

Questions to Ask a Committee

Leadership and Polity

- If a big decision needs to be made, to whom do leaders look for blessing and approval?
- What are business meetings like? Can you describe the most recent one?
- What was the topic of the last contentious business meeting?
- How do you describe your leadership structure?
- What type of decisions call for a church vote? How are other decisions made?
- Can you give an example of the process a new ministry went through from the idea stage to implementation and inclusion in the life of the church (on the calendar, including volunteers, budget line item, etc.)?

Doctrine, Theology, and Denomination

- With which denominational or convictional groups do you affiliate?
 - Why are these important to this church?
- How would you describe this church's theological perspective?
- What are your groups studying?

Mission and Ministry

- What ministries does this church do well? Why?
- What ministries are really struggling? Why?
- What is this church's mission and vision?
 - How was this developed?
 - What percentage of the church could repeat it?
 - How has it affected the life and ministry of the church?
- How does this church participate in missions? Why?
- In what ways does this church witness to its community?
 - What are the perceived needs of this community?
- What does the community say about this church? How do you describe this church to those in the community? Can you give an example?

History and Culture

- How would you describe the voice of personality of this church?
- Why was the church started? What have been the momentous moments in the church's life?
- What is your dream for this church?
- What is your fondest memory of this church?
- Why are you a member here?
- How does this church celebrate?

Expectations

- What are the expectations of the church for my family?
- Given a 50 hour work week, how much time do you think needs to be spent on various pastoral roles (Sermon and Bible study prep, pastoral care, staff relations, administration, personal spiritual formation).
- What does success in this position look like in six months? One year?
- What were the greatest strengths of the previous pastor? What were the greatest weaknesses?

Uncover Landmines

- What might be something I say from the pulpit that causes people to cringe?
- What is the biggest conflict the church has faced?
- What are the biggest obstacles facing this church?
- What is the biggest mistake made by one of your former staff members?
- What does leadership mean to you?
- What have you not told me that needs to be discussed?
- What have I not asked that I need to know?