

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Foreword

With a pastoral vacancy, the church goes through a period of transition. Transitions are usually accompanied by a variety of feelings and emotions. Even if the Pastoral vacancy is a result of a positive life event, such as a retirement, this period of time will be viewed by some as a disruption to the life of the church. As difficult as this time may seem to some, the congregation has the opportunity to look forward and anticipate what new thing God will accomplish in the life of the church through new pastoral leadership. The initial question should not be, “who will we get for a new Pastor?” but, rather, “who are we and where do we want to go?”

This guide is intended to be a resource; specifically, it is for use by the Pastoral Search Team charged with the task of discerning who the person will be that will fill that pastoral vacancy.

HMBC policy is that the Leadership Team serves as the Pastoral Search Team although they may appoint a team with representatives from the congregation and Leadership Team. This document assumes the latter situation. However, the essential guidelines below work in either situation.

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
A. Before the First Step	3
B. Pastoral Search Timeline	3
Step 1: Organizational Process	5
A. Pastoral Search Team Guidelines	6
B. Some Common Mistakes Made During the Pastoral Search	6
Step 2: Information Gathering Process	7
A. Develop a Church Profile	7
B. Develop a Pastor Profile	8
C. Develop a Job Description	8
D. Prepare Information Packet for Suitable Candidates	9
E. Advertise the Position	9
F. Gather Resumes	9
Step 3: Candidate Selection Process	9
A. Prioritize Resumes	9
B. Compare Resumes to Pastor Profile	9
C. Contact Priority Candidates	10
D. Interview Candidates by Telephone	10
E. Contact Applicant's References	10
F. Process Candidate Information	11
G. Narrow List of Candidates	12
H. Interview Candidate in Person	12
Step 4: Presentation/Recommendation	12
A. Chosen Candidate	12
B. Credentialing	12
C. Candidating and Observation	13
B. Issuing the Call	14
Step 5: Negotiation Process	14
A. Conducting a Credit and Criminal Background Check	14
B. Discussing the Employment Agreement with the Candidate	14
Appendices:	
Appendix 1.1 Sample Church Profile	16
Appendix 1.2 Sample Job Description	17
Appendix 1.3 Sample Description of Church Governance	18
Appendix 2.1.1 Sample Church Member Questionnaire #1	19
Appendix 2.1.2 Sample Church Member Questionnaire #2	22
Appendix 3.1 Sample Telephone Interview Questions	24
Appendix 3.2 Sample Personal Interview Questions	25
Appendix 3.3 Additional Questions to Consider Asking a Prospective Pastor	26
Appendix 3.4 Evaluation of Interview	27
Appendix 3.5 Sample Questions for References	28

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

INTRODUCTION

A. Before the First Step

This step-by step process is designed to help a Pastoral Search Team accomplish its task of identifying the needs of the Church and the Pastor most likely to meet those needs. However, the practical process suggested in this manual will also be useful in assisting a church in the search for other pastoral staff.

Remember that searching for someone to fill a pastoral position is a spiritual process. The Church and the Pastoral Search Team must remember to pray over the Candidates.

(Note: HMBC would normally hire a male Lead Pastor. This document reflects that preference. However, in the hiring of other staff positions “she” may be substituted for “he”.)

B. Pastoral Search Timeline

This timeline is an outline of the Pastoral Search Team’s work. This suggested framework gives an indication of the relative times it will take to complete the process.

Weeks 1-6

- Pray about Pastoral needs of the Church
- Review the Church Bylaws and Constitution
- Select the Pastoral Search Team
- Communicate the Pastoral search process to the congregation; give progress updates regularly
- Inform the ABMB Executive Director that a pastoral search is underway
- Develop the Church Profile
- Develop and implement the Church Questionnaire
- Develop the Pastor Profile
- Prepare Information Packets and develop advertising strategy
- Revise the current Job Description to include current requirements
- Develop the telephone interview, face-to-face interview, and references questions

Weeks 7-15

- Advertise the position; set an application closing date
- Begin to receive resumes
- After closing date, select possible Candidates
- Check the list of selected Candidates with the ABMB Executive Director
- Interview references of possible Candidates
- Make selection of Candidates to be interviewed by telephone or in person if they are local

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Weeks 16-26

- Schedule and conduct telephone interviews
- Make selection of Candidates to be interviewed face-to-face
- Schedule and conduct face-to-face interviews at neutral site
- Complete background checks
- Conduct interviews with references
- Decide on best Candidate to present to congregation
- Invite Candidate to the Church, or select new Candidate and begin process again
- Set date for Candidate to visit the Church
- Assign person(s) to care for needs of Candidate's family during pastoral visit to the Church
- Other tasks the Pastoral Search Team deems necessary

Week 27

- Issue call to Candidate
- Complete Employment Agreement

After Calling the Pastor

- Advise ABMB Executive Director that a Pastor has been called
- Leadership Team gives orientation to the new Pastor
- Leadership Team gives leadership to the commissioning of the new Pastor
- Leadership Team works to help the new Pastor have a successful ministry
- Other tasks Leadership Team deems necessary

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

STEP 1: ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS

1. Review the 'Constitution and Bylaws' and 'Policies and Procedures' documents for guidelines in calling a Pastor, such as:
 - a. Who appoints the Pastoral Search Team?
 - b. What mix of Leadership Team, congregants, genders, and ages should be represented on Team?
 - c. For what is the Pastoral Search Team responsible?
 - d. To whom does the Pastoral Search Team report?
 - e. What percentage of the Church members present and voting is necessary to call a Pastor?
2. The Leadership Team needs to determine who will handle the Pastoral duties in the absence of a Pastor. Is an Interim Pastor required? Should a Transitional Pastor be called in?
3. It is recommended that the Leadership Team contact the departing Pastor to set up an exit interview. This will aid in determining the needs of the Church when considering a new Pastor.
4. When the position being filled is *not* that of Lead Pastor, the Leadership Team needs to decide what role the Lead Pastor will have in the search process.
5. Once appointed, the Pastoral Search Team should meet to elect a chairperson (to call and preside over meetings) and a secretary (to keep the minutes and prepare all necessary correspondence).
6. The Pastoral Search Team should contact the Alberta Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (ABMB) Executive Director to get names and secure resumes of prospective pastors.
7. The Pastoral Search Team should obtain the latest ABMB Salary Grid and other relevant documents. These are available on the ABMB website <www.abmb.ca>.
8. The Pastoral Search Team should coordinate with all committees and individuals necessary to make sure that all preparations (e.g. office renovation) are completed in time for the arrival of the new Pastor.
9. The Pastoral Search Team should nurture its relationship with the congregation by regularly reporting to the congregation on the search process and by asking the congregation to pray regularly for Pastoral Search Team members and their work.
10. The Pastoral Search Team needs to secure a budget for costs associated with the candidating process.
11. The Pastoral Search Team should seek guidelines from the Leadership Team for presentation to Candidates including:
 - a. Confession of Faith
 - b. Standards of Conduct
 - c. Job Description

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

- d. All other Expectations
- e. Criminal and Credit Background Checks
- f. Personnel Policies
- g. Total Compensation
- h. Moving Expenses
- i. Vacation and Holidays

A. Pastoral Search Team Guidelines

1. Members of the Pastoral Search Team must understand the vital importance of their task. Calling a Pastor is one of the most important decisions made in the life of a church.
2. Every Pastoral Search Team member should have full standing on the team and attend every meeting possible.
3. Pastoral Search Team members must be able to put aside their own agendas and discern God's will for the Church.
4. The Church should commit itself to pray daily for the Pastoral Search Team for God's will to be done.
5. Ideally, the Pastoral Search Team's decision should be unanimous. A strong consensus is important; a simple majority vote should not suffice.
6. It is improper for a Pastoral Search Team member to resign due to the Church not choosing their particular recommendation. Remember, it is the Church who calls the Pastor.
7. Pastoral Search Team expenses should come from the Church's general budget (ideally a separate line item should be established in the budget).
8. There are some individuals in the Church who should *not* serve on a Pastoral Search Team:
 - a) Persons who come and go;
 - b) Persons who are critical of the Church;
 - c) Persons who campaign for the position;
 - d) Persons who have a conflict of interest;
 - e) Persons who are related to other members of the Pastoral Search Team or existing Staff.
9. Since Pastoral Candidates will come through the Pastoral Search Team, it is vitally important that this team be made up of individuals who have a positive outlook about the Church.

B. Some Common Mistakes Made During the Pastoral Search

1. Failing to carefully select members of the Pastoral Search Team.
2. Selecting a Pastoral Search Team that is too large or too small.

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

3. Not providing a well-developed Church Profile.
4. Not keeping confidences.
5. Not getting a clear charge from the Church.
6. Not using all available resources.
7. Not organizing the Pastoral Search process in the beginning.
8. Having more than one Pastoral Search Team member contact individual applicants.
9. Not being honest with Candidates about problems at the Church.
10. Not being well prepared for interviews.
11. Not taking extra care when considering Candidates from outside the denomination.
12. Not considering the Candidate's family throughout the process.
13. Overemphasizing pulpit skills.
14. Not allowing sufficient time for the Candidate and the Church to get to know each other.
15. Inadequately communicating with Candidates.
16. Not allowing enough time to elapse between pastors.
17. Not considering whether a Transitional (rather than Interim) Pastor is needed.
18. Not keeping Interim/Transitional Staff informed.
19. Allowing an Interim or Transitional Pastor to be considered for the new position.
20. Not getting all agreements in writing.

STEP 2: INFORMATION GATHERING PROCESS

Once all the preparations have been completed, the search for Pastoral Candidates begins. The question that should be asked at this time is, "What Pastoral Profile best suits the current needs and situation of our Church?" Everyone has their own ideas as to what a Pastor should be like (e.g., dynamic preacher and evangelist or strong shepherd who cares for his flock or a strong visionary). However, no Candidate will be ideal; every Pastor has strengths and weaknesses. The Pastoral Search Team, with input from the congregation, needs to discern the profile of the Pastor they are seeking. This begins with developing a Church Profile.

A. Develop a Church Profile. This process has two purposes:

1. to help the Pastoral Search Team describe the Church and community to prospective Candidates;
2. to help the Pastoral Search Team begin to collect information useful in designing the Pastor Profile.

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

A1) Describe where God is at work in your Church

1. Review Sunday School and Worship Gathering attendance, baptism, and financial records for last five years.
2. List unique characteristics of the Church (i.e., conservative, moderate, harmonious, contentious, Single/Senior Adults Ministry, student ministry, etc.).
3. Describe some major accomplishments and problems that have occurred in the Church in the last five years.
4. Describe the Church's mission, vision, core values, governance model. Note any recent changes.
5. Obtain pictures of the Church building(s), including classrooms, etc.

A2) Describe where God is working in your community

Write a one page summary of the general area or community where the Church is located. Include areas such as size, demographics, trends, how the Church is presently engaged in the community, ministry opportunities, etc.

See Appendix 1.1 for Sample Church Profile

B. Develop a Pastor Profile

Resumes are filtered through the Pastor Profile. It is used to develop questions that will be asked of Candidates and their references. Information, insights, and discoveries made during the development of the Church Profile will be useful in developing the Pastor Profile. Negotiable and non-negotiable attributes need to be determined and prioritized. Include details about the following:

B1) Church Needs - Consider what the congregation may need and want from the new Pastor (see Appendices 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 for samples of Church Member Questionnaires). Consider the current situation of the Church to determine what specific skills, personality, character, and pastoral style the new Pastor should have (e.g., good preacher, more mature, experienced, caring).

B2) Community Needs - "What kind of Pastor does our community need? What relational skills will the Pastor need to minister effectively in this community? What are the spiritual needs of the community?"

B3) Leadership Needs - Consider skills and qualities required to work with Staff and Church Leadership.

C. Develop a Job Description

A current Job Description may already be in place for this position and this step may not be necessary. More likely, as a result of developing the Church and Pastor Profiles, the existing Job Description will have to be reviewed and updated. This task is the responsibility of the Leadership Team with input from the Pastoral Search Team. Final approval of the Job Description comes from the Church Membership.

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

D. Prepare Information Packet for Suitable Candidates

Just as the Pastoral Search Team will be asking for information from the Candidate, the Candidate will need information to get acquainted with the Church. The Information Packet should include:

- The Church Profile
- The Pastor Profile
- The Church Governance Model describing the model under which the Church operates (see **Appendix 1.3** for sample). Questions about the Church's Governance Model are more likely to be asked by more experienced Candidates (often because of a bad experience in a previous position).

E. Advertise the Position

With an updated Job Description, the Pastoral Search Team will advertise the position (e.g., MB Herald, website, personal contacts, seminaries). Information contained in the Job Posting should be consistent with the Church and Pastor Profiles.

F. Gather Resumes

Potential Candidates responding to the Job Posting will be asked to submit a resume. These may arrive via mail or e-mail. The Pastoral Search Team should establish a unique e-mail account to receive e-mailed resumes. Suitable Candidates suggested by the ABMB Executive Director should be asked to submit their resumes.

Pastoral Search Team members may invite specific people to apply for the position although care has to be taken when these Candidates are being considered. An invitee from a member of the Pastoral Search Team would possibly be a conflict of interest and that member should recuse him/herself from the consideration of this person. Invited Candidates should be subject to the same rigour given to all other Candidates.

STEP 3: CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS

A. Prioritize Resumes

Set a deadline for the receiving of resumes. All resumes received after that date should be kept but set aside for future reference, if needed. Each Pastoral Search Team member should be given a copy of all resumes received. The team members should pray for guidance as they compare them to the Pastor Profile.

B. Compare Resumes to Pastor Profile

As you study the information in the resume, look for characteristics that match the Pastor Profile the Pastoral Search Team has developed. Study the profile and look for evidences in his resume of attributes found in:

- Church details
- Community details
- Leadership details

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

C. Contact Priority Candidates

When the Pastoral Search Team meets to compare their results from the resumes, some names will appear on everyone's priority list. Contact these priority Candidates to determine if they are interested in being considered by the Church. Have Church and Pastor Profiles ready in order to answer such questions from the Candidates. This information should help prospective Candidates determine whether or not he wants to be considered for the position. Some priority Candidates will likely eliminate themselves when contacted by the team at this stage.

A preliminary filtering technique is the Job Description (if possible, note what percentage of time is expected to be allocated to each specific duty). Given in advance of the telephone interview, this would give the Pastoral Search Team an opportunity to see if the Candidate and the Church, as represented by the Pastoral Search Team, have parallel goals. Changing the time allocation expectations after hiring a Candidate will cause tension and unease.

D. Interview Candidates by Telephone (see Appendix 3.1 for sample questions)

The purpose of the telephone interview is to become acquainted with Candidates and to determine which Candidates (if any) warrant further research (e.g., contacting references).

Make an appointment to call each Candidate using a high quality speakerphone. Have a list of prepared questions to ask the Candidate based on your Pastor Profile and resume comparisons. Generally avoid questions requiring a "yes" or "no" answer.

Conduct a historical interview: This method of interviewing gives you a picture of how the Candidate has performed in the past and is the best indicator of future behaviour. Ask the Candidate about a circumstance such as "Tell me how you organized the outreach campaign? What actions did you take? What were the results?"

During each telephone interview it is appropriate to request video or audio tapes of the Candidate's sermons. Also, secure a list of references (if not included with the resume) and permission to make contact with them. Ask if his current or previous Church may be contacted (he may not want his current church to find out that a move is being considered).

E. Contact Applicant's References

Should the telephone interview lead to a face-to-face interview, references may be checked either before or after that face-to-face interview. There are advantages to both of these two alternatives:

- Reference checking *before* will give you a "heads up" on potentially serious problems before you invest time, money, and yourselves in a Candidate. It will also help you gather information and provide an opportunity to develop questions which address any concerns that have been raised

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

- Reference checking *after* the face-to-face interview gives the Pastoral Search Team the opportunity to execute a more objective selection process without having to have their impressions clouded or highlighted by the outside opinions

Begin by preparing a list of questions to ask references based on the Pastor Profile the team has developed. You will ask each reference the same questions to determine a base line of information that can be compared in the team.

After the primary reference checks are complete, the team may decide to not pursue the Candidate further. However, the information gathered on Candidates still being considered should be used in future interviews.

At some point in the process, the Candidate's current and previous Leadership Team Chair (e.g., moderator) should be contacted. Staff in provincial Conference offices may also be helpful in supplying information about the Candidate.

Summary Reference Checklist:

Whom to contact?

1. All primary references
2. Secondary references (if needed)
3. Current and previous Church Moderator or Leadership Team Chair
4. Other denominational workers, other pastors
5. Funeral director(s)
6. Members of former churches (not where currently serving)

What to ask? (A list of sample questions is in Appendix 3.6)

1. Develop standardized (same for every Candidate) questions based on Church and Pastor Profiles
2. May include questions on the following:
 - Doctrines/Beliefs
 - Denominational involvement/Position
 - Moral/Ethical
 - People /Relational Skills
 - Leadership Style/Skills
 - Family Life
 - Work Habits

F. Process Candidate Information

Now that you have collected the necessary information about the Candidates from interviews and reference checks, it is time for processing and analysis. Compare what you have learned about the Candidate with the Pastor Profile. Is the Candidate a good overall match to primary needs? Are the areas that don't match well significant?

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

G. Narrow the List of Candidates

On the basis of prayerful consideration and analysis of all gathered information decide on one Candidate. **Neither the Church nor the Candidate should be dealing with more than one possibility at a time.**

Contact the other Candidates on the “short list” to let them know that another Candidate is being pursued. Their application will be kept until the search process has concluded.

H. Interview Candidate in Person

Schedule a meeting with the primary Candidate preferably in a neutral location (neighbouring church, the ABMB office, business office, restaurant). If distance is a factor then consider a video conference. The personal meeting is very important, as it is during this time that the Pastoral Search Team and the Candidate begin to develop a deeper relationship. The team and Candidate begin to see what it would be like to work with each other.

Sample Personal Interview questions are listed in Appendix 3.2. The goal of these open-ended questions is to give the Pastoral Search Team perspective into what it would be like to work with the Candidate. The ultimate goal is for the team to determine, “Is this Candidate God’s choice for our Church?”

A tool is available in Appendix 3.4 to help your team to evaluate the interview. This tool is only an example; your team should customize it to meet your needs. Conduct as many interviews as needed to help the team objectively seek God’s guidance in determining if the Candidate matches your Pastor Profile. Will his style of ministry match the needs of your congregation?

Once the team determines that the Candidate fits your Pastor Profile, you move into the candidating stage of the selection process.

STEP 4: PRESENTATION/RECOMMENDATION PROCESS

A. Chosen Candidate

The Pastoral Search Team reports to the Leadership Team with their recommendation. If the Leadership Team affirms the choice then the Church can proceed as follows:

- (1) if the Candidate is not credentialed within the MB Conference go to **B. Credentialing**;
- (2) if the Candidate is credentialed within the MB Conference go to **C. Candidating and Observation**.

B. Credentialing

If the Candidate is not credentialed within the MB Conference then the Candidate must first complete the ‘Ministry Credentialing/Ordination Questionnaire’ available on the ABMB.ca website. Once completed, the Candidate should return it to the Church for

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

review by the Leadership Team. If the Leadership Team is satisfied with the Candidate's suitability for credentialing, the completed Questionnaire should be signed by the Chair or Assistant Chair of the Leadership Team (or by the Lead Pastor if this is for an associate/assistant pastor). The signed form should then be sent to the ABMB Board of Faith and Life for consideration. The Board will determine the suitability of the Candidate for credentialing with the ABMB Conference. If possible, this should be completed before candidating.

C. Candidating and Observation

If the Candidate is credentialed within the MB Conference (or has been vetted by the Board of Faith and Life), then an announcement is made to the congregation that a potential Pastor for the Church has been identified and that a weekend visit to the Church by the prospective Pastor (with spouse/family) is planned. Meetings should be scheduled with the Leadership Team and other special interest groups within the congregation. By doing this, the sermon on Sunday morning will not be the only basis for the congregation to accept or reject this Candidate.

This visit should be scheduled at a time acceptable to both the Church and Candidate and should include at least a weekend. If the Candidate is geographically close then consideration may be given to extending the candidating over more time (e.g., preaching more than once, mid-week meetings, etc.).

The needs of the Pastor (and his family) should be considered throughout this process.

Sample three-day meeting schedule:

The following meetings could be scheduled with the Candidate:

Friday Evening:

Dinner or a coffee evening with the Pastoral Search Team and Leadership Team. Spouses may be included to get an extended group.

Saturday:

- Meetings with the Staff and other Church groups.
- Candidate and his family tour the community. Allow ample time for this.
- Dinner with the Leadership Team. Consider including a period of testimonies and questions and answers.

Sunday Morning:

- Candidate may be asked to address/observe an adult Sunday School while in session.
- Candidate preaches the morning message.
- Lunch for the congregation and Candidate/family.
- Informal time of questions and answers with congregation and Candidate/family.
- At some point afterwards, the Church membership needs to vote on calling the Candidate. The timing of this vote needs to be determined by the Leadership Team.

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Remember that the meetings listed are only suggestions. The team should develop a "call weekend" schedule that fits your needs and the needs of the Candidate.

B. Issuing the Call

The Leadership Team extends a call if approved by a sufficient majority of the Church Membership.

A time of congregational prayer, conversation and reflection is very appropriate before a vote is taken. After the vote, immediately contact the Candidate:

- Share the decision of the Church.
- Share the number of votes, number of members present and voting, and the resulting percentage.
- Ask for a response within a couple of days.

Report the response (positive or negative) to the Church congregation.

STEP 5: THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

The purpose of the negotiation process is to eliminate misunderstandings that can damage the fellowship between the congregation and the Pastor in days to come. Some negotiations may have begun during the candidating process.

A. Conduct a credit and Police Information Check.

The character of the Pastor is of utmost importance. HMBC's Safe Place Policy requires Church Staff to submit a Police Information Check. A credit check should also be considered.

B. Discuss the Employment Agreement with the Candidate (see Appendix 5.1 for sample).

Items to discuss for inclusion in the Employment Agreement:

1. Total compensation package:
 - a. Salary and housing allowance
 - b. Benefits: Health insurance and pension plan
 - c. Ministry related reimbursement of expenses
2. All relevant items in the Employment Manual
3. Ministry expectations including:
 - a. Job description
 - b. Number of Sundays allowed to be away (if Lead Pastor, number of Sundays expected to preach)
 - c. Completion of credentialing/licencing (and, if applicable, recognition of ordination) with the ABMB Conference
 - d. Any other agreed-upon arrangements
4. Moving expenses

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

5. All verbal agreements
6. What constitutes a call: HMBC requires a 75% majority of voting members to extend a call; the candidate may designate a different percentage in order to accept a call.
7. Safe Place Policy
8. Candidate's first day of work
9. Put all the discussed and agreed upon items in writing so both parties have it in writing.

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Appendix 1.1 Sample Church Profile

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church is an urban church that meets at 4018 Centre B St. NW, Calgary, AB. The Church was founded in 1956 as the first Mennonite Brethren Church in Calgary. The vacancy in pastoral position was a result of the previous Pastor, [Pastor's name], leaving because _____. **Highland MB Church** is seeking to fill the position of [Lead Pastor] with someone who has the passion to lead the Church into the next chapter in its mission. Our stated mission is **'TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST AND HELP OTHERS KNOW, LOVE, AND SERVE HIM.'**

Highland MB Church is a community of people [supply demographic details]. We have one service on Sunday morning with an average attendance of _____. We are a church with a heart for the poor and hurting of our community. We have a desire to "make room for all" by breaking down the entry barriers. We desire to engage with people where they're at and establish friendships that open doors to sharing Christ. We as a Church celebrate diversity without compromising mission. Our goal is not perfection but direction. We recognize the gifts and potential in all people and want to lead them to a closer relationship with God. We want to walk with people to a place of peace and order that will replace the chaos and pain that are often evident in our congregation. We embrace a culture of depending on the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

One of the missing pieces in our overall ministry is _____. We are looking for leadership in establishing ministry with _____ that embraces the mission of **Highland MB Church**.

Our mission at **Highland MB Church** rests on the following core values:
[list core values]

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Appendix 1.2 Sample Job Description

Position Title: Lead Pastor

Reports To: The Leadership Team

Effective Date: mmm dd, yyyy

Position Overview

The Pastor is responsible to the Church to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, to teach biblical revelation, to engage in pastoral care, to provide leadership in Church life.

Position Qualifications/Competencies/Gifts

- Displays mature Christian character and demonstrates love for God and the Church
- Is a humble servant-leader as described in John 13; 1 Pet 5: 1-4; I Tim 3 and Titus 1
- Is committed to the Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith and to live a lifestyle consistent with that Confession of Faith
- Is gifted in leadership as a visionary and collaborative leader
- Takes initiative; operates independently when necessary
- Possesses good communication and interpersonal relational skills; connects and communicates to all generations
- Preferred Education: Post-Secondary degree aligned with position expectations

Communication:

- delivers challenging and stimulating biblically based sermons
- encourages the congregation in personal evangelism and witnessing
- encourages the congregation to minister to one another

Administration:

- gives administrative leadership to the Church

Leadership:

- leads as a full voting member of the Leadership Team
- leads by giving oversight to specific areas of Church ministry (worship, adult ministries)
- leads in observing the ordinances of the Church: Baptism and The Lord's Supper

Pastoral Care:

- extends care to individuals or families through one-on-one contact
- visits individuals who are in hospitals or homebound
- contacts prospective Church members
- contacts those who have become inactive in the Church
- contacts people experiencing crisis or spiritual needs in times of celebration or grief
- involves couples in pre-marriage counseling
- officiates at funeral services and wedding ceremonies

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Appendix 1.3 Sample Description of Church Governance

Introduction

The leader of the Church is Jesus Christ. As a Church, we long to hear his voice and live out His purposes in our community and world. We realize that our greatest question is: Where is Jesus working and how can we follow him? On a human level, three groups of people lead the ministries of **Highland MB Church**. These groups are the Leadership Team, volunteer ministry staff, and the congregation as a whole.

Leadership Team

The New Testament is clear that the Church is to be led by a plurality of men and women under the oversight and watch care of godly leaders. Their authority is expressed in servant leadership, not in “lording over” those placed in their charge. The leaders are members of **Highland MB Church** who have been discerned by the congregation to give this leadership, oversight and care. The Leadership Team is led by the Executive made up of the Lead Pastor, Leadership Team Chair, Leadership Team Assistant Chair, and Leadership Team Secretary. The larger Leadership Team is made up of the Executive and Core Ministries Coordinators.

Role of the Leadership Team

Leadership Team members are to guide the mission and ministry of the Church. In this regard they will:

- Regularly communicate actions and decisions to the congregation through written summaries of meetings, Church@Work sessions, etc.
- Seek input from congregation on issues deemed significant for whole congregation
- Establish and enforce Church policies
- Search for and present candidates to membership for pastoral positions
- Annually review the ministry of pastors
- Annually evaluate the overall ministry, governance structure, and supporting documents of the Church to ensure we are effectively accomplishing our mission
- Prepare annual Church budget
- Hire part-time (50% or less) or temporary pastoral staff
- Hire office and facility staff
- Examine potential members and baptism candidates
- Review membership list; propose membership removals to membership

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

Appendix 2.1.1 Sample Church Member Questionnaire #1 (actually used in 2013)

The Pastoral Search Team invites your input as we develop a Pastor Profile.

Tell us about yourself:

1. Please indicate your age category
 - 12-17 years
 - 18-29 years
 - 30-39 years
 - 40-49 years
 - 50-59 years
 - 60 or more years

2. How long have you been attending Highland?
 - Less than 2 years
 - 2-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - 10-20 years
 - More than 20 years

Answer the following on the basis of what HMBC needs in their next Pastor:

3. About what age would you like our next Pastor to be, assuming other characteristics are favourable? (check one):
 - Age should not be a major factor
 - Under 30
 - 30-39
 - 40-49
 - 50 or more

4. What level of formal education should our next Pastor have? (check one):
 - Formal education should not be a factor
 - At least Bachelor's degree
 - At least seminary Master of Arts (2 year) degree
 - At least seminary Master of Divinity (3 year) degree
 - Doctorate in theology or ministry

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

5. Prayerfully consider the following potential pastoral skills and interests. Based on our Church's needs, rate each on a scale of 1 (not important) to 10 (very important).

Administration: Managing the affairs of the congregational organization through planning, decision making, delegating, evaluating, and leading.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Bible Teaching: Encouraging and communicating biblical understanding in the congregation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Congregational Care: Ministering to individual congregants.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Counselling: Assisting people facing problems or decisions.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Crisis Ministry: Ministering to people in the midst of crisis, e.g. death, sickness, or other traumatic events.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Denominational Participation: Participating within local, provincial, or national denominational ministries.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Global Outreach: Promoting awareness of and involvement in global missions.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

Inter-Denominational Cooperation: Promoting ministry partnership with churches in other denominations.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Leadership: Having the skills necessary to lead the congregation in accomplishing its mission.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Local Outreach: Leading the congregation to intentionally engage with the community around us.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Prayer: Promoting individual and corporate prayer

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Preaching: Clear, biblical preaching that speaks to the life of the Church and congregants.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Worship Planning: Ensuring that worship services are well-planned and well-led.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Please list briefly any other qualities or characteristics you would especially like to see in a person serving as our Pastor. Indicate any that you feel are of greatest importance.

Thanks for your help in finding our next Pastor!

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

Appendix 2.1.2 Sample Church Member Questionnaire #2

1. Your Gender:

- Male
- Female

2. Your Age:

- 12-17 years
- 18-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- 60 or more years

3. Minimum Acceptable Educational Level of New Pastor

- Attended seminary, divinity school, or Bible college
- Undergraduate degree from a Bible college / Christian university
- Master's degree from seminary/divinity school
- Doctorate degree from seminary/divinity school
- Formal educational degree unimportant

4. Required Years of Prior Ministry or Professional Ministry Experience

- No prior experience necessary
- Less than 3 years of prior pastoral experience
- Less than 3 years of church ministry experience such as church staff
- More than 5 years prior pastoral experience
- More than 5 years prior church ministry experience such as church staff
- More than 10 years prior pastoral experience
- More than 10 years prior church ministry experience such as church staff

5. Acceptable Age Range for New Pastor:

- No age preference
- 30-34 years
- 35-39 years
- 40-44 years
- 45-49 years
- 50-55 years
- 56-59 years
- 60 or more years

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

6. Please check what you consider to be the three top ministry priorities
- A gifted teacher who enables people to learn and understand deep spiritual truths.
 - An administrator of the church office, giving attention to correspondence, newsletters, etc.
 - A person active in denominational life
 - A community volunteer who cooperates in community and interdenominational activities / programs
 - An effective communicator of well-prepared sermons
 - A skilled counselor available to assist people with personal and spiritual problems
 - One who emphasizes evangelism and the importance of lifestyle witnessing
 - A person with a personal vision and a well-developed vision for the future of the Church

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Appendix 3.1 Sample Telephone Interview Questions

One of the most difficult tasks of a Pastoral Search Team is to build good interview questions based on the Church and Pastor Profiles. These questions are offered as suggestions only but it is best to ask them in plain speak, not hedged in or soft-peddled so as to miss the point. Questions that open a window to the thoughts, values and feelings of the Candidate are most valuable.

1. Tell us about your conversion experience. (Let him tell you his story. Listen for authenticity and warmth of his experience with Jesus.)
2. Tell us about your “call” to the ministry. (Ask if consideration was given to not being a Pastor. Listen for the excitement about being in the ministry and the commitment to remaining in the ministry.)
3. Do you have a personal mission statement that guides your decisions and purposes?
4. How have you equipped yourself to be most useable to God? (Formal education, practical training and personal study, etc.)
5. What do you believe God has called you to do?
6. Why are you considering leaving (or did you leave) your current position?
7. What is your philosophy of ministry?
8. What are your personal goals?
9. What are your professional goals?
10. What experience have you had in church work?
11. What sizes of church have you worked in, either as a member or a leader?
12. What has been your experience working with leadership boards? What type of boards (deacons, elders, council)?
13. What has been your most difficult experience working with a leader?
14. What do you consider to be a well-balanced church program?
15. What do you feel is the role of preaching in the total scope of your ministry?
16. What do you believe about the Bible?
17. Please describe the last evangelistic conversation that you have had.
18. What are your thoughts on pastoral visits to congregants? Do you enjoy doing them? Is there a need for them? Is it important to visit congregants in the hospital, in nursing homes, and shut-ins at home?
19. How do you view the role of the Pastor in the church?
20. What do you think God’s intent is for the church today?
21. How are you seeking to make the gospel relevant to today’s society?
22. What do you sense to be the greatest need of people in the pews?

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

Appendix 3.2 Sample Personal Interview Questions

1. Tell us about yourself. What interests you in this position?
2. What do you feel is your greatest strength? weakness?
3. Tell us about your call to the ministry.
4. What is your leadership style?
5. What is your personal mission statement?
6. What do you plan to be doing in 5 years?
7. Tell us three of your characteristics.
8. What motivates you?
9. Give us an example of a time when you went beyond what was expected of you.
10. Tell us about a situation that got you really upset. What did you do? What was the result?
11. What were your duties on your last job?
12. What type of supervision did you have?
13. What did you like best about your previous church?
14. Tell us about how your skills will transfer to our church.
15. What will your current/previous church members/leaders tell me about you?
16. What do (did) you like most about your current/previous church position?
17. What do (did) you like least about your current/previous church position?
18. What was the biggest frustration in your previous church?
19. What were you passionate about at your previous church?
20. What is the most difficult task you have had to complete?
21. Tell us about a problem you encountered with one of your church members. What was the specific problem? How did you handle it?
22. Tell us about a particular problem you weren't able to solve. What happened?
23. Describe a time when your routine was upset by an emergency or unforeseen circumstances. What did you do about it?
24. Tell us about a situation when you anticipated a problem with a church member or co-worker. How did you handle it?
25. Can you describe a recent problem that you solved in a new or creative way?
26. What do you know about our church?
27. What appeals most to you about our church?
28. Why do you want to minister in our church?
29. If you were hiring someone for this ministry, what qualities would you look for?
30. What strengths do you bring to this position?
31. What questions do you have of us?

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

Appendix 3.3 Additional Questions to Consider Asking a Prospective Pastor

(Questions not covered in Appendix 3.1 and Appendix 3.2)

1. How do you feel the Pastor should relate to other staff members in the Church?
2. How do you feel about receiving an annual performance review by a responsible committee in the Church?
3. What is your normal approach to promoting/leading change in the life of the church?
4. How would you describe your organizational skills?
5. How would you describe your promotional skills?
6. How would you describe your preaching style?
7. How would you describe your delegation skills?
8. How would you like to be remembered at the end of your life on earth?
9. How would you describe your achievement of balance in your life?
10. What is your commitment to personal and professional growth in your life?
11. How would you describe your physical health? The health of your family?
12. How would you describe your emotional health? Your spiritual health?
13. How would you describe your community and denominational participation?
14. What has been your role in denominational controversy/politics?
15. What are some of your pet peeves in church life?
16. What kind of personality in others bothers you the most?
17. If we do a credit check on you, what will we discover?
18. What do you believe is the role of women in the church?
19. Do you practice and promote speaking in tongues?
20. How do you feel about the Mennonite Brethren Conference? the Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith? support of the Conference Support Fund?
21. How would you describe your view of the sovereignty of God?
22. What is your view of divine election to salvation?
23. Are you comfortable with physical expression during worship singing?
24. How will you relate to staff members whom you inherit in the Church?

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE Pastoral Search Manual

Appendix 3.4 Evaluation of Interview

Evaluation of _____ by _____

(Please evaluate by applying a rating to each area. Be as objective as possible.)

Area	Factors to Consider	Ex- cellent	Very Good	Satis- factory	Poor	Un- known
Ministering Ability	Human relationships; One-on-One interactions					
Self-Expression	Sermon organization, content, delivery					
Leadership	Ability to organize, obtain cooperation, and direct efforts of others effectively; Spiritual leadership					
Administrative Ability	Knowledge of and ability to carry out administrative procedures: planning, delegating, evaluating etc.					
Judgment	Ability to act rationally and with dispatch within the leadership of the Holy Spirit					
Initiative	Ability and willingness to begin work when and where needed					
Flexibility	Ability to adapt to various situations					
Personal Bearing	Physical appearance; appropriate attire					
Marriage Relationship	Relationship with spouse; continued growth and stability of marriage					
Relationship with Children	Parenthood: love for and discipline of children					
Credit and Financial Management	Ability to manage personal finances and indebtedness					
Health	Any personal or family health problem that might affect performance					

**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church
Governance Manual - EXECUTIVE
Pastoral Search Manual**

Appendix 3.5 Sample Questions for References

1. How long have you known this person?
2. What is the nature of your relationship?
3. Have you ever been in his church?
4. What have you observed about his relationship with church leaders?
5. What leadership style has he displayed?
6. Are you aware of any turnovers with volunteers or problems within the church leadership?
7. What are the areas of emphasis in his ministry?
8. Are you familiar with his study habits and, if so, what are they?
9. Are you familiar with his pastoral care role and, if so, please describe it?
10. In what area is his style of pastoral care most effective?
11. What are his greatest obvious strengths?
12. How does he handle criticism? conflict? confrontation?
13. Does he have a good sense of humor?
14. Can he take a joke at his expense? teasing?
15. How would you rate his administrative skills?
16. What do you know about relationships within his immediate family?
17. Is his spouse directly involved in this ministry? In what ways?
18. If your church was seeking a Pastor and you were on the Pastoral Search Team, would this Candidate be your first choice? Why or why not?

Other factors and comments: Please furnish detailed comments on any special characteristics and/or skills which you consider to be exceptionally strong or weak points. Also elaborate further on any of the areas of evaluation given on other page.

Please also include the names and addresses of two other persons who could be qualified to evaluate this person.

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____