

Leading Through Transition In the Church

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An open letter to Churches in Transition . . .

Sooner or later every church experiences a change in pastoral leadership. It is not always a simple matter to negotiate these seasons of change in church life. During these times of transition churches have a golden opportunity to take a step back and reflect to see how they can prepare for effective ministry in the future.

Our vision in the Western Canadian District is for every church to thoughtfully hire a new Lead Pastor from a posture of spiritual health and clarity of vision and mission. We want to help churches thrive through transition in preparation for a greater missional impact in the future. There are some important things to keep in mind about transition:

- The reasons for a Lead Pastor's departure and the way the time of transition is managed will have significant impact on the present and future life and vitality of the church.
- The temptation is to move immediately into a pastoral search process. There is great value in taking the time to find closure to the former pastor's ministry and doing a re-evaluation of the church's mission, vision and health before engaging in pastoral search.
- With good leadership, transition can be a time of opportunity for your church to experience renewal of vision, purpose and spiritual vitality.
- Most transitions include eight major phases — Closure, Regaining Stability, Assessment of Church Health, Developing a Transitional Plan, Preparing for the Pastoral Search Process, Conducting the Search, Hiring the Pastor, and evaluation.
- The length of the transition varies from church to church - it is not uncommon for a season of transition to last anywhere from 6 months all the way up to 24 months.
- We have discovered one of the best ways for a church to navigate through a season of transition effectively is with the help of a Transitional Pastor or Coach.

We recognize it can be a real challenge to lead through a season of transition. We are committed to assisting you by providing the resources and support that address the unique needs of churches in transition. Many resources are posted on our website. Our District personnel along with our network of Transitional Pastors and Coaches are committed to help each of our churches through times of transition.

Sincerely,

Rev. Brent Trask,
District Superintendent
Western Canadian District,
Christian and Missionary Alliance

About this resource . . .

This Church - in - Transition resource has been developed in collaboration with a team of Transitional Leaders who specialize in helping churches through seasons of transition and pastoral change. We hope this resource will provide guidance to help you navigate the season of transition effectively.

This manual is:

- Designed to provide resources for the Board Chair, Church Board, Search Team, and Church Staff.
- Written in point form, whenever possible, for ease of use.
- Intentionally incomplete! In order to keep this resource current without the need for continual reprinting this manual is supported with an ever growing body of additional resources posted on the Western Canadian District website.

Transition Defined

We use the word *Transition* to describe an *intentional process* between the departure of a Lead Pastor and the arrival of a new one. Transition begins the moment it becomes public that your current pastor will be departing. The process of preparing to say farewell and making plans to function as a church without a Lead Pastor are the early stages of the transition. From that point forward there are a number of phases a church moves through in a transitional season.

Eight Major Phases of Transition

Our experience in working with churches in transition has helped us to identify eight major phases to a healthy transition process. Some phases require more attention than others depending on the circumstances. These phases are not necessarily a step by step sequential process; often there is overlap between some of the phases.

| Transitional Phase | Description |
|---------------------------|--|
| Closure | Assisting the senior pastor (and their family) and the church family to finish well, conclude the mode of relationship, mark the occasion with respect/memory/celebration and dignity. |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Regaining Stability | Addressing the urgent and emergent needs of the church and its ministry in light of the departure of the Lead Pastor. Space to grieve the loss & let go of the past without being rushed on to a new beginnings. |
| Assessment of Church health | Listening to God and His people about how we are, who we are, where we are...and where we are headed. Exploring questions of church health, mission, vision, identity and context in preparation for future search. |
| Developing a Transitional Plan | Creating ways to address the health and vision needs of the church to effectively maintain the current ministry while in transition without a senior pastor. |
| Preparing for the Pastoral Search | Creating a search team, understanding the process and resources available to conduct an effective pastoral search. |
| Conducting the Pastoral Search | Doing the research, interviews, reference checks, pre-candidating, candidating and prayerful discernment needed to reach a decision. |
| Hiring a Lead Pastor | The steps needed to complete the hiring process and welcome a new Lead Pastor effectively. |
| Evaluation | Reflection together about what we have learned and experienced through this process. |

Specific information about each phase is provided in the sections 4- 10 of this manual.

A Proposed Agenda for an Initial Meeting with the Church Board and District Coach to Address Transition

1. Devotional Thoughts and Prayer
2. Discussion of Immediate Concerns
 - 2.1 Circumstances Regarding the Lead Pastor's Resignation
 - 2.2 The Church's General Health and Financial Condition
 - 2.3 Immediate Needs for Ongoing Ministry
3. District Philosophy about Churches in Transition
 - 3.1 Options to Consider
 - 3.2 Do we Need a Transitional Leader to Help Us?
 - 3.3 Considering Transition Options and Financial Implications
4. A Review of District Protocol on Search and Calling of a Lead Pastor
 - 4.1 Consideration of a Church Health Survey
 - 4.2 When a Church is without a Senior Pastor, the District Superintendent or his representative (which will be your Church Coach) is considered a full member of the Elders Board in the place of the Senior Pastor.
5. Q & A about the Process
6. Deciding (if appropriate at this meeting)
 - 6.1 Which Transition Model to Pursue
 - 6.2 Next Steps in Setting up a Transitional Model
 - 6.3 Considerations in Setting up a Transition Contract
7. Other Possible Matters Needing Attention
 - 7.1 Healthy Process for Departing Pastor
 - 7.2 Communication to Congregation
 - 7.3 Is There a Need for Another Meeting?
8. Short Debrief of This Meeting
9. Prayer and Adjournment

A Word to the Church Board

Providing strong leadership during a time of pastoral transition can be one of the more challenging aspects of serving your church as an Elder. Transition places new demands, expectations and variables on your leadership as individual Elders and as a group. Some guiding principles to remember:

- Be sure to include your District Coach in the process
- Work together - avoid making any commitments to the departing pastor or potential new pastor without including the Board in the discussion
- Be sure that any decisions and agreements are made in writing
- If the situation is conflicted - seek out third party assistance; the District Office can provide specialists to assist churches address conflict constructively
- Seek ways to honour your departing pastor, even if there are struggles
- Recognize the temptation to engage in the search too quickly
- Start by developing a plan for how the church will function through transition
- Communicate regularly with the congregation
- Remember you are not alone in this challenging season; there is a support system to help you through this process

Common mistakes churches make while in transition

- Launching into the search process too quickly
- Not recognizing the realities of loss (even grief) after a pastor departs
- Absence of consistent congregational prayer gatherings
- Thinking they will save money because of reduced salary costs
- Failing to know and follow the Constitution and Bylaws of the church
- Failing to consult with Denominational Leadership
- Inconsistent and/or inaccurate communication with the congregation
- Avoidance of dealing with conflict
- Failure to strengthen and encourage the governing board during transition
- A lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of leadership and staff
- Reluctance to consider outside help

MAJOR STEPS IN CALLING A LEAD PASTOR

. . . an instructional guide for Elders' Boards

ARTICLE IX - Local Church Constitution

"The District Superintendent shall suggest to the Board the names of such workers as in his judgment have proper qualifications for senior pastor of this church (who may be given another title). The Board shall give consideration only to candidates approved by the District Superintendent. The senior pastor of the church shall be called by the Board and appointed by the District Superintendent. Upon his appointment by the District Superintendent, the senior pastor and his wife become members of the church."

Manual of The Christian & Missionary Alliance in Canada (Page 35)

CONSULT WITH DISTRICT COACH

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| 1. MEETING WITH DISTRICT COACH AND BOARD OF ELDERS TO DISCUSS TRANSITION | At the resignation/leaving of a pastor to discuss procedure. |
| 2. AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME THE BOARD OF ELDERS APPOINTS A PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE | The District Coach will present options about how to best manage this time of transition and explain the process. |
| 3. BOARD OF ELDERS/SEARCH COMMITTEE, ALONG WITH THE CONGREGATION, FINALIZE A PASTORAL PROFILE DOCUMENT | A Search Committee should include some elders and other members to adequately represent the congregation as a whole. A maximum of 8 people is suggested. |
| 4. DISTRICT COACH CONTACTS ANY PROSPECTIVE PASTORS THAT DO NOT HAVE ACTIVE RESUMES | <p>It is good protocol to contact a Church's Senior Pastor if a staff member is being considered for the position.</p> <p>Because of the role that the District must play in the appointment of a Senior Pastor, while the Search Committee can contact people who might be of interest to the Search Committee, the ongoing involvement of the District at this level is imperative.</p> <p><u>As a part of the search process for a Senior Pastor, a short list (the top two or three candidates) must be approved by the District Superintendent before moving on to the next step.</u></p> |

5. PRE-CANDIDATING INTERVIEW WITH THE BOARD/SEARCH COMMITTEE Pre-candidating means no public exposure of candidate to the congregation.
Church may pre-candidate more than one person.
6. BOARD/SEARCH COMMITTEE CONTACTS INDIVIDUAL FOR CANDIDATING If AFFIRMATIVE - Next step
If NEGATIVE - next candidate is contacted.
7. CANDIDATING "EXPERIENCE" Board interviews candidate, candidate is profiled publically to the congregation, Elders extend call to the candidate or release the candidate and notifies District Coach of decision. Be sure that sufficient time is allowed for the candidate to consider and give a response. (Only one person can be candidated at a time.)

If AFFIRMATIVE by both the Board and candidate - Board and District Coach "work out" details of employment contract, start date, installation service, etc. and move to Next Step.
If NEGATIVE by either the Board or Candidate - back to step 5 or 6.
8. ARRIVAL AND INSTALLATION OF THE NEW PASTOR!!

Do we need a Transitional Pastor or Coach to help us?

This is a key question to address as early as possible when facing a pastoral transition. The answer to this question depends on many factors including:

- The general health of the church
- The general health and leadership capacity of the church board
- Whether or not the church has other staff capable of providing needed leadership and ongoing ministry during the transition
- The reason(s) why your church is entering into a time of transition
- The level of resources, volunteerism and leadership available in the church

Many church boards believe finding another pastor will not take very long; soon things will get back to normal. This is seldom the case. It is not uncommon for the time of transition to range anywhere from 6 – 24 months, sometimes even longer.

Many church boards discover that over time they do not have the capacity to sustain the level of energy required to do all that needs to be done. Some Elders may resign; others may not agree to continue on when their term of office comes up for election. Often the Board Chair carries a heavy load as a volunteer.

The Western Canadian District is committed to helping church boards receive the support they need during times of transition. Additionally we have access to a network of Transitional Pastors to assist our churches through seasons of transition. This network is a group of transitional ministry specialists who are equipped to serve as Transitional Pastors or Coaches in order to help churches effectively navigate a season of transition. Much more than simply providing pulpit supply or interim pastoral services, they provide strategic leadership and guidance to help churches manage transition well and to hire a new pastor from a posture of health.

The worksheet in the next section is provided to help your church board explore the possibility of, and understand the possible need for, seeking outside assistance while in transition.

Do we need additional help?

A worksheet for each member of the church board

The following is designed to help you assess your current situation and explore the possibility of having a Transitional Pastor or Coach. Please check any of the following statements that you believe reflects conditions or attitudes in the church:

- Our pastor (who just left) was a long-term pastor. (5+ years)
- Our church has had a succession of short-term pastors.
- Our pastor departed under circumstances that have caused divisions.
- Our church has serious problems that we expect the new pastor to resolve.
- The best thing we can do to "stop the bleeding" and restore the congregation's confidence is to find a new pastor as quickly as possible.
- We need to find a pastor as similar as possible to our previous pastor.
- We need to hire a pastor with different, or even opposite gifts to our departing pastor.
- We need to hire a new pastor who will identify a new direction for the church and then lead us there.
- We need to hire a new pastor who will fit well with the existing staff.
- Our current staff and/or Elders will find it challenging to provide strong ongoing leadership for the church through a season of transition.
- Our church may consider the possibility of appointing one of our current staff members as the new Lead Pastor.

After completing this checklist, ask each member of the Board share their responses and the reasons for choosing any of the above statements.

If, as a leadership group, you have consensus that any of the above statements apply we recommend that your church consider having a Transitional Pastor or Coach.

The next section provides some reasons why.

The District Coach can provide further assistance.

How a Transitional Pastor or Coach could help your church . . .

Our pastor (who just left) was a long-term pastor (5+ years)

Congregations need time to grieve the loss of a long-term pastor. When this doesn't happen congregations tend to unduly compare a new pastor to the previous one. This can lead to expectations that make it difficult for the new pastor to succeed. Transitional pastors/coaches are able to help congregations come to terms with a pastoral departure in a healthy manner.

Our pastor departed under circumstances that have caused divisions

The reasons for pastoral departures can cause divisions and resentments that can last for years. These matters need to be addressed so the church can move forward and hire a new pastor from a posture of relational health. Transitional pastors/coaches can facilitate discussion that helps congregations find understanding, forgiveness, and relational health prior to the arrival of a new pastor.

Our church has serious problems that we expect the new pastor to resolve.

Is it fair to expect a new pastor to "clean up the mess"? This often results in the new pastor being the *unintended transitional pastor* who winds up having to leave after the hard work of addressing the problems is done. Transitional pastors/coaches are experienced and equipped to help churches deal with their issues in a constructive, biblical manner paving the way for a new pastor to enter a church that is spiritually, relationally and organizationally healthy.

Our church has had a succession of short-term pastors.

A series of short term pastors often indicate unresolved issues, expectations, and patterns of behavior beneath the surface that are unhealthy. Transitional pastors/coaches bring objectivity and skill to help leaders identify critical issues in the church that can be addressed *prior* to engaging in the pastoral search. This helps to create a healthier environment for a future pastor to have a long, productive ministry.

The best thing we can do to "stop the bleeding" and restore the congregation's confidence is to find a new pastor as quickly as possible.

Virtually every congregation experiences some attrition when a pastor leaves. Church leaders can be tempted to react and seek to get a replacement as soon as possible. This is not the optimal way to hire a new pastor for long term effectiveness. Transitional pastors/coaches can provide leadership, guidance and time to help churches find stability in the absence of a Lead Pastor, thus providing time to address key issues of health and vision prior to engaging in a pastoral search.

We hope to find a pastor as similar as possible to our previous pastor OR a pastor with different, or even opposite gifts to our departing pastor.

Reaching either of these conclusions is often a *reaction* to the previous pastor's ministry. Reaching a conclusion about the type of pastor to hire next requires evaluation and reflection based on many factors. Taking the time to consider the needs and future direction of the church enables leaders to identify and develop an accurate, preferred profile of their next pastor. This helps to provide a much clearer picture of the church for both the congregation and prospective pastors paving the way for congregations to accept the unique gift and personality mix of their new pastor.

We need a pastor who will bring us a new direction and lead us there.

Many churches believe that the Lead Pastor should be the visionary leader and set the direction for the church. This may be the kind of leader your church needs, but not necessarily so. It could be that instead of bringing a vision to the church the new pastor's role is to embrace a vision that is already present or to help nurture a vision that is beginning to take shape in the church. A Transitional pastor/coach works with the local church to understand what the role of a new pastor should be as it relates to the vision of the church. This provides greater clarity for the church, the search team and a new pastor about the kind of pastoral leadership skills required related to the question of vision.

We need to hire a new pastor who will fit well with the existing staff.

Determining the preferred relationship between a new pastor and existing church staff shapes the pastoral search and profoundly impacts the morale of your current staff. A Transitional pastor/coach can help evaluate what is happening at the staff level and, if needed, address staff related concerns before the new pastor arrives. A Transitional pastor/coach can also assist the staff to prepare to work together effectively with a new Lead Pastor.

Our current staff and/or Elders will find it challenging to provide strong ongoing leadership for the church through a season of transition.

Providing week to week leadership for the church, the staff, and Sunday ministries can be an overwhelming responsibility. Some Boards are not able to provide this level of leadership. A Transitional pastor/coach brings leadership and support to address the needs of the church in transition. This provides both stability and time for the church to prepare well for the future.

Our church may appoint a current staff member as the new Lead Pastor.

Having a member of the current staff become the next lead pastor is an option churches often consider. There are many factors involved in this decision, especially if there was no succession plan in place. The process used to determine if a staff member should become the next Lead Pastor can have significant impact on their future success. A Transitional pastor/coach can provide guidance about this kind of decision and how to implement it effectively.

Leadership Models for Churches in Transition

A Transitional Pastor

- Transitional Pastors bring a blend of pastoral experience along with specialized training to help churches through a season of transition
- Transitional Pastors are *never candidates* for the Lead Pastor role. They help churches to experience a greater measure of health and vitality by addressing key areas of church life *before* hiring a new pastor
- Transitional Pastors are members of the District's Transitional Pastors Network, which exists to develop leadership to serve churches in transition

A Transitional Coach

- Transitional Coaches work closely with the Board and church staff to help a church work through the major stages of transition
- Coaching models can be configured in a variety of ways to meet the specific needs of the church including on-site visits along with telephone and online coaching
- The Coaching model works effectively when a church has an interim pastor or has appointed a member of the church staff to provide leadership for the ongoing pastoral and ministry needs in the church

An Interim Pastor

Interim pastors serve churches in transition to provide needed pastoral services in the absence of a lead pastor. Their services can include any or all of the following: pulpit supply, congregational care, some short term administration, and supervision for other church staff. In some cases churches appoint an existing staff member as the Interim Pastor. An Interim Pastor may be a good option when:

- Combined with the services of a Transitional Coach
- There is a church staff that is working well together
- The church has a healthy sense of mission, vision, and ministry
- There is a strong, vital, and stable church board in place

To further explore having a Transitional Pastor or Coach contact your District Coach for more information.

Closure

Assisting the senior pastor (and their family) and the church family to finish well, conclude the mode of relationship, mark the occasion with respect/memory/celebration and dignity.

Regaining Stability

It is important that a local Elders Board are prepared to and willing to address the urgent and emergent needs of the church and its ministry in light of the departure of the Lead Pastor. Space must be provided to grieve the loss & let go of the past without being rushed on to a new beginnings.

These urgent and emergent needs would include (but not be limited to) ...

- Developing a plan for pastoral leadership during the transition
- Ensuring that effective Sunday ministries are in place during the transition
- Ensuring effective administration of staff, volunteers and ministries
- Nurturing the spiritual, relational, and organizational health of the Board
- Providing helpful ongoing communication to the congregation
- Helping to create a sense of calm and stability during the early days of the transition

Questions to Consider:

1. How can we ensure effective Sunday ministries during transition?
2. How can we ensure effective ongoing communication with the congregation at this important time in the life of the church?
3. Are we able to sustain and manage this transition with the personnel and leadership we have?
4. How can we ensure that we work well together as a Board and church staff through this time?
5. How might a Transitional Pastor or Coach help us?
6. How can we provide stability for our church staff and congregation at this time?
7. Who will provide leadership for the church staff and day to day operations?

Assessment of Church Health

Listening to God and His people about how we are, who we are, where we are...and where we are headed. Exploring questions of church health, mission, vision, identity and context in preparation for the search for a new Senior Pastor.

- Assessing the spiritual and relational health of the congregation
- Assessing the health and effectiveness of the ministries of the church
- Assessing administrative strengths and weaknesses; capacity for change
- Identifying the key result areas that need to be addressed and resolved prior to engaging in an active search
- Studying the history of the church, its leadership patterns, issues and styles
- Identifying the unique character of the church in its community context
- Re-visiting the church's sense of mission and vision

Questions to Consider

1. Under what conditions should we begin to conduct a pastoral search?
2. What issues do we need to address before we hire a new Lead Pastor?
3. What patterns are present in life of our church that we want to change?
4. What factors have precipitated the departure of previous pastors?
5. Are we on the same page about our sense of mission and vision?
6. Are we at a place where we need to explore a new vision and direction?
7. What role has our previous pastor(s) played in shaping vision?
8. Are we committed to hiring a new pastor from a position of health?

Developing a Transitional Plan

Creating a way to address the health and vision needs of the church while continuing on in ministry during transition.

- Developing a sustainable term ministry plan for the transition period
- Exploring the results of the congregational assessment of church health
- Outlining the process that leads towards greater church health and a successful pastoral search
- Deciding what the role of the congregation will be through transition
- Implementing an ongoing communication process with the congregation

Questions to Consider:

1. How can we develop a plan to continue on in ministry while we are in transition?
2. How will we maintain strong communication between the Board and the congregation in the absence of a Lead Pastor?
3. Who will give oversight and leadership to the church staff?
4. How can we encourage morale and volunteerism within the congregation?
5. How will we measure our progress through transition?

Preparing for the Pastoral Search Process

Creating a search team, understanding the process, gathering resources available to conduct an effective pastoral search.

- Understanding the roles of the Board, the Search Team, and the District Superintendent in the search process
- Creating a Search Team and developing their mandate
- Developing a comprehensive Lead Pastor profile and Job Description
- Ongoing communication of the process with the congregation
- Addressing the possibility of current staff members becoming candidates

Questions to Consider:

1. How will we select a search team that will represent our congregation?
2. How will prayer and discernment be part of this process?
3. How can we gain a clear sense of the following aspects of our church:
 - who were we?
 - what is our community context?
 - who are we now?
 - who we hope to become?
 - what kind of leader will we need?
4. How will we develop an effective Pastoral Profile?
5. What will the role of the search team, the Board, the church staff and the congregation be in the search process? The hiring process?
6. How will we keep the congregation informed?
7. What if current staff members wish to apply for the position?
8. What do we need to know about the requirements and resources provided by our denomination in this process?

Conducting the Search

Doing the research, interviews, reference checks, pre-candidating, candidating and prayerful discernment needed to reach a decision.

- Gathering and evaluating resumes and tabulating information
- Conducting reference checks and initial interviews
- Understanding the pre-candidating and candidating process
- Developing a short list of candidates
- Presenting the short list to the Board and deciding on a candidate
- Presenting the board's agreed upon short list to the District Superintendent for approval
- Conducting the candidating process
- Ensuring a sense of congregational ownership in the process

Questions to Consider:

1. What confidentiality, privacy law, and reference check issues do we need to know?
2. How do we get resumes?
3. What process do we use in co-operation with our District Office regarding candidates who are not accredited with our denomination?
4. What is the difference between pre-candidating and candidating?
5. What would an effective candidating process look like in our church setting?
6. What role will the congregation have in the search process?
7. What/When/How do we communicate to - the church staff?
- the congregation?
8. Who will be doing the communicating?

Hiring the Pastor

The steps needed to complete the hiring process and welcome a new Lead Pastor effectively.

- Finalizing the decision in cooperation with the District Superintendent
- Making an offer of employment and receiving an acceptance
- Refining the job description with the new pastor
- Communicating this information with the congregation
- Details related to start date, moving, and an installation service
- Welcoming the new pastor
- Transitional Pastor debriefing — with the new pastor, the Board, and the District

Questions to Consider:

1. When do we announce that a call has been given to a candidate?
2. When should we announce that the candidate has accepted?
3. Documenting an offer of employment? Acceptance of the same?
4. How will we welcome a new Lead Pastor and help him to start well?
5. What is the role of District Church Coach in the hiring process?
6. How can we celebrate the work of God in this process?
7. What should we do to orient our new pastor to our congregation and community?

Evaluation

Reflection together about what we have learned and experienced through this process.

- Sharing how God has developed our spiritual life together as a community
- Exploring what we have learned about one another through this process
- Documenting what we have learned for future reference
- Considering the importance of succession planning
- Evaluating how well we followed our transition plan and search process
- Conducting an exit interview with our Transitional leader
- Recommendations and suggestions for our District Superintendent
- Developing a mutually agreeable pastoral evaluation process for the Board and the new Lead Pastor

Questions to Consider:

1. What has God shown us about ourselves through this process?
2. What have we learned about trusting God and listening to God as a community?
3. What would we do differently next time? What would we do the same?
4. How can we be better prepared for a pastoral departure next time?
5. How well did our transitional plan work? How well did we work the plan?
6. How can we conduct a meaningful exit interview with our Transitional Leader?
7. Do we have a pastoral evaluation process that all parties are comfortable with?
8. How can we conduct effective pastoral evaluations in the future?
9. What suggestions or ideas might we want to share with our District Coach?
10. How will we document this information for future use?

The Eight Recommended Goals of a Transitional Leadership Process

During the Transitional Process there are 8 goals that are recommended so that the church experiences the full benefit of a pastoral change and doesn't just go on autopilot until the next pastor shows up.

Goal 1. There is the need for closure.

Local Congregations must be able to find the ways and means to deal with the past in such a way that it doesn't hinder or restrict what God is wanting to do in the future.

- A Transitional Leader counsels & helps people deal with their grieve and loss — as well as celebrating the past and leaving to let go in a healthy way so they can move on.

Goal 2. There is the need for relevant preaching & clear communication.

A Transitional Leader carries the primary burden for ensuring that the congregation gets fed and that the preaching ministry of the church does not suffer during the transition time.

- Not just filling in while they wait for the next pastor, but sermons that are messages from God designed with this church in mind.

Goal 3. There's a need for short term administration.

A Transitional Leader can easily fulfill the traditional administrative role that is filled by the Senior Pastor.

- There is the management function that the transitional leader needs to do or ensure is being done by someone

Goal 4. There's a need for pastoral care.

A Transitional Leader is able to continue to meet the needs for pastoral care in the congregation and/or ensure that people are cared for even if he or she does not fulfill that function.

- The need for pastoral care not only continues during the time between Senior Pastors, but in many ways the need actually increases during a transition time.

Goal 5. Focus needs to be given to relational renewal.

A Transitional Leader can both recognize and respond to the reality that during the change of a Senior Pastor there are always feelings of hurt and loss that, if not addressed and dealt with, will leave the congregation with unresolved hurts and hindered in its ability to move ahead with effective ministry and future relationships.

- "Relationship Renewal" refers to the connections both with God and with each other — during a transition, the opportunity is there to renew, restore and revive any weak or poorly functioning connections

Goal 6. There's opportunity for vision renewal.

A Transitional Leader can be sensitive to the need in a local congregation for a renewed or reinforced buy-in by the congregation for the church's vision.

- Since healthy churches have a vision and an action plan to bring it into reality. A time of transition can be a time for the whole congregation to listen and discern what God is saying to them. It can be an incredibly healthy thing for the church to see where God is leading them so that their next pastor can match who they are and where they are wanting to go.

Goal 7. There's an opportunity for structural renewal.

A Transitional Leader is able to recognize that at times the structures within the local congregation are either contributing to the congregation's present situation or structured in such a way that they were not able to provide stability during the transition time.

- If the structures of a church are mismatched or in need of review, a time of transition is an excellent time to renew them — for the purpose of achieving their mission.

Goal 8. Then lastly, a transitional leader takes a congregation through a search process.

There's no denying that God has a specific leader(s) for every church that is listening and responding to Him. The greater prepared the church is to move forward in a healthy way, the more successful the search process.

