

Making a Good Move

Seminar

based on the book Making a Good Move, by, Michael J. Coyner

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AGENDA

PASTORS/SPOUSES

Leaving Well to Look Ahead

Choosing Well to Lead Well

Your First Impressions

Your First Sunday

Your First Week

Your First Few Months

Your First Year

Your Own Spiritual Life

PASTORS/PASTOR-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEES

Pastoral Time Use and Priorities

Regular Meetings of the PPRC

Clear Process for Handling Concerns

LEAVING WELL TO LOOK AHEAD

Let people say "goodbye"

- Schedule a variety of events and opportunities.
- Have a great party or reception (always folks who want to say thanks).

Preach a helpful last sermon (perhaps part of a closing series).

- For the congregation
- For your successor
- For yourself
- What sermon will you preach?
 - What do you want to say?
 - What will you avoid?

Send a letter to the entire congregation:

- state several reasons for your leaving (different people resonate with different reasons)
- make clear you are no longer the pastor and will no longer do pastoral duties (weddings, funerals, baptisms) – but will remain friends

Visit the shut-ins and nursing homes and tell them goodbye.

Leave helpful notes for the new pastor:

- crisis care in progress
- clear notes about office and parsonage details
- suggested list of stores, doctors, hair stylists, mechanics, etc.
- 2-3 people who have undeveloped leadership potential
- no list of persons to be careful of (except chronically difficult)

Leave the parsonage cleaner and neater than when you arrived and arrange for helpful repairs and upgrades (consulting with new pastor and spouse)

Leave your successor an "annotated" membership directory.

Plan an excellent "hello" for your successor. Pave the way for their success.

CHOOSING WELL TO LEAD WELL

You need to develop trust in order to lead well in your new appointment.

Develop trust by:

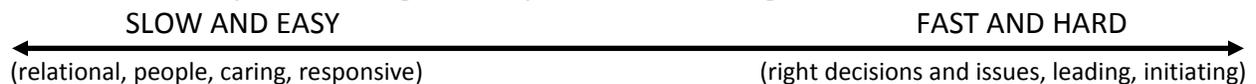
- positive relationships
- doing what is needed

Good emphasis selection early is the key to getting off to a good start.

Either extreme can be dangerous to your leadership:

- miss the train because they move ahead without you
- get so far ahead they mistake you for the enemy and shoot at you

The choice is the pace of change and implementation along this continuum:



Key clues to discern a good balance and which direction to emphasize:

SLOW	FAST
previous pastorate for church was hurtful	previous pastorate for church was supportive
major congregational conflict	people are pretty together and unified
major community change	community and stable
strong accelerated program and activity	church is passive and folks are eager to get going
small church (average <100 in worship)	large church (average >250 in worship)

Ways to gather clues to discern the pace of ministry:

1. Statistics
2. Interview with PPRC – tone, future orientation, pastoral expectations, level of conflict
3. Conversation with previous pastor
4. Church size

If you are in doubt and not a small church, lean toward fast and hard – this is probably needed 75% of the time.

If you are not comfortable with the pace that the church needs ... adapt!

Pastors serve churches, not the other way around!

YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Keep notes on your first impressions and initial insight (your only chance to do so).

Develop an "agenda" of things to get done during your pastorate
(but be flexible to change this agenda as you learn more).

Write a letter to your new congregation (on your present church's letterhead) and invite them to meet you in worship on your first Sunday.

This letter is hand addressed and sent first class.

Express:

- excitement about coming
- that worship is central to ministry and you look forward to meeting them there
- any installation or welcome event(s) date & time
- consider including a family picture

Meet with church staff (and/or key leaders) a couple of week before moving to listen and learn from them as you begin your ministry.

Get a copy of the latest pictorial directory (annotated if possible) and spend at least an hour per day before your first Sunday learning names and faces (and keep working on this during your first few months until you are confident you know the people of the congregation by name).

Call trusted observers and ask their impressions of the church.
See the church through a variety of perspectives.

Get a tour of the church building, so you are familiar with the church facilities before your first Sunday (to lower your anxiety).

Check your attitude – you do literally make a good move!

YOUR FIRST SUNDAY

In advance, have someone knowledgeable about the worship service (literally) walk you through the worship service.

- ask lots of questions about what is appropriate here
- the worship service is a "sacred cow" so make sure that any changes you make are intentional and clear, not accidental and vague

Make sure someone will host your spouse and children (if applicable) during all of the first Sunday so they can get acquainted and have a great day, too. You will be busy otherwise. (*PPRC can arrange this.*)

Make sure someone will formally introduce you in the worship service and tell the helpful vitae and brief recap of why the PPRC and leaders are pleased you are here as pastor (as they have been sharing since the introductory meeting).

Preach a good sermon (which has different criteria this week):

- share your call to ministry (like OT prophets did)
- talk about why you are pleased to be at this church
- affirm your predecessor (in ways that you can with integrity)
- affirm your own transition: your grief about leaving, your excitement about coming, and your anxiety about starting well
- use helpful liturgy (or the following Sunday) including pastoral symbols "be brief, be bright, be gone"

Be sure that you greet people before and after each worship service (requires intentionality if you're an introvert).

- be accessible
- suggest the use of nametags by the congregation the first several weeks

YOUR FIRST WEEK

Establish your ministry (people watch what you do to discern your priorities).

Visit in the hospital and visit some of the shut-ins.

Meet with some community leaders and other pastors in town.

Give bulletin information to the secretary (if applicable) early!!

Begin to schedule meetings with all the staff and committee and ministry area chairpersons (one-on-one) to get acquainted, to hear what has been happening, to hear their dreams, to share some initial insights, and to build a sense of "team".

Have a staff meeting (if applicable), and do lots of listening and sharing insights.

Unpack and set up some of your office – to show that you are "on the job" but also still new here.

Go home early each day and help unpack and arrange your house with your spouse and family.

Remember the wisdom: "Beware of those who greet you at the train."

YOUR FIRST FEW MONTHS

Keep establishing your ministry around your ministry pace.

Finish unpacking your office.

Begin to communicate your plan to get acquainted with the congregation.

- Tell them how you are meeting with leaders individually.
- Explain how you plan to meet persons in the congregation (and how your spouse will be involved).
 - small church is through home visits
 - large church is through cottage meetings
 - midsize is a combination
- Report on your progress as you go to increase credibility and patience.

Preach to establish your ministry (themes that emphasize your ministry pace).

Have a leadership retreat (faster the pace, the sooner the retreat).

- use a common resource for ideas for ministry
- share results of learnings from getting acquainted
- share early vision for worship, discipling, outreach, care and programs

Start "paying the rent" and keep paying it throughout your entire ministry.

Use phone calls, notes and emails to multiply your capacity to touch and care for many people quickly.

YOUR FIRST YEAR

Keep adjusting your ministry pace through regular feedback and discernment.

SLOW	FAST
1. Visits – lots of relational contacts	1. Victories – gain early victories that build trust and momentum on an issue that the church needs to address successfully.
2. Announce plan not to start new ideas for several months, after getting acquainted and listening to everyone.	2. Allies – develop a team of people to help with the victories.
3. Sermons – community, forgiveness, love, patience, reconciliation	3. Sermons – vision, risk, new ventures, faith, confidence, God leading us forward
4. Emphasize congregational care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Absentees b. Pastoral calling c. Lay support groups d. Lay visitation 	4. Newcomer outreach emphasis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Awareness b. Hospitality c. Responding d. Connecting
5. Emphasize quality of programs	5. Emphasize new programs and ministries to meet needs
6. Strengthen existing committees	6. Use ministry teams to get things going quickly with passion
7. CBWA – Caring by Walking Around	7. MBWA – Management by Walking Around

Role of PPRC – meet monthly to get feedback, check pace, and improve ministry

Announce your plan to stay a long time (non-specific time frame)

Don't focus on inactive members!! – they will only come back after the church has changed

Rely on your "ignorance" and "newness" as strengths:

- practice the art of "selective ignorance"
- decide what is better for you not to know or do
- ask lots of questions about how and why things are done as they are

YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL LIFE

Have a plan and schedule your spiritual life.

- Take your announced day off (with spouse, family, friends) every week
- plan and take your vacation with spouse, family, and/or friends
- use personal days for spiritual renewal, prayer, and visioning

If you are introverted, use personal retreats and silent reflection.

If you are extroverted, teach a Bible study or lead a covenant group.

Develop or expand an intentional prayer ministry in the church.

Allow people to minister to you.

Take your ministry seriously, but not yourself. Listen to your spouse!

Laugh, listen, and pray a lot!

Don't let your "being" get lost in all the important "doing" of a new appointment.

Keep your focus and heart tuned to God, who called you to the place and ministry.

PASTORAL TIME-USE AND PRIORITIES

- Time Column: place a + next to your top 4, a – next to your bottom 4, and a 0 next to the middle 4 based on where you will spend the most time.
- Priority Column: place a + next to your top 4, a – next to your bottom 4, and a 0 next to the middle 4 based on what is most important.

Time	Priority	Task	Time	Priority	Task
_____	_____	<u>Visitation</u> – calling in the homes of members or at their places of work in a systematic program to meet each member on their own turf	_____	_____	<u>Community Leader</u> – serving as a volunteer leader in the community to help make this a better world for all of God's children.
_____	_____	<u>Teaching</u> – planning and/or teaching classes for church school teachers, teaching short term classes, teaching the confirmation classes, training laity in evangelism, leadership, etc.	_____	_____	<u>The Leader</u> – serving as the leader of the leaders in the congregation, the person who articulates the vision and focuses the work of the whole congregation on that vision.
_____	_____	<u>Counseling</u> – counseling with individuals on personal and spiritual problems, with couples planning to be married, with those who are hospitalized, etc.	_____	_____	<u>Denominational and Ecumenical Responsibilities</u> – carrying a fair share of denominational responsibilities, participating in ecumenical groups and other cooperative bodies.
_____	_____	<u>Administration</u> – serving as the "executive" to the congregation, working with the committees, helping to plan the financial program of the church, working with committees on the planning and implementing of programs.	_____	_____	<u>Personal and Spiritual Growth</u> – developing & following a discipline of Bible and other devotional study, participating in programs of continuing education, and helping to plan and lead opportunities of growth for others.
_____	_____	<u>Evangelism</u> - calling on the unchurched people in the community, bearing witness to the Good News, calling on prospective new members.	_____	_____	<u>Leading Worship and Preaching</u> – planning and conducting worship services, including sermon preparation and working with others who lead and participate in worship.
_____	_____	<u>Enabler</u> – responding to lay leadership as a "coordinator," helping others identify their own special call to service, and enabling them to respond.	_____	_____	<u>Office Management</u> – handling the correspondence, channeling communication, keeping records, getting out bulletins, newsletters, etc.

(Adapted from The Pastor and the People, by, Lyle Schaller, page 46)

REGULAR MEETINGS OF PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Meet monthly for the first year.

Give good feedback by asking good questions:

- What is going well with the pastor's ministry for the sake of the Mission?

- If the pastor could change or improve one thing to strengthen his/her ministry for the sake of the Mission, what would it be?

- What does the congregation need to be doing for the sake of the Mission?

Clarify expectations and time use.

- Communicate widely and regularly.

- **Be visibly, verbally, consistently, unyieldingly supportive of the expectations.**

CLEAR PROCESS FOR HANDLING CONCERNS

Matthew 18:15-17 is our model, described by Jesus.

Start by going directly to the staff member with whom there is the concern.

- First question: Have you talked with the staff member?
- If they are fearful to do that, have a PPRC member go for support (not to plead the case).
- **No anonymous or secret complaints!**

If the issue is not yet resolved, then bring it to a PPRC member who can then talk with the staff member about the concern.

If it still is not resolved, it comes to the PPRC for discussion and potential resolution (with agreed upon steps and action).

- Is effective ministry happening?
- What will need to change (pastor/staff and church)?
- What steps and actions will be taken to move toward effective ministry?
- What follow support and accountability will be put in place?

If still not resolved, then the District Superintendent may come to meet with Pastor and PPRC.

Remember to follow the whole process – you have a better chance for a good result.