

Presentation of IPM (Interim Pastor Ministries) – March 12, 2023

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

DATE: Sunday – March 12th @ 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 NOON

1. My “retirement” after 33 years presents a unique problem for MMBC.

- Average tenure of a pastor in the typical church is around six years. Yes, there is a small percentage of churches where pastors stay 10, 15, or 20 years or more, but such longevity is more the exception than the rule. (Soaring Between Pastors, 2021). *Remember, after a long-term pastorate, you will have an interim pastor: you will have an unintentional one, or you will have an intentional interim.*
- That statistic has been the experience of McCoy up to 1990. McCoy had eleven pastors between 1936 and 1990. The average tenure was 4.9 yrs. The longest pastorate was Dave Wilcox (1977-86); the shortest was two yrs. by three pastors (D. J. Duncan; 1936-38 ... G. E. Carlson; 1945-47 ... Art Willis; 1987-89).
- There are unique problems following a long-term pastorate. My DNA is plastered all over and throughout this church. *No one you get is going to be like me; no one!* And yet churches compare the next guy to the long-term and loved pastor. That happened to the church I pastored in Michigan City. The pastor who followed me was so frustrated by being compared to “Pastor Ray”, he referred to me as the “fourth person of the Trinity”. His pastorate was shorter than mine, and it did not go well for he or the church.
- Because of the unique dynamics after a long-term pastorate, there are pitfalls churches face; there are mistakes churches make. A major one is moving too fast. They are anxious & want to get another ASAP.

2. I have a “way forward” (a plan) that I’d like to suggest. Let’s call in some help! Bring in an *Intentional Interim Pastor* through IPM – Interim Pastor Ministries.

- IPM is the largest evangelical Protestant organization dedicated to providing S³ Intentional Interim Pastors to churches in transition (bet. pastors). S³ means their *seasoned, skilled, Strategic*. Since 1990, IPM has served more than 1,300 churches. IPM services 80 or more churches at any given time. [They’re currently serving 75 churches in the U.S.]
- How was I first intro. to IPM? – Dan Schleich’s dad; Walt Barrett. It was he who planted bug in my head.
- I attended two-day training in Chicago (April 2018) by myself.
- In April 2019, I took Pastor Christopher with me to Chicago and went through training again.
- In April 2021, Pastor Christopher, Mark Anderson, Steve Swope & I went through the training together.
- I would like to propose and encourage this church to use IPM. The mission of IPM: “To strengthen churches during pastoral transition for greater effectiveness.”
- The time between pastors is an opportunity ... a “Kairos” moment (Eph. 5:15-16).
- A superb analogy is our reaching out for help to Church Growth Services (Bill Walter & Dick Beall).

3. What will the intentional interim pastor do?

They will lead the church through a 5-Stage Intentional Process. The Interim Pastor functions as a guide while the church is engaged in the process of evaluation & development of its ministry. ***Utilizing IPM’s 5-stage intentional process can be the most vital part of partnering with them.*** The interim pastor is available to provide the dir. for this proc. as he works closely with key church leaders/board.

A. Connect with the people: Building Relationships

The connection stage sets a solid foundation for the work that will be done in the stages ahead. During this stage the Interim est. close relationships, builds rapport & develops trust. To move thru the inten-

tional process effectively, the interim **1)** clarifies & emphasizes the interim process to the leaders, staff, and congregation, and **2)** conducts “listening” interviews, seeking to discern key issues that may need to be addressed. The interim **3)** also forms a Transition Team with leaderships’ participation & blessing.

B. Assess Church Health: Discovering Reality

During this stage the Interim, along with the Transition Team, gathers information from both inside and outside the congregation to develop a clear, up-to-date picture of the congregation & the surrounding community. The interim pastor leads the church in discovering and celebrating what God has done in the church throughout history & currently. This stage is critical because it enables the congregation to discover existing issues, patterns, and the reasons behind them, identifying unresolved issues that may be impeding the church’s ministry effectiveness.

C. Facilitate Action: Addressing Needs

Following the Assessment Report (at the conclusion of Stage 2), the church should determine how it will address the recommendations specified in that report. This stage is vital as the church determines the most appropriate steps to deal with issues that may be hindering fruitful ministry. Some of the action steps will occur during the transition, or under the ministry of the new pastor.

D. Lead Strategic Planning: Discerning Direction

Strategic planning is a process whereby a church leadership team works together to develop or clarify a biblical mission and a compelling vision, discover the church’s core values, and craft a strategy that implements a unique, authentic church model. During this stage the church should answer 3 basic questions: Who are we? Where are we going? How will we get there? Clearing articulating answers to these questions will have a more profound impact on the church ministry’s future.

E. Coach the Pastor Search: Assisting the Search/Pulpit Committee

When a congregation has properly prepared by achieving sufficient health, unity, and vision clarity, it is ready to search for the next pastor who will be a good fit for their church. The Interim Pastor serves at the Church Board’s desire, and can introduce & train in the search process, bring resources the church needs, assist in understanding and interpreting resumes, and help where needed. During this phase of the intentional process, the interim serves as a wonderful facilitator, as the congregation prepares for the calling and installation of its new pastor.

4. Deacon support regarding IPM

A. Deacons’ Meeting – February 2, 2023

- I shared my plans to retire, effective August 27th.
- I explained IPM to the Deacons as an excellent transition plan for McCoy.
- Distributed IPM’s book: Soaring Bet. Pastors: 8 Actions to Thrive During a Pastoral Transition.

B. Between February 2nd through March 2nd

Deacons prayed; became familiar with website; read the IPM book; had further mtgs. with each other.

C. Deacons’ Meeting – March 2nd

- We talked more about IPM.
- We had about 45–60 min. with Todd Musser, IPM’s Vice-President of Church Engagement.
- We voted one-by-one and had unanimous support to utilize IPM to assist us through our pastoral transition process.

5. Close with reading select portions of Soaring Between Pastors (2021).

6. Resources:

- Soaring Between Pastors: 8 Actions to Thrive During a Pastoral Transition (2021)
- IPM’s website: www.interimpastors.com