

Core Tasks of Facilitating Healthy Pastoral Transitions

Important elements in guiding a church through a pastoral transition

Process Values

- Honouring the past
- Careful spiritual discernment
- Creating vision for the future
- Open & honest communication to all
- A purposeful & transparent process of transition

Saying goodbye well

- Make sure there is a healthy completion plan for the leaving pastor (see “Leaving Well”)
- Make sure there is an appropriate celebration and farewell
- Make sure there is an appropriate Exit Interview (see “Exit Interview”)
- Allow time for a natural grieving process
- Clarify the future relationship of the church with the leaving pastor (see “Farewell Letter” & “Should a Retiring Pastor Stay in the Congregation?”)

Helping the church reflect on the past season of leadership

- A SWOT/SCOT analysis
- A storytelling event
- Highlight the changes that have occurred in the church & the community
- Workshop the elements of the previous pastor's ministry that need to
 - live on
 - be intentionally transformed into something new

Rebooting the church system

- **Revisit the identity, vision & values**
 - Who are we now as God's people in this place
 - What unique challenges or tasks have become clear to us as a community of God's people
 - Who is God calling us to serve & disciple?
 - What values is God calling us to embrace as we live and reach out?
 - What is unique about the way we are church?
- **Conduct a Gaps & Overlaps Analysis**

Rebooting the church system

- **Allow a Leadership Reset**
 - Review the governance – pastor partnership
 - Review the leadership – ministry structure
 - Reflect on the need for any specific leadership empowerment around roles or positions
- **Reshape Key Relationships & Partnerships**
 - Denominational ties
 - Missions partnerships
 - Local church networks
 - Community connections

Rebooting the church system

- **Conduct a General Church Health Review**
- **Walk the Transition Journey**
 - “So you want to go back to Egypt?” – know your “Egypt”
 - “Manna” - unexpected gifts of provision in the neutral zone
 - Send out the spies
 - Believe the promise
 - Communicate, communicate, communicate
 - Pray, pray, pray

Rebooting the church system

- **Transitioning to New Leadership**
 - Review and sharpen the selection process
 - Finalise the church profile
 - Finalise the pastor profile
 - Discern God's leading (allow for the unexpected)
- **These tasks are best co-ordinated by a Transition Team**
 - 4-7 members
 - Medium-term life span
 - Separate from the normal operational and interim leadership teams