



12 Key Lessons for Ministerial Search Teams

LESSON 1: BEGIN WITH PRAYER AND DISCERNMENT

A pastoral search is more than a hiring decision—it is a spiritual process. Commit to prayer and discernment from the start, seeking God’s guidance at every step.

LESSON 2: CLARIFY YOUR CHURCH’S IDENTITY AND MISSION

Before seeking a pastor, define who you are as a congregation. What are your values, strengths, and vision for the future? A clear identity helps ensure a strong match.

LESSON 3: BUILD A COHESIVE AND COMMITTED SEARCH TEAM

Select a diverse team that represents the congregation. Team members should be spiritually mature, open to different perspectives, and committed to the church’s best interests.

LESSON 4: ESTABLISH A CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS

Define roles, timelines, and communication strategies early on. A well-structured process prevents confusion and builds trust within the congregation.

LESSON 5: LEARN FROM COMMON PITFALLS

Many pastoral searches fail due to rushed decisions, unrealistic expectations, or lack of unity. Be mindful of these challenges and work proactively to address them.

LESSON 6: GO BEYOND THE RESUME

A candidate’s experience and credentials matter, but so do their character, spiritual depth, and leadership style. Look for alignment in emotional, spiritual, and missional intelligence.

Start your ministerial search with confidence. Visit [CHCHURCHES.ORG](https://www.chchurches.org) to access additional resources and expert guidance.





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LESSON 7: ENGAGE IN MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS WITH CANDIDATES

Interviews should go beyond surface-level questions. Explore theological beliefs, leadership philosophy, conflict resolution style, and personal spiritual practices.

LESSON 8: FOSTER CONGREGATIONAL BUY-IN

The search team should regularly update the congregation, seek input, and involve members in prayer. Transparency strengthens trust and unity.

LESSON 9: ASSESS CULTURAL AND THEOLOGICAL FIT

A pastor who aligns with the church's culture and theology will have a more fruitful ministry. Evaluate how candidates approach worship, mission, and leadership.

LESSON 10: MAKE THE FINAL DECISION WITH UNITY AND CONFIDENCE

Strive for consensus among the search team. Disagreements are natural, but a unified decision ensures a smoother transition and a stronger foundation for the new pastor.

LESSON 11: PROVIDE A SMOOTH TRANSITION AND ONBOARDING PROCESS

Once a pastor is selected, support their transition with clear expectations, mentorship, and congregational welcome efforts. A strong start sets the stage for long-term success. Download *Welcoming A New Pastor Guideline* at chchurches.org.

LESSON 12: CONTINUE TO PRAY AND SUPPORT YOUR PASTOR

The search process doesn't end with hiring. Commit to ongoing prayer, encouragement, and constructive feedback to foster a healthy and thriving pastor-church relationship.

NEXT STEPS

Schedule a Consultation with a CHC expert for personalized guidance and support.

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