



Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada

CONGREGATIONAL and PASTORAL PRIORITIES

NOTE: This worksheet is for use in combination with the 2020 Ministerial Leadership Information (MLI) form. If a pastoral candidate completed an MLI before January 2020, congregations should use the earlier Twenty Pastoral Area/Tasks form, also on the website at mennoniteusa.org/resource/ministerial-transitions-committee-packet/.

This worksheet is filled out by both pastors and congregations to be used in the search process. It is designed to identify the perceived needs/priorities of the congregation and the priorities and vision of pastoral candidates. It is an initial screen that helps identify general agreement between what the church is seeking and the priorities a pastor has for their ministry. It can also serve as a useful discussion guide between a pastoral candidate and a search committee/congregation. The questions are categorized using the six [core competencies](#) of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

- **Pastoral Candidates:** Focus on how you would prioritize your time and energy in pastoral ministry.
- **Congregations:** Focus on what your perceived needs and expectations are for the pastor you are seeking to hire and how they may use their time and energy.
- **Search Committees:** Page 4 includes more information for interpreting the results.

Instructions for both a congregation and a pastor

Click (electronic) or check (hard copy) the box to indicate your answer for each priority. Make sure you select only one box for each priority.

1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
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Mark *only six (6)* in the high range

Mark *only twelve (12)* in the medium range

Mark *only six (6)* in the low range

		Low		Medium			High	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Biblical Story								
1	Pastor prepares and delivers Bible-based sermons.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Pastor is actively involved in teaching Scripture and theology for the purpose of equipping people to grow in their faith and practice.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Pastor spends time studying the Bible for the purpose of ministry.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Pastor spends time reading contemporary books related to issues in biblical interpretation and application	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
Anabaptist/Mennonite Story, Theology, and Practice								
5	Pastor embraces the priesthood of all believers—sharing leadership in the congregation by including, empowering, and equipping congregation members for leadership.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Pastor is committed to gifts-based ministry, helping congregation members identify their spiritual gifts and empowering their use in ministry.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Pastor supports the conference and denomination by what they do and say—helping the congregation connect to the wider church.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Pastor has a good working knowledge of Anabaptist history and theology and is able to connect that history to contemporary questions and challenges.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>

Christian Spirituality/Discipleship				
9	Pastor provides leadership in assessing the formation needs of the congregation and helps develop opportunities for growth and transformation.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
10	Pastor actively participates in planning, designing, and leading worship services.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
11	Pastor models and teaches personal and communal spiritual practices.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
12	Pastor fosters a discipleship culture in which members follow Jesus in relationships of mutual accountability.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
Self-awareness, Emotional Health, and Pastoral Care				
13	Pastor engages in self-care, managing self in ministry in ways that ensure emotional health, maintain healthy boundaries, and make space for healthy accountability.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Pastor initiates counseling and pastoral care for those within and outside the congregation and makes appropriate referrals.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
15	Pastor prioritizes important rituals of commitment, transition, and healing with individuals, family, and congregation (infant dedication, baptism, weddings, funerals, communion, footwashing, etc.).	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
16	Pastor visits those in hospitals, emergency situations, and long-term care facilities—informing the congregation of opportunities to provide mutual support and care.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
Contextual Awareness/Missional Engagement				
17	Pastor is personally engaged in the community, working with community groups, local ecumenical groups, and interfaith efforts.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
18	Pastor leads the church in proclaiming the good news in word and deed, leading to individual growth, congregational growth, and/or church planting.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
19	Pastor connects the call of Jesus to contemporary issues of justice and peace, developing strategies to engage in what God is doing to restore Shalom.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
20	Pastor helps connect the gifts and capacities of the congregation to the needs of persons outside the church—creating space for new persons to enter into and connect to the congregation.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership				
21	Pastor facilitates the development and implementation of vision, mission, and goals with the congregation, including appropriate administrative and supervisory responsibilities.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
22	Pastor works with the congregation to develop healthy stewardship practices, including a system of responsible budgeting, financial management, and financial decision making.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
23	Pastor leads in developing effective and transparent communication.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
24	Pastor models healthy ways of living with congregational differences, working at conflict resolution, problem-solving, and communal decision-making processes.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Notes for the search process:

- ***It is not essential*** for a congregation and prospective pastor to have all the same expectations/priorities.
- ***Do pay special attention*** to areas where one party has marked a high priority and the other has marked the same area as a low priority.
- ***No pastor can pay equal attention to all areas of pastoral ministry.*** Pay attention to all three expectation/priority levels. Low expectation/priority levels are as important as high expectation/priority levels.
- ***In general,*** you can expect a pastor to be more “hands on” in the areas they list as high expectations/priorities and rely on other congregational leaders to accomplish necessary ministry in medium and low expectation/priority areas.

Interpretation Guide for examining the results of your congregational survey.

To tabulate for a congregational score, add the numerical values of each pastoral priority as marked by all the participants, i.e., each “low priority” counts as 1 or 2; each “medium priority” counts as 3,4 or 5; each “high priority” counts as 6 or 7. The higher the congregational score on any activity, the greater the congregational priority for and expectation of its pastor.

After totaling scores for each pastoral task, it is helpful to write them down in the order the congregation has indicated. Discuss whether this order in fact reflects the consensus of the congregation.

In interpreting the congregational results, look for areas of strong consensus and agreement. What does it mean if there are diverse expectations within the church? Discuss how the congregation can move toward consensus of realistic goals and priorities for a pastor.

Caution! When recent experience shows a neglect or weakness of one area, the temptation is to mark that higher than normal. The results need interpretation in addition to tabulation.

It is not essential for a congregation and a prospective pastor to have all the same high priorities. What signals danger is if a **high** priority for one is a **low** priority for the other. It is important to pay attention to all three priority levels. Those that come out as “low priority” are as important to notice as “high priority” categories. Remember that no pastor can pay equal attention to all 24 areas.

Chances are that a competent pastor will give 70-80 percent of time and energy to 6 high priorities, 20-30 percent of time and energy to 12 medium priorities, and nod in agreement that 6 low priorities need attention while never finding time or energy to do much about them.

It might be useful to estimate the number of hours per week that the pastor might be expected to give to each of these pastoral priorities. To be fair and consistent with this form, only those priorities that are identified as medium or high should be included.

Permission is given to make additional copies of this form for use by the congregation.