

The Role of the Adventist Pastor

1 Timothy 3 describes the characteristics of the “overseer” – which is part of the pastor’s role. In Chapter 4, Paul gives Timothy further specific directions as to what can be expected of a Minister of Jesus Christ. This includes clarifying what is truth and godliness to God’s people. “Command and teach” hope in Jesus. “. . . set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and purity.” Publicly read Scripture, preach and teach. Give yourself wholly to these things! Your effectiveness should be able to be observed. Persevere!

Gospel ministers should evince:

- An experiential knowledge of and devotion to Jesus Christ.
- A broad knowledge of the Scriptures
- Competence for the tasks of ministry
- A fruitful ministry.

Expectations

At the beginning of each year, the Pastor should prepare a plan for the coming year which should be agreed with his church and the President. Using the previous year’s plan (if appropriate), he should consider what he believes to be his key areas including the resources he has (workers and budget etc.), what specific objectives need to be met or worked towards and how progress on these should be assessed.

The following pastoral objectives are not intended to be mandatory nor are they fully comprehensive, but illustrate the main areas to be considered depending on the role of the Pastor in relation to the needs and expressed requirement of the Church.

Pastoral Care and Nurture

1. Organise a visitation programme for the church involving church Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses. Visit members regularly – at least once each quarter where possible. Give special attention to the elderly and sick, visiting the hospitalised more than once a week as appropriate.
2. Have an ongoing programme for reclaiming former members and encouraging inactive members.
3. Offer support to the sick and bereaved.
4. Promote spiritual growth of members.
5. Pay attention to the special needs of families, children, youth, single people and the elderly.

Evangelism and Church Growth

1. Have an on-going outreach programme.
2. Conduct a weekly Pastor's Bible Class.
3. Train members to give Bible Studies.
4. Seek to baptise the equivalent of 5% of the church membership each year.
5. Aim for at least 3% annual net growth in membership.
6. Have an on-going programme for assimilating new members into the church family.
7. Visit and develop VOP contacts.

Preaching and Worship

1. Plan a sermonic year. Have your preaching plan prepared at least 1 quarter in advance.
2. Conduct a quarterly Communion Service.
3. Determine the needs of the congregation and relate faith and worship to these needs.
4. Support and regularly attend the Sabbath School.

Church Management

1. Conduct not less than a monthly church Board Meeting, depending upon the needs and size of the church.
2. Conduct regular church Business Meetings depending upon the needs and size of the church.
3. Meet with the Elders Committee before all Board meetings to plan the Board agenda, review the needs of the church family and to guard the values of the Church.
4. Train members for service.
5. Have a short-term, medium-term and long-term plan for your church.
6. Ensure that the monthly Tithe and Offerings report and quarterly Church Clerk's report are sent to the Conference/Mission on time.
7. Ensure the church building is satisfactorily maintained with an attractive frontage and notice board.
8. Develop an effective filing system of member's information, church statistics, etc.
9. Plan and provide purposeful leadership that aims to embed the values of the character of Christ into the hearts of your members and the culture & behaviours of your churches.

Finance

1. Preach regularly on the subject of Christian Stewardship.
2. Aim for at least 10% increase in tithe each year.
3. Ensure that the church operates on an annual budget if appropriate.
4. Encourage all eligible members to enrol in the Gift Aid scheme.
5. Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for both church building and contents.
6. Promote and participate in the annual ADRA appeal.

Promotion

1. Promote the programme and interests of the church in general.
2. Promote the programme and interests of the Conference/Mission
3. Promote the programme and interests of the local church.
4. Promote the use of LIFE.info and Focus magazines.
5. Promote Literature Evangelism.
6. Promote the participation of members in church management and outreach.

Community

1. Join the local ministerial fraternity if possible.
2. Participate in local community projects which are not in conflict with the interests of the church.
3. Include non-SDA members of the community in the visitation programme as far as possible.
4. Make friends with people who live in the immediate community.
5. Endeavour to “recruit” known non-SDA clergy to the PREACH programme.

Family

1. Average one day off each week.
2. Spend time in interaction with your family each day.
3. Average the programme so as to have family worship together daily.
4. Plan a minimum of one evening meal per week with all the family present and the TV and computers off.

General

Any other activities required by the appropriate Church/Mission/Conference.

Status of a Pastor

A Pastor is responsible:

- To God who has called him.
- To the character of Christ.
- To the appointing entity.
- To the conference president through whom the Pastor is accountable to the Board of Trustees.
- To the local church members as servant leader.