

## Ministry transition: Guide for church leadership

Contact your [area conference minister](#) to inform them that your congregation is anticipating a pastoral search process. Your conference minister is your first line of support. Invite your conference minister to your next leadership meeting so they can explain the search process. Once the search process begins your conference minister will relate directly to the search committee. Your conference minister will attend the first search committee meeting.

Church leadership will take official action to accept the pastor's resignation and will work with the departing pastor, when appropriate, to determine when their pastorate will conclude. Depending on the situation, church leadership may also want to include the conference minister in this discussion.

1. Inform the congregation that the pastor will be leaving. Generally, the departing pastor and church leadership inform the congregation together, during a worship service.
2. Plan an event of thanksgiving and appreciation for the departing pastor, if appropriate.
3. Determine what type of leadership the congregation needs in this time of transition. For more information view the [Transitional Ministry document](#). The responsibility of arranging transitional interim leadership remains with church leadership and should not be assigned to the pastoral search committee.
4. Complete the [Congregational Information Form \(CIF\)](#). Your CIF should reflect a balanced and accurate description of your congregation. This form will help give an introduction of your church to protentional candidates. Completing the CIF is an act of spiritual discernment, as it provides the opportunity for you to deeply consider who you, as a congregation, are and what your needs are. [Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective](#) and [A Shared Understanding of Ministerial Leadership](#) can be helpful resources for this discernment process.
5. Form the search committee. For information on forming a search committee, read [Guide for the Search Committee](#).
6. Once the CIF has been completed and your search committee has been formed, alert your conference minister. This signals to your conference minister that you are ready begin the pastoral search process. At this point, your church's open position will be advertised on the [Pastoral Openings website](#).