

Factors Challenging Pastoral Employment

There is attrition factor where experienced pastors have been retiring, a few pastors have transferred to another field, some experience unfortunate illness, and some pastors have been released from service over poor performance or improper lifestyles.

There is the economic factor since October 2008 which has been stifling hiring and pastoral moves.

There is the solidarity factor. Specific conferences have been appealing for more solidarity with the Seventh-day Adventist Church beliefs.

There is the education factor where college or graduate theological education is expected of pastoral candidates.

And there is the experience factor with an expectation that pastoral candidates have some evidence of pastoral skills in volunteer leadership. This may be from Bible study instruction, Christian literature sales and distribution, summer youth camp ministry, itinerant preaching, local church office participation, and delivery of devotions for church school students. These and more volunteer ministries demonstrate a proclivity to pastoral ministry. Consistent modeling of lay leadership can serve to propel pastoral candidates toward candidacy in pastoral ministry.

There is also the call factor. If a potential pastor can testify to God's call to the pastorate, his or her pastoral candidacy is improved.

Finally, there's the mentor factor. Pastoral candidates with mentors may find themselves easier appointments to the field; because the more experienced pastors know of the novice's contributions. Additionally, peers already in a pastoral position give stronger recommendation to state conference administration of a colleague's availability.