none more productive than to evaluate our corporate life on the basis of the development of the fruit of the Spirit as given to us in Paul's letter to the Galatian churches.

The fruit of the Spirit is . . .

LOVE (commitment to see God's very best in the life of others)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

Highly functional

Moderately functional

Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

JOY (delight in the Lord and in His provision in any circumstance)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

Highly functional

Moderately functional

Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

PEACE (shalom, wholeness in Christ, completeness)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

Highly functional

Moderately functional

Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

PATIENCE (the grace-enabled ability to wait on God and on each other)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

Highly functional

Moderately functional

Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

KINDNESS (believing the best about people, rather than the worst)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

- Highly functional Moderately functional Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

GOODNESS (commitment to do the right thing, even when no one is looking)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

- Highly functional Moderately functional Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

FAITHFULNESS (keeping our eyes always fixed on Jesus)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

- Highly functional Moderately functional Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

GENTLENESS (a higher concern to bless than to be "right")

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

- Highly functional Moderately functional Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

SELF-CONTROL (the ability to choose God's way instead of the easy way)

In your church, do you see this Christ-quality as:

- Highly functional Moderately functional Dysfunctional

What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

STEP THREE: Review of our Ministry

20 Questions to Determine Ministry Health and Effectiveness

For each question, circle the number that best applies to your church – with 1 meaning, "We haven't thought about it yet" and 5 meaning, "We are in excellent shape in this area."

- 1. Do we have a clear and common vision?** 1 2 3 4 5
Biblical, widely known, and owned by our people. Articulated with clarity and redundancy by leadership.
- 2. Is there purposeful direction to our activities?** 1 2 3 4 5
Our leadership concentrates on focused and purposeful programming rather than, "We've always done it this way."
- 3. Is the Word of God seen as the basis of authority?** 1 2 3 4 5
There is an attempt to get beyond our local prejudices and traditions to biblical truth. Our classes and groups have the Bible as the center of our curriculum.
- 4. Do our public celebrations inspire true worship?** 1 2 3 4 5
The music and sermons glorify Christ. The emphasis is more on content than style. The cross and life in Christ are emphasized. There is a sense of reverence for God in his holiness.
- 5. Does our church present a positive gospel message?** 1 2 3 4 5
Sin is faced squarely, but there is an emphasis on grace and forgiveness. Our corporate times leave people with something to help them face the week ahead.
- 6. Is there a balance between evangelism and edification?** 1 2 3 4 5
Spiritual maturation is as important as numerical growth. People are being added to the church by conversion growth, then disciplined in doctrine, spiritual formation, and ministry skills.
- 7. Does corporate prayer saturate the life of our church?** 1 2 3 4 5
Prayer that include adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and intercession are modeled in public services by the leadership. Special corporate prayer services are called for during the year.
- 8. Is there concentrated effort to bring individuals to maturity?** 1 2 3 4 5
The overall thrust of the public services, classes, and groups is to help people become mature in Christ.
- 9. Do we really reach out to people who visit?** 1 2 3 4 5
Our people work to make guests feel at home. There are systems whereby people are led into a group or class.
- 10. Is our church aware of the world at its door?** 1 2 3 4 5
We are having a positive impact on our neighborhood and city.
- 11. Are we actively pursuing fulfillment of the Great Commission?** 1 2 3 4 5
Our services reflect concern for the unreached peoples of the world. Missions has a high public profile.

- 12. Do we develop leaders?** 1 2 3 4 5
We involve people in training both formal and informal. There are Structures for discipling existing leaders.
- 13. Do our leaders take their responsibilities seriously?** 1 2 3 4 5
Our leaders hold themselves responsible when asked about current or past wrongs. Leaders are elected on the basis of character first and giftedness second.
- 14. Does our church have appropriate structures and wise administration?** 1 2 3 4 5
There is a clear understanding of the role of the pastor, the board, the staff, the congregation, and the denomination. We think strategically.
- 15. Do our congregants have a sense of community?** 1 2 3 4 5
Despite personal differences there is an undergirding sense of unity. We are family. Many linger after a service in order to visit.
- 16. Do we practice accountability and exercise integrity?** 1 2 3 4 5
Believers understand that commitment to membership demands accountability. The practice of discipline is spelled out in writing.
- 17. Do we practice redemptive love?** 1 2 3 4 5
We follow Jesus' teaching in Matt. 18:15-18 in attempting to free people who are ensnared in sin, with the goal of restoration.
- 18. Is confession openly practiced?** 1 2 3 4 5
Most people seem willing to confess wrongs to God and to one another in an appropriate way. This is a safe place to confess our sins.
- 19. Do we network with other congregations?** 1 2 3 4 5
We work in harmony and participate with congregations in our community and on our district and global basis. We share our resources with other congregations.
- 20. Do we live as people of hope and expectation?** 1 2 3 4 5
We are convinced we are making a difference in our community. We communicate to people their ultimate hope is in the return of Christ.

Scoring

Total your circled numbers.

- 85-100 You see your church as healthy.
- 70-84 You see your church as well on the road to health
- 55-69 Don't stop now; you have things working for you.
- 40-54 You need some work, but you've begun. What's the next step?
- < 40 Yours is not a very healthy church. Don't give in to despair. It's time for leaders to humble themselves before God and seek renewed direction for this church.

Developed by Donald Bubna, Keith Walker, and Jim VanYperen.

STEP FOUR: Review of our Pastor

Review of Duties (from the MANUAL) and Evaluation of Pastoral Roles

From the MANUAL Church of the Nazarene:

413. The duties of a pastor are:

413.1. To preach the Word.

413.2. To equip the saints for the work of the ministry.

413.3. To receive persons as members of the local church according to [107](#) and [107.1](#).

413.4. To administer the sacraments.

413.5. To care for the people by pastoral visitation, particularly the sick and needy.

413.6. To comfort those who mourn.

413.7. To correct, rebuke, and encourage, with great patience and careful instruction.

413.8. To seek, by all means, the conversion of sinners, the entire sanctification of the converted, and the upbuilding of God's people in the most holy faith. ([25](#))

413.9. To have the care of all departments of local church work.

413.10. To appoint the teachers of the Sunday School in harmony with [145.8](#).

413.11. To administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at least once a quarter. A licensed minister who has not complied fully with the provisions of [427.7](#) (see also [802](#)) shall arrange for the administration of the sacrament by an ordained minister. Consideration should be given for extending the Lord's Supper to homebound persons, under supervision of the pastor.

413.12. To read to the congregation the Constitution of the Church of the Nazarene and the Covenant of Christian Conduct contained in 1-27, 33-39, both inclusive, within each year ([114](#)), or have this section of the *Manual* printed and distributed annually to the members of the church.

413.13. To supervise the preparation of all statistical reports from all departments of the local church, and present promptly all such reports through the district secretary to the district assembly. ([114.1](#))

413.14. To give leadership to the evangelism, education, devotion, and expansion programs of the local church in harmony with the district and general church promotional goals and programs.

413.15. To submit a report to the annual church meeting, including a report on the status of the local church and its departments, and an outline of areas of future needs with recommendations for reference by the church to any of its officers or departments for study and/or implementation in future steps for growth and progress.

413.16. To appoint an investigating committee of three in case of accusation filed against a church member. ([501-1.2](#))

413.17. To see that all World Evangelism Fund monies raised through the local NMI are remitted promptly to the general treasurer; and that all District Ministries Fund monies are remitted promptly to the district treasurer. ([136.2](#))

413.18. To nominate to the church board all persons who are paid employees of the local church, and to have supervision of the same. ([160.1-60.3](#))

413.19. To sign in conjunction with the church secretary all conveyances of real estate, mortgages, releases of mortgages, contracts, and other legal documents not otherwise provided for in the *Manual*. ([102.3](#), [103-4.3](#))

413.20. To notify the pastor of the nearest church when a member or friend of a local church or any of its departments moves to another locality in the same assembly district where vital association with the previous local church is impractical, giving the member's or friend's address.

413.21. To arrange, together with the church board, according to plans adopted by the General Assembly and agreed to by the district assembly, for the raising of the World Evangelism Fund and District Ministries Fund apportionments made to the local church; and to raise these apportionments. ([38.2](#), [130](#), [154](#))

413.22. The pastor may, when requested by a member, grant a transfer of church membership, a certificate of commendation, or a letter of release. ([111-11.1](#), [112.2](#), [813.2-13.5](#))

413.23. The pastor shall be, ex-officio, president of the local church, chairperson of the church board, and a member of all elected and standing boards and committees of the church he or she serves. The pastor shall have access to all records of the local church. ([127](#), [145](#), [150](#), [152](#), [153.1](#))

413.24. To nurture the call that people feel toward Christian ministry and to mentor such persons as are called. This shall include guiding them toward appropriate preparation for ministry.

413.25. To fulfill the expectations of God and the Church for a program of lifelong learning. ([433.15](#))

413.26. To nurture his or her own call through the years of ministry, to maintain a life of personal devotion that enriches his or her own soul, and, if married, to guard the integrity and vitality of that marriage relationship.

414. The pastor shall have the right to a voice in the nomination of all heads of all departments of the local church, and any Nazarene childcare/school (birth through secondary) organization.

415. The pastor shall not contract bills, create financial obligations, count moneys, or disburse funds for the local church unless authorized and directed by majority vote of the church board or by majority vote of a church meeting; such action, if taken, must be approved in writing by the District Advisory Board and shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the church board or of the church meeting. No pastor or any member of his or her immediate family shall be authorized to sign checks on any church account except upon the written approval of the district superintendent. Immediate family shall include spouse, children, siblings, or parents. ([129.1](#), [129.21-29.22](#))

416. The pastor shall always show due regard for the united advice of the district superintendent and the District Advisory Board. ([222.2](#), [433.2](#))

417. In case a licensed or ordained minister presenting credentials from another denomination shall, during the interim of sessions of the district assembly, make application for membership in a local church, the pastor may not receive such applicant without first having obtained the favorable recommendation of the District Advisory Board. ([107](#), [225](#))

418. For the exercise of this office the pastor shall be amenable to the district assembly, to which he or she shall report annually and give brief testimony to his or her personal Christian experience. ([203.3](#), [427.8](#), [433.9](#))

419. The pastor shall automatically become a member of the church of which he or she is pastor; or, in case of more than one church in his or her charge, of the church of his or her choice. ([433.8](#))

Key Pastoral Roles

We can properly evaluate the work of our pastor only when we understand the nature of pastoral calling and work. The Bible is quite descriptive about the proper role of spiritual leaders. Please consider these reflections before moving to an evaluation of your pastor:

If pastors truly take their job descriptions from the Bible then three key roles of ministry emerge as foundational to spiritual leadership. The roles are Prophet, Priest, and Shepherd-King. Here is what these roles mean from a pastor's perspective.

The pastor as prophet speaks of the role of truth telling in the midst of a congregation. Jesus is described in John's Gospel as one who was "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This seems the perfect balance. Enough grace to be a healing balm in the lives of people who are broken and lost. Yet also enough truth that we are willing to speak with the sharpness of a surgeon's scalpel, exposing that which is compromised and false in lives of our people.

The pastor as priest is perhaps the loveliest form of pastoral ministry, in that we are privileged to guide our people into the presence of a God who is revealed not only as holy and awesome, but also as loving Father. We call our people to gather in the name of our risen Lord Jesus Christ. We announce the presence of the living Christ and exhort people who have perhaps lost their true identity during the week to worship God and thus become "righted" again. We proclaim the Word of the Lord and joyfully announce the Gospel. We lead our people in prayers of confession, repentance, and covenant. We help our people to use the divine grace through the gift of the sacraments and we pronounce the blessing of God upon them in Jesus' name. What good and happy work!

The pastor as shepherd-king speaks to the most common aspects of our work. We understand and are comfortable with the shepherd metaphor. We follow the pattern of the Good Shepherd in this work, caring for the people in all the experiences of their lives, whether critical or mundane. We spend time with them until they know our voice and we know theirs. We know their stories and love them anyway. We pray for them and visit them when they are sick. We help them present their children to the Lord, we unite them in marriage, and we commit their bodies to the grave. This is the work that compels many of us to fall in love with pastoral ministry.

The part of this metaphor with which we are perhaps less comfortable is the image of king. We wouldn't want to place ourselves on some kind of inappropriate pedestal, to be sure. However, by "king" is meant that role of superintendancy or administration in the church whereby our leadership helps to create systems and structures of ministry that promote the common good. This is what we sometimes call the "business" of the church, but for us it is not to be divorced from the essence of pastoral work. Whether we like the idea or not, we wield great power in the congregation. We are spiritual leader, theologian in residence, administrative head of the organization, and mouthpiece of God. These roles are not things we embrace out of our own abilities. These are gifts given by God for the building up of the church. These are charges placed on us by the weight of our ordination vows. The ways in which we exercise these authorities will either lead to communities of peace and security, or to communities of chaos and abuse. These are very important pastoral acts indeed.

EVALUATION OF OUR PASTOR (this page will be anonymously shared with the pastor)

- 1=Needs much improvement
- 2=Occasionally satisfactory
- 3=Average effectiveness
- 4=Above average effectiveness
- 5=Doing very well

The Pastor as Prophet

- 1. Our pastor is effective in his/her proclamation of the Word of God. 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Our pastor uses illustrations that apply Bible truth to life. 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Our pastor's sermons indicate that s/he spends time in prayer and preparation 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. Our pastor is not afraid to speak the truth, even when it is hard. 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Our pastor's messages make us feel connected to him/her and cared for. 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Our pastor seems to exercise wisdom and discernment in his/her leadership. 1 2 3 4 5
- 7. Our pastor effectively preaches/teaches the holiness message of our Church. 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

The Pastor as Priest

- 1. Our pastor plans well for our worship services. 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Our pastor is a faithful and effective leader of the worship service. 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Our pastor leads us in the regular observance of the sacraments. 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. Our pastor publicly prays for us and leads us in prayer effectively. 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Our pastor provides special times of spiritual deepening through the year. 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Our pastor handles births, weddings, funerals, etc. with grace. 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

The Pastor as Shepherd-King

- 1. Our pastor has a vision for the church that s/he regularly communicates to us. 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Our pastor is available to provide counsel and care in times of need. 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Our pastor finds ways to let us know that s/he loves us. 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. Our pastor is a good administrative leader, taking care of finance and facility. 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Our pastor models in public services and personal life how to win others to Jesus. 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Our pastor conducts him/herself with dignity and integrity. 1 2 3 4 5
- 7. There is a sense in the church that we trust our pastor. 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Add your responses, write the total here: _____

STEP FIVE: Determine Next Steps

1. Consensus of church board regarding continuation of pastoral relationship.
2. Review of pastor's compensation.
3. Sharing the announcement this Sunday.
4. Honoring/blessing the pastor and family.
5. Review of district policy on sabbatical leave.

Something to read and consider:

"Tired Pastors" by Jeren Rowell
July 2003 Communicator

It's 9:30 in the morning and I'm ready for a nap! I was up at 4:30 today simply because I was awakened with a cacophony of thoughts crashing through my mind about the tasks I must complete today (including writing this article!) I know that I am nothing special in this. Every pastor I encounter talks about the overwhelming "to do" list that goes with this amazing calling.

This past weekend I was with a number of colleagues from around my region of the country. Every one of them had stories to share about how *tired* we pastors seem to be all of the time. Nazarene physician, Daniel Spaite, speaks of this in his wonderful book, *Time Bomb in the Church: Defusing Pastoral Burnout*. Dr. Spaite cites Rick Ryding's Ph.D. dissertation in which he documented how pastors evaluated their specific activities. Their average workweek was more than 62 hours, but even more significantly they were able to identify, on average, some 255 separate work activities, each averaging 15 minutes in length. As Dr. Spaite says, "It's no wonder a pastor feels fragmented and overwhelmed" (p. 71). And I don't think this is the whining of a younger generation of pastors. My colleagues with more than 30 years experience in pastoral ministry seem to acknowledge that the vise has tightened significantly as we have moved into the postmodern era.

What has happened? And what can be done about it? Clearly this subject needs much thought, research, and dialogue. In my own experience, however, I resonate with the observations of Will Willimon who speaks to this problem in his book, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Willimon pins the problem on us pastors. We have allowed the world to squeeze us into its mold. We have allowed congregations to squeeze us into their particular molds. We are trying to do this pastoral work in a culture where the supreme value is consuming. In this atmosphere the role of pastor has too often been corrupted from shepherd to cruise director. Willimon says it better than I do:

"One reason many pastors become so exhausted by the demands of ministry is that they enter ministry with little basis for it other than 'meeting people's needs.' That is dangerous in a society of omnivorous desire, where people, not knowing which desires are worth fulfilling, merely grab at everything" (p. 60).

I have personally discovered that finding a way out of the exhaustion of pastoral ministry has less to do with managing schedules or delegating work and more to do with being lashed to a pastoral theology that will not allow me to give my life to the purposes of contemporary culture, but to the purposes of the kingdom of God. When I do my core work, I am encouraged and strengthened. When I forget my core work I am tired.

May the Lord help us to remember who we are and what it is that God has called us to do.

SABBATICAL POLICY
[Name] Church of the Nazarene
Adopted by the Church Board, [insert date]

PURPOSE OF SABBATICAL

We, the congregation of [name] Church of the Nazarene, wish to provide long-term pastoral staff and their family the opportunity of a sabbatical leave for the purpose of professional development, personal and spiritual renewal, rest, and visioning. By means of a sabbatical leave, the congregation wishes to express gratitude and affirmation to our pastors and their families.

At the same time, it is the intent that the church will be challenged to a special time of renewal as well as an enlarged vision of its ministry.

SABBATICAL TIME FRAME FOR THE SENIOR PASTOR

A sabbatical leave of seven weeks will be provided to the senior pastor after the completion of each seven years of consecutive full time employment with [name] Church of the Nazarene.

It is preferred that the seven week sabbatical be taken in consecutive weeks. However, a two-session sabbatical of four weeks and three weeks will be considered by the church board if the pastor so desires.

The scheduling of the sabbatical leave shall take into consideration the needs of the congregation, the scheduling needs from the pastor's proposal, and other pertinent concerns as may be established.

SABBATICAL TIME FRAME FOR ASSOCIATE PASTORS

A sabbatical leave may be provided to full time associate pastors at the discretion of the senior pastor. A sabbatical leave provided for an associate pastor shall follow the same guidelines as for the senior pastor and as set forth in this outline.

SABBATICAL PLANNING

The use of the seven week sabbatical will be primarily planned by the pastor and shall require church board approval. It is recommended and preferred that the sabbatical include activities and events that will carry out the purpose of the sabbatical as stated above.

The church board shall appoint a Sabbatical Committee to receive and review the pastor's proposed plan of sabbatical leave. It shall help establish specific expectations of the sabbatical and present the plan to the church board for review and approval. It shall help develop a plan for implementing the sabbatical leave and carrying on the ministry of the church in the pastor's absence.

These specifics shall be followed:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the board to initiate the planning by setting aside funds on a regularly scheduled basis to finance a sabbatical. A budget line item shall be established to track the accumulation of funds.
2. At the end of the pastor's sixth year of employment, the board shall appoint a committee of a minimum of three individuals from the board and the congregation. The committee will serve from the date of receipt of the pastor's sabbatical plan until the sabbatical evaluation is completed upon the pastor's return.
3. At the end of the pastor's sixth year of employment, the board shall ask the pastor to prepare a sabbatical leave itinerary to be presented to the church board. The pastor's proposed plan shall be received by the Sabbatical Committee six months prior to the planned date of commencement of the sabbatical. The proposed plan should focus on the specific objectives of the leave. The proposed plan shall also outline how the pastoral duties will be carried out in the pastor's absence.

PROCEDURE FOR CONTINUING THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH DURING THE PASTOR'S SABBATICAL LEAVE

The pastor will provide a proposed plan for the continuing ministry of the church during the sabbatical. The pastor will be responsible for appointing persons from the pastoral staff or arranging for interim leadership to carry out the administrative duties, congregational care ministries, and pulpit responsibilities.

It is recommended that only normal activities and regularly scheduled events in the ministry of the church (i.e. Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening services, regularly scheduled board meetings, regularly scheduled meetings) are to be carried out. It is recommended that special events and programs or fellowship gatherings are limited during the sabbatical.

During the sabbatical, contact with the senior pastor should be limited to the following:

1. Serious illness or death of a member of the congregation;
2. Any event that the Sabbatical Committee and the interim pastor jointly determine to be an emergency situation; and/or
3. A specific prearranged request by the senior pastor.

FINANCING OF SABBATICAL LEAVE

The church shall make the following financial commitment during the pastor's sabbatical leave:

1. The pastor's full salary and benefits will continue. There will be no reduction of salary or benefits during the duration of the sabbatical.
2. Seminar or educational expenses incurred by the preapproved sabbatical plan will be supported by the church according to professional development policies.
3. A sabbatical budget will be established with the amount to be approved by the church board after consideration and approval of the sabbatical plan. The budget may assist with additional expenses (e.g. travel expenses).

THE PASTOR'S FAMILY DURING SABBATICAL LEAVE

The pastor and his or her spouse shall determine the role family members will take in the sabbatical leave. That role shall be included in the proposed plan for sabbatical that the pastor submits to the Sabbatical Committee for board approval.

The pastor's immediate family members may, but are not expected to, attend regularly scheduled services and/or activities. The pastor and family members shall be free to communicate with the church community as they desire.

However, to enable the sabbatical to accomplish the intended purpose, it will be requested of the congregation and the board that no direct communication is made with the pastor or the pastor's family members.

RETURN FROM SABBATICAL

Upon return from sabbatical leave, the pastor shall first meet with the Sabbatical Committee and interim pastor before reentering his duties of ministry. A date shall be scheduled for this meeting prior to the commencement of the sabbatical leave. The purpose of the meeting shall be twofold. First, the committee and interim pastor will inform the pastor of all issues that have arisen in his/her absence, bring him/her up to date on all activities, and discuss the effect the sabbatical has had on the church. Second, the pastor may in turn give a brief oral report to the Sabbatical Committee on his activities and what s/he feels transpired with regard to carrying out the goals of the sabbatical.

The pastor and the Sabbatical Committee shall each prepare a written report at approximately one month following the pastor's return.

The first Sunday worship service following the pastor's return should be planned as a celebration of renewal for the pastor and congregation.

STIPULATIONS

1. Sabbatical leave will not negate any of the pastor's earned vacation. Vacation days may not be used to extend the length of sabbatical leave.
2. Sabbatical leave will be in addition to board approved events or seminars throughout the sabbatical year.
3. No more than one member of the pastoral staff may be on sabbatical leave at any one time.
4. No personnel shall be hired or terminated while the senior pastor is on sabbatical, unless approval is given by the senior pastor.
5. This sabbatical leave policy shall be reviewed periodically.
6. The purpose of this policy is for direction and is not intended to be all conclusive.
7. Proposed changes or additions in the above policy may be submitted to the Sabbatical Committee and presented to the church board for approval.