

Pastoral Transition and First 90 Days Plan

Full-size companion resource • Print additional copies as needed. Keep candidate-specific information in restricted, secure storage.

Purpose: Prepare the church and incoming pastor for a healthy beginning, then transfer responsibility from the search team to established church leadership. Begin only after the call is properly authorized and accepted.

Church: _____ Incoming pastor: _____

Call accepted: _____ Start date: _____

Transition coordinator: _____

Accountable church leadership contact: _____

Before Arrival

- ☐ Accepted call and written terms confirmed.
- ☐ Compensation, benefits, and start date confirmed by authorized leaders.
- ☐ Governance and reporting relationships reviewed with pastor.
- ☐ Outgoing pastor's ongoing role or departure terms clarified, if applicable.
- ☐ Relevant ministry, financial, personnel, and governing documents prepared.
- ☐ Relocation, housing, and community help offered as welcomed by family.
- ☐ Congregational communication coordinated with pastor and current church.
- ☐ Pastor's spouse and children are not assigned unrequested ministry duties.

Open questions and owner: _____

Days 1–30: Listen and Learn

Suggested activities: Meet church leaders and staff; learn congregational history; review care needs, facilities, finances, and ministries; spend time listening before making nonurgent changes.

What the pastor is learning: _____

Support requested: _____

30-day leadership conversation date: _____

Days 31–60: Assess and Clarify

Suggested activities: Discuss observations, confirm boundaries of authority, identify ministries needing attention, and distinguish urgent issues from matters requiring patience.

Emerging needs and strengths: _____

Decisions and resources needed: _____

60-day leadership conversation date: _____

Days 61–90: Agree on Initial Priorities

Use priorities suited to this congregation, not a fixed numerical growth target.

Priority	Responsible leader(s)	Support / review date
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____

90-day conversation date: _____

First-Year Support

Leadership check-in schedule: _____

Primary topics: family adjustment, workload, shepherding needs, trust, collaboration, training, priorities, financial support, and areas of disagreement.

Escalation and accountability process under church governance: _____

Search Team Closeout

- ☐ All candidate communications completed.
- ☐ Documents transferred to the authorized custodian.
- ☐ Candidate records retained or deleted under approved policy.
- ☐ Lessons learned documented without unnecessary sensitive details.
- ☐ Transition responsibilities assigned to authorized church leaders.
- ☐ Search team's assignment formally closed.

What worked well in this search? _____

What should be improved next time? _____

Who owns the pastor's first-year support? _____

Team leader signature/date: _____

Church leadership confirmation/date: _____