FUTURE EVENT SURVEY METHOD

**Administration Guide**

**Purpose:** To collect individual input from your congregation about pastoral expectations and priorities for your Church Profile

**OVERVIEW**

The Pastor Profile Questionnaire gathers data from your congregation about what qualities, experiences, and approaches they want in their next pastor. This tool works best when you need individual responses without group influence.

**When to Use This Tool:**

* You want every person's individual voice captured
* You need data that can be easily compiled and analyzed
* You prefer a less time-intensive event format
* You want people to respond thoughtfully on their own schedule
* You have a congregation comfortable with written responses

**When NOT to Use This Tool:**

* You want group discussion and community processing (use the Small Group Rotation event instead)
* You need immediate results (this requires compilation time)
* Your congregation struggles with reading or writing

**PRE-DISTRIBUTION PREPARATION**

**Announce the Survey**

**Four Weeks Before Distribution:**

Announce from the pulpit and in church communications:

"In the coming weeks, you will receive a Pastor Profile Questionnaire. This survey asks about the qualities, experiences, and priorities you want in our next pastor. Your input will directly shape the Church Profile that our Pastor Search Committee uses. Please plan to complete it thoughtfully and prayerfully. Watch for more information soon."

**Two Weeks Before Distribution:**

Provide more detail:

"Next Sunday, you will receive the Pastor Profile Questionnaire. This is your opportunity to tell the Transition Team what matters most to you in our next pastor. The survey takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. You can fill it out at home and return it by [date]. Your responses are confidential. All input will be compiled and presented as aggregate data, not individual responses. Please participate. Your voice matters."

**Prepare Materials**

**Print Copies:**

* Print one questionnaire per adult (age 18 and up)
* Print 10-15 extra copies for last-minute requests
* Use quality paper (this shows you value their input)
* Staple pages securely

**Digital Option:**

* Create an online version using Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, or similar tool
* Test the online form thoroughly before releasing
* Ensure all questions transfer correctly
* Make sure ranking questions work properly in digital format

**Distribution Method:**

* Decide: Will you hand out surveys on Sunday morning, mail them, or both?
* Prepare addressed envelopes if mailing
* Create return envelopes for collecting completed surveys
* Designate a secure collection box if collecting at church

**DISTRIBUTION**

**Sunday Morning Distribution**

**Announcement Script:**

"Good morning. Today we are distributing the Pastor Profile Questionnaire. This survey asks what you want in our next pastor. Your responses will shape the Church Profile that guides our search. Here is how this works:

**1. Every adult (18 and up) should receive a questionnaire.** If you do not get one, see [designated person] after the service.

**2. Take it home and complete it thoughtfully.** This is not a quick checklist. Give yourself 20-30 minutes to answer prayerfully.

**3. All responses are confidential.** We will compile data as numbers and percentages, not individual names.

**4. Return your completed questionnaire by [date].** You can:

* Drop it in the collection box in the lobby
* Mail it to the church office [if providing stamped envelopes]
* Submit it online at [URL if offering digital option]

**5. Questions?** Contact [name and phone/email].

Your voice matters. Please participate. Thank you."

**During Distribution:**

* Have volunteers stationed at exits with surveys
* Ensure every adult receives one copy
* Have extra copies available at the church office all week
* Post the online survey link prominently (website, social media, bulletin)

**Mail Distribution (if applicable)**

**Cover Letter:**

[Church Letterhead]

Dear [Church Member Name],

Enclosed is the Pastor Profile Questionnaire for our pastoral search process. Your input is valuable as we seek God's guidance in selecting our next pastor.

This questionnaire asks about the qualities, experiences, and priorities you want in our next spiritual leader. Please complete it thoughtfully and prayerfully. Your responses are confidential and will be compiled as aggregate data.

**Please return your completed questionnaire by [date] using one of these methods:**

* Mail it in the enclosed stamped envelope
* Drop it in the collection box in the church lobby
* Complete it online at [URL]

If you have questions, contact [name] at [phone/email].

Thank you for participating in this important process.

In Christ,

[Transition Team Chair Name] [Title]

**MANAGING RESPONSES**

**Tracking Participation**

**Create a simple tracking system:**

* Total questionnaires distributed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Responses received by week 1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Responses received by week 2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Responses received by deadline: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Participation rate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_%

**Reminder Announcements:**

One week before deadline: "We have received [number] completed Pastor Profile Questionnaires. Thank you. If you have not yet submitted yours, please do so by [date]. Your input shapes our pastoral search."

**Extension Decision:**

If participation is low (under 30%), consider extending the deadline by one week with a strong reminder about the importance of participation.

**Secure Storage**

**Confidentiality Measures:**

* Store all completed questionnaires in a locked file or secure location
* Limit access to Transition Team members only
* Keep online responses password-protected
* Do not leave surveys in public areas
* Shred any damaged or duplicate responses

**DATA COMPILATION**

**Assign Compilation Roles**

**Data Entry Team (2-3 people):**

* Enter all responses into a spreadsheet
* Double-check entries for accuracy
* Keep track of completion progress

**Analysis Team (2-3 people):**

* Calculate totals and percentages
* Create charts and graphs
* Identify patterns and themes
* Write summary narratives

**Roles can overlap, but have at least two people verify all calculations.**

**Create Master Spreadsheet**

**Set up tabs for each question category:**

**Tab 1: Demographics**

* Age ranges (count and percentage)
* Length of attendance (count and percentage)
* Level of involvement (count and percentage)

**Tab 2: Pastoral Qualities**

* List all 7 qualities
* For each quality, count how many people ranked it 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
* Calculate average ranking for each quality
* Create a bar chart showing average rankings

**Tab 3: Growth Areas**

* List all 7 growth areas
* For each area, count rankings (1-7)
* Calculate average ranking for each area
* Create a bar chart showing priorities

**Tab 4: Mission and Ministries**

* List all options
* Count how many people selected each one
* Calculate percentage for each
* Create a chart showing top selections

**Tab 5: Current Ministries to Preserve**

* List all 9 ministry areas
* For each area, count rankings
* Calculate average ranking
* Create a bar chart showing priorities

**Tab 6: Pastoral Experience**

* List all 5 experience areas
* For each area, count rankings (1-5)
* Calculate average ranking
* Create a bar chart

**Tab 7: Education Level**

* Count responses for each education level
* Calculate percentages
* Note the most common response

**Tab 8: Years of Experience**

* Count responses for each experience range
* Calculate percentages
* Note the most common response

**Tab 9: Leading Change**

* Count responses for each change approach
* Calculate percentages
* Create a pie chart showing distribution

**Tab 10: First Year Priorities (Open-Ended)**

* List all unique responses
* Group similar responses into themes
* Count frequency of each theme
* Identify top 5-7 themes

**Analysis Guidelines**

**For Ranking Questions (1-7 or 1-5):**

Lower average score means higher priority. For example, if "Biblical Knowledge and Teaching" has an average ranking of 2.3 and "Administrative Abilities" has an average ranking of 5.8, biblical knowledge is ranked much higher in importance.

**Look for:**

* Clear consensus (one option ranked significantly higher than others)
* Divided opinions (rankings spread fairly evenly)
* Surprising results (expectations vs. actual responses)
* Demographic differences (do younger members prioritize differently than older members?)

**For Multiple Choice Questions:**

Calculate the percentage of respondents who selected each option.

**Look for:**

* Strong majorities (over 60% selecting an option)
* Close splits (options with similar percentages)
* Options with very low support (under 10%)

**For Open-Ended Question (First Year Priorities):**

Read all responses and create theme categories. For example:

* Build relationships and get to know people (37 responses)
* Focus on preaching and teaching (28 responses)
* Lead us in outreach and evangelism (19 responses)
* Unite the congregation (15 responses)
* Address youth and children's ministry (12 responses)

**CREATING THE RESULTS REPORT**

**Written Summary**

**Introduction Section:**

"Between [dates], the Transition Team distributed the Pastor Profile Questionnaire to our congregation. We received [number] completed responses from [number] distributed, representing a [percentage]% participation rate. The following report summarizes what our congregation indicated they want in our next pastor."

**Demographic Overview:**

"Respondents represented a cross-section of our congregation:

* Age distribution: [summary]
* Length of attendance: [summary]
* Involvement levels: [summary]"

**Key Findings by Category:**

For each question category, write 2-3 paragraphs summarizing:

* What the data shows
* Areas of strong consensus
* Areas of diversity
* Notable patterns or surprises

**Example:**

"When asked to rank seven pastoral qualities, our congregation showed strong consensus on several priorities. Biblical Knowledge and Teaching received the highest priority (average ranking 2.1), followed closely by Theological Soundness (2.4) and Great Commission Leadership (2.7). The congregation ranked Administrative Abilities lowest (5.9), suggesting they value spiritual leadership over organizational management. However, there was diversity in how people ranked Pastoral Care (ranging from 1 to 7), indicating different expectations about the pastor's role in personal ministry."

**Visual Data Presentation**

**Create charts for each major question:**

* Bar charts for ranking questions
* Pie charts for multiple choice questions
* Tables for demographic data

**Chart Guidelines:**

* Use clear, readable fonts
* Label axes clearly
* Include legends where needed
* Use color to enhance readability (not just decoration)
* Keep designs simple and clean

**Narrative Insights**

**Beyond the numbers, note:**

"Several patterns emerged from the data:

**Strong Consensus Areas:** Our congregation agrees strongly on [list 3-4 areas where data shows clear consensus]. These priorities should guide the Pastor Search Committee's work.

**Diversity of Opinion:** We see diversity in [list 2-3 areas where opinions vary]. This diversity reflects the different needs and perspectives within our body. The Search Committee should be aware of these varying expectations.

**Generational Differences:** [If applicable] Younger members (under 45) tended to prioritize [pattern], while older members (over 60) emphasized [pattern]. Understanding these generational perspectives will help our next pastor serve the whole congregation.

**Surprising Findings:** [Note any unexpected results and what they might mean]"

**PRESENTING RESULTS TO THE CONGREGATION**

**Schedule Presentation**

**Options:**

* Special church-wide meeting (Sunday afternoon or Wednesday evening)
* Sunday morning announcement with printed handout
* Detailed written report mailed or emailed to all members
* Combination approach (brief Sunday announcement + detailed report available)

**Presentation Format**

**If presenting in person (20-30 minutes):**

**1. Thank participants** (2 minutes) "Thank you to everyone who completed the questionnaire. We received [number] responses. Your input directly shapes our pastoral search."

**2. Overview of findings** (3 minutes) "Today I will share what we learned about our congregation's priorities for our next pastor. I will cover [list the major categories]."

**3. Present data category by category** (15-20 minutes)

* Show one chart at a time
* Explain what the data shows
* Note consensus areas and diversity areas
* Keep it moving (do not dwell on every detail)

**4. What this means for the search** (3 minutes) "This data tells us [summarize 3-4 main takeaways]. The Pastor Search Committee will use these findings to [explain how it shapes the search process]."

**5. Next steps** (2 minutes) "The Transition Team will now complete the Church Profile using this data. That profile will guide our search process. Watch for updates about [next milestone]."

**6. Questions** (5-10 minutes) Allow brief questions for clarification only (not debate about results)

**Printed Report Distribution**

**Create a 4-6 page summary document:**

* Page 1: Introduction and participation summary
* Pages 2-4: Key findings with charts
* Page 5: What this means for the search
* Page 6: Next steps and timeline

**Distribution:**

* Email PDF to all members
* Print copies available at church
* Post on church website
* Include in next newsletter

**USING RESULTS IN THE CHURCH PROFILE**

**Integration Points**

**The questionnaire data informs these Church Profile sections:**

**Future Focus Section:**

* Summary of pastoral qualities ranked highest
* Growth areas the congregation prioritizes
* Mission and ministry emphases
* Current ministries to preserve
* Desired pastoral experience
* Education and experience expectations
* Change leadership preferences

**Pastor Profile Narrative:**

Use the data to write descriptive paragraphs about your ideal pastor. For example:

"Our congregation has expressed strong desire for a pastor who excels in biblical teaching and maintains theological soundness. While administrative abilities are valued, our people prioritize spiritual leadership over organizational management. We seek a leader passionate about the Great Commission who can equip our members for evangelism and missions."

**Balancing Data with Discernment**

**Remember:**

* The questionnaire shows what people want, not necessarily what the church needs
* The Transition Team and Pastor Search Committee must prayerfully discern how to weigh this input
* Some expectations may be unrealistic and require gentle shaping
* Consensus areas should carry more weight than divided areas
* The data informs decisions but does not make decisions

**From the Pastoral Transition Guide:**

"Congregational input is valuable but should not simply become a popularity contest or a wish list. The search committee must prayerfully discern which input aligns with the church's mission and actual needs. Input gathering is not a vote but a source of wisdom to inform the committee's discernment."

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What if participation is very low (under 25%)?**

Consider whether the low response indicates a problem with the process (timing, communication, format) or reflects general congregational disengagement. You may need to extend the deadline, send personal follow-up contacts, or supplement with other input methods like the Small Group Rotation event.

**Should we share individual responses with the Pastor Search Committee?**

No. Compile data as aggregate results only. Individual responses should remain confidential to encourage honesty.

**What if someone writes negative or inappropriate comments?**

Focus on data that can inform the search process. If comments reveal pastoral care concerns, address those separately from the data compilation.

**Can we modify the questionnaire to fit our context?**

Yes, but be careful. The questionnaire aligns with standard Church Profile requirements. Significant changes may produce data that does not fit the profile template.

**Should we compare results to other churches?**

No. Every church is unique. Your data reflects your congregation's priorities, which is exactly what you need.

**What if the data shows contradictory priorities?**

This is normal and helpful. It reveals the diversity within your body. Present the data honestly and let the Search Committee navigate the complexity with prayer and wisdom.

**How long should we keep the completed questionnaires?**

Keep them securely stored until the new pastor is called and settled (at least 6-12 months). Then shred them to protect confidentiality.

**POST-SURVEY FOLLOW-UP**

**Thank You Communication**

**One week after presenting results:**

Send a thank you message to all participants:

"Thank you for completing the Pastor Profile Questionnaire. Your input has given us valuable insight into what our congregation wants in our next pastor. The Transition Team is now using this data to complete our Church Profile, which will guide the Pastor Search Committee's work. We will keep you updated as the search process moves forward. Please continue to pray for wisdom and discernment."

**Archive the Data**

**Create a permanent record:**

* Save all spreadsheets and charts
* Print one complete set of results for church records
* Store digital files in multiple locations (cloud backup recommended)
* Provide copies to Transition Team and Pastor Search Committee
* Keep one copy in church safe or secure file

**Connect to Next Steps**

**The questionnaire is one piece of the larger transition process:**

* Use data to complete Church Profile document
* Share relevant findings with Pastor Search Committee
* Reference results when explaining search decisions to congregation
* Revisit data periodically during the search to stay aligned with congregational priorities

**TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

**Before Distribution:**

* Communicate clearly and repeatedly about the survey
* Explain why participation matters
* Assure confidentiality
* Make it easy to complete and return

**During Collection:**

* Send reminder announcements
* Offer multiple return methods
* Keep the secure collection box visible
* Track participation rates

**During Compilation:**

* Double-check all data entry
* Have multiple people verify calculations
* Create clear, simple charts
* Write plain-language summaries

**During Presentation:**

* Be honest about what the data shows
* Acknowledge both consensus and diversity
* Connect findings to the search process
* Thank participants sincerely

**Remember:** The questionnaire is a tool for gathering wisdom, not a binding vote. Use the data to inform your discernment process as you seek God's choice for your next pastor.