PRIORITY IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS
FOR THE SPECIALIZED TRANSITIONAL MINISTER
AND CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT
The STM and congregational leadership will use this document as a starting point for identifying priorities for their time together. These priorities will be pursued together, and shall serve the work of transition. At intervals prescribed below the priorities will be re-evaluated, with an additional evaluation of the STM’s work when the contract is completed.

B. POSSIBLE PRIORITIES:

1. FOSTER THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION
   Goal: That opportunities for corporate prayer be expanded and enhanced.
   Process: Since prayer for the church’s ministry, her community and her next called pastor is vital, the STM will work with the leadership to encourage frequent and regular corporate prayer, both within and apart from worship services.

2. INCREASE THE LEADERSHIP’S SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT
   Goal: That the capacity to intentionally discern and pursue the Lord’s will be enhanced.
   Process: The leadership will engage in developing basic spiritual practices for leaders such as described in Ruth Haley Barton’s book, Pursuing God’s Will Together.

3. MAINTAIN THE REGULAR PASTORAL MINISTRY
   Goal: That ministry to the members of the congregation, including preaching, shaping and leading worship, and providing pastoral care, be the main priority.
   Process: The preaching of the STM is an effective dimension of helping the congregation through our transitional time. The pastoral care of the STM brings encouragement and healing to members of the congregation.

4. MAINTAIN THE REGULAR MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH
   Goal: That the ministries and programs already underway be effectively continued, or revised/re-created, if needed.
   Process: The STM and leadership will evaluate existing operations, and if needed, create and implement an organizational structure that will serve the
congregation well into the future.

5. **CLARIFY THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH**
   Goal: That the mission of the church be clarified with a deeper understanding of the identity of the congregation.
   Process: The STM will employ the skills and training needed to guide the church in discovering or rediscovering its identity and purpose.

6. **PREPARE THE WAY FOR FRUITFUL MINISTRY**
   Goal: That the congregation come to understand its history with grace and clarity.
   Process: The STM and leadership will objectively mediate issues in a way that will help the congregation move on and prepare the way for fruitful ministry in the future.

7. **EMPHASIZE FELLOWSHIP AND RECONCILIATION**
   Goal: That the congregation experience authentic fellowship, and the quality of the relationships within the congregation will be strengthened.
   Process: The STM and leadership will foster the congregation’s ability to have honest and graceful conversations. Such methods might include council training and the formation of a Transition Team.

8. **RESOLVE FEELINGS RELATED TO GRIEF**
   Goal: That the members of the congregation experience emotional healing.
   Process: The STM and leadership will help the congregation move on by exploring and addressing issues of grief and assisting them in resolving any grief which was experienced in their unique circumstances.

9. **RESOLVE CONFLICTS INVOLVING PEOPLE OR ISSUES**
   Goal: That areas of conflict, if identified, be dealt with in a way that demonstrates effective conflict management and resolution processes.
   Process: The STM will work with the leadership to identify unique concerns in the church using the training that the STM received in congregational dynamics.

10. **STRENGTHEN THE LEADERSHIP BASE OF THE CONGREGATION**
    Goal: That the leadership base of the congregation be strengthened.
    Process: The STM and leadership encourage the participation of the people in leadership and service opportunities knowing that the transitional period is a particularly good time to address these priorities.

11. **IMPROVE THE CONGREGATION’S COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**
    Goal: That changes be made to positively influence the congregation’s communication system in the future.
Process: The STM and leadership listen well and adapt to the needs of the congregation in the areas of structures, processes, and procedures.

12. INCREASE THE POTENTIAL FOR THE NEXT PASTOR’S MINISTRY
Goal: That the importance of the coming of a new pastor be recognized and preparations will be made for that time.
Process: The STM and leadership will demonstrate a love for God and his church that will contribute to the health of our congregation going forward.

13. STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS
Goal: That connections with other congregations, the classis and the ministries of the denomination be reestablished and strengthened.
Process: The STM will model a good relationship with such entities and will encourage the congregation in its participation with them.

14. INCREASE THE FINANCIAL HEALTH OF THE CONGREGATION
Goal: That our passion and support for vital ministries which further the work of the congregation be invigorated.
Process: The STM and leadership will offer and encourage basic stewardship training.

C. IMPLEMENTATION
1. Within the first three months the STM and congregational leaders would together identify the priorities that the STM and church leadership would focus on. It is recommended that 3-4 priorities be identified initially (more is fine), with others being added later, if needed. It is the STM’s responsibility to update the office of Pastor Church Resources with this list of priorities.
2. At the 9 month mark, the STM and congregational leaders would intentionally review the progress and make adjustments as needed. For example, some of the original priorities might have been accomplished or set aside and new objectives added.
3. At the 15 month mark, the same would happen.
4. At the end of the STM’s time, a final review would be conducted and the Evaluation Survey would be completed by congregational leadership, aided by input from the STM, and sent to:

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    Pastor Church Resources - STM Program
    1700 28th Street SE
    Grand Rapids MI  49508-1407