

Not FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

Transitional Pastor Ministry

In August 2020, the SBC of Virginia hosted a two-and-a-half-day Transitional Pastor Training. This specialized training prepared experienced pastors for how to lead a church through a transition. Normally, when a church loses its pastor, a pastor search committee is quickly formed to begin the process of finding a new pastor. In the meantime, they often call an interim pastor to stabilize the church by filling the pulpit each Sunday. But there are some situations in which the church has been through a difficult time (decline in attendance, struggle with inner conflict, losing sight of its mission, etc.) and is not ready to call a pastor. This is a church that would benefit from a transitional pastor.

This kind of pastor is prepped and ready to lead the church family through a very important and strategic time. His role is not only to shepherd the flock but to guide them through a healing process—to identify specific issues that have impacted the church and help resolve them. The main objective of a transitional pastor is to prepare the church for its new pastor.

Henry Webb from LifeWay, along with Dave Bounds, Steve Bradshaw, and Darrell Webb from SBCV, led the training weekend. They emphasized that transitional pastor ministry is not for the faint of heart. This is a critical time for these churches, and they need someone who can give an objective view of their strengths, weaknesses, and changes needed. Eight pastors were trained and equipped at the 2020 Transitional Pastor Training. From that group, Leroy Davis, pastor of **Hopeful Baptist Church** Montpelier, shared this encouragement with Steve Bradshaw:

Steve, I want to say again how much I appreciated the Transitional Pastor Training this week. Dr. [Henry] Webb is so good and such an amazing individual. But the SBCV guys are no slouches. I gained a new appreciation for David, Darrell, and you... I am so proud to be associated with the SBCV. I wish this relationship would have started years ago.

Transitional Pastor Ministry is greatly needed for the revitalization of many churches. Churches that were once spiraling down due to a history of conflicts and forced terminations will reverse their direction and begin to grow again. Whether you are a church that needs a transitional pastor or a pastor/retired pastor who senses God is calling you into this ministry, now is the time to respond to the voice of the Great Shepherd! We have plans to provide access to the training sessions online this year. ■

RESOURCE:

For more information on the Transitional Pastor Ministry, contact Steve Bradshaw:

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