**Questions for Pastoral Candidate Interviews**

Example 1:

1. Describe your conversion and your call to ministry.
2. What is the relationship between God’s sovereignty and man’s free will, pertaining to salvation?
3. How do you relate to other ministries/entities outside the local church?
4. What is your position on the inspiration, authority, and inerrancy of the Bible?
5. How, and on what levels, should the church be engaged with mission work?
6. Describe your personal evangelism practices.
7. What is your policy on pastoral counseling? Please give any background in the field, if applicable.
8. What do you think is the most important thing for you to do during the first year as the new pastor of a church?
9. Describe and explain the ideal church polity structure: pastor-led, committee-led, team-led, deacon-led, etc.
10. How would you describe an effective worship service?
11. How do you go about making changes in the church?
12. What style of public worship and preaching do you prefer?
13. What are your greatest strengths and your greatest weaknesses?
14. What do you like most about ministry? What do you like least about ministry?
15. What do you consider in the order of their importance, your chief duties as pastor?
16. What should be the core values of the church you want to pastor?
17. What interests you about serving at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church?
18. What have you learned in the congregation you now serve that will make you a better pastor?
19. Have you had a positive or negative experience with a church building program?
20. Do you have plans regarding future education? What role do you believe the church should play in your continuing education?
21. Describe the mission of your present congregation. In what ways have your ministry influenced this mission?
22. Describe your leadership style.
23. Give an example of how you have relied on someone else to give you direction in ministry.
24. What measures have you put in place for personal accountability?
25. How do you respond to criticism?
26. To what degree if any do you differ with the historical doctrinal positions of this church?
27. Do you openly identify yourself with any particular political group?
28. Do you consider yourself a Southern Baptist? Why or why not?
29. Do you already know of any changes you might make to in our congregation if you became our pastor? If so, what are they?
30. What would be your most important priorities in the first 6 months as our pastor?
31. How have you approached issues of financial stewardship in congregations you have served?
32. How (and how often) do you prefer to conduct business meetings?
33. Describe an effective worship service.
34. Describe your routine and/or process of preparing sermons.
35. How much time do you devote each week to sermon preparation? How does that compare to time spent counseling or administration?
36. How long do you typically preach?
37. How do you feel about other ministers preaching at our church?
38. Are there any topics you feel uncomfortable preaching about, such as finances or current moral issues?
39. What role does pastoral care and counseling play in pastoring?
40. What duties are more important than pastoral care? What duties are less important?
41. Do you consider yourself a counselor? If so, what type of counseling do you perform?
42. More recently, sexual misconduct within the church has become a more visible issue. What safe guards have you initiated to protect yourself and the church from such misconduct?
43. How do you view your role in visiting members and church guests (visitors)?
44. Do you have any restrictions on the performance of marriages? Describe your approach to premarital counseling.
45. Do you regularly encourage participation in state and associational trainings? Why or why not?
46. Describe your idea of an effective discipleship ministry in the church.
47. How do you equip the church for personal evangelism?
48. How do you view the responsibility of world missions in your current church?
49. Are you a proponent of the Cooperative Program? How do you now allocate financial resources to the local association, state and national mission endeavors?
50. What is the primary role of the deacon body? What responsibilities, priorities or boundaries should the deacon body have in defining our church ministry?
51. What accountability should exist between the deacon body and the pastoral staff members?
52. Describe how your leadership style affects your relationship with other church staff members.
53. What measures of accountability might be put in place for staff members?
54. What type of conflicts have you experienced with other staff members, and how was it resolved?
55. How do you feel about a church member being employed as the church secretary, janitor, etc.?
56. Have you ever had to terminate a church staff member? If so, how did you handle it?
57. How would you respond to other staff members who in your opinion are doing a poor job?
58. What are your salary expectations?
59. On what basis would you expect future raises?
60. How many weeks of vacation do you presently receive?
61. Do you have a retirement plan?
62. What insurance plans do you have?
63. What responsibility do you feel the church has to serving our community?
64. Have you ever worked with ecumenical activities within your community? Why or why not?
65. Tell us about your family. How does your family feel about the possibility of this job change?
66. How can a church best provide support to the pastor’s family?
67. If you were to move here, what type of housing would you be looking for?
68. What motivates you as a pastor?
69. How do you cope with stress?
70. Have you been previously married?
71. Do you take regular vacations?
72. Have you ever been charged and/or convicted of a crime?
73. Do you smoke, dip, or chew tobacco?
74. What is your attitude regarding the social use of alcohol?
75. Do you have outstanding debts with which you are struggling?
76. Do you have any unusual difficulties with your children or teenagers?
77. Do you have any outside business involvements? If so, how involved are you?
78. How familiar are you with the history of our church? Do you have any questions about our past?
79. How familiar are you with the current life of our church? Do you have any questions?
80. What do you see that you like about our church?
81. What questions do you have about this position that have not been answered?
82. Are there any concerns about which we have not asked, which might be of a sensitive nature for you or our church?

**Example 2:**

**Christian Sojourn:**

1. Ask both the candidate and wife to share their conversion experience.
2. Ask the candidate to talk about his call to ministry.
3. Ask the wife to describe her feelings about being a pastor’s wife. Was she aware of his call before marriage? If not, ask her to explain how she has come to view it.
4. Ask the candidate where his calling has led him to this point.
5. Ask candidate why he would be open to a move at this time.

**Family:**

1. Invite the candidate to talk about where he grew up.
   1. Parents
   2. Schools/Involvement
   3. Church experience (may have been covered above)
2. Invite him to talk about his commitment to this family.
3. Invite him to talk about how he plans time to be with his family (if not covered in his previous response).

**Preparation for Ministry:**

1. Ask him to briefly describe his formal training for ministry (this will likely be reflected on his resume); however, it is important for the committee to verify the educational credentials of the candidate. Follow up with any questions that may be raised by his resume or his oral presentation.
2. Ask him about his commitment to continuing education and ask for examples, e.g., certificates, diplomas, specialized training opportunities, etc.
3. Ask the candidate to talk about three books that have shaped his ministry.
4. Ask him what books he has read recently.
5. Ask him if he does personal counseling and if so, on what level, and what is his training in this area.

**Ministerial Experience:**

1. Ask the candidate to talk about where he has served and his most significant accomplishments.
2. Ask him to describe his leadership style.
3. Ask him how he would characterize his ministry at his current church.
4. Ask him he has ever left a church under unfavorable circumstance. If so, why?
5. Ask him what role committees have played in his churches and how he has related to them.
6. Ask him to describe his relationship with deacons in his previous churches.
7. Ask him how he has been involved with the associations where he has served, the state convention and the national convention.

**Theological Orientation:**

1. Ask him what he believes about the Bible.
2. Ask him if he supports the Baptist Faith and Message.
3. Ask him how he sees his role as pastor of the church.
4. Ask him how he views the role and ministry of women in the church.
5. Ask him what he believes about missions (Cooperative Program, International Missions, North American Missions, State Missions, Association Missions, etc.) and how he has led his churches to support missions.
6. Ask him how he understands pastoral authority.
7. Ask him how he understands the relationship between church and community.

**Personal and Professional Strengths:**

1. Ask him how he gets along with people.
2. Ask him to talk about his gifts and strengths for ministry.
3. Ask him what he enjoys most about being a pastor.
4. Ask him to talk about his weaknesses.
5. Ask him what he dislikes most about being a pastor.