

Clergy Restoration

Operations Manual of the Restoration Committee of the Minnesota-Iowa Baptist Conference. (Author: Rev. Nils C. Friberg, PhD, with additional input from Rev. Rob Boyd, Minnesota-Iowa Baptist Conference Director of Church and Pastoral Vitality. We have co-chaired this committee since 1992.)

This manual is written for church and district or national denominational leaders who lead or participate in the

the goals of the specific restoration process with being ready to flex with the peculiarities of each case. We've had to adjust our approach to some degree with each case.

Later we will comm

repercussions of the misconduct and outcomes or the restoration process, perhaps never accomplished.

- c. Restoration is primarily to God, the candidate's marriage, family, and local church. The church-at-large will not be brought into view until all the other levels of restoration are reached.
 - d. A major concern here: when can this candidate be considered safe enough? This demands lengthy and carefully considered, prayer-filled judgment on the part of a wise committee. We agree with the important warnings against a superficial rushing to forgiveness and restoration by Jack Hayford, (*Restoring Fallen Leaders*, Regal, 1988). He argues for a thorough process that involves full repentance, reconciliation, and recovery.
2. Initial Evaluation of the Candidate.
- a. The candidate meets first with the MIBC Director of Church & Pastoral Vitality who composes a rough outline of the candidate's history and events relevant to our committee's work.
 - b. Having assessed the candidate as appropriate for the process, the MIBC Director of Church and Pastoral Vitality contacts the church involved, and interviews two or three well-informed people from that setting.
 - c. He then contacts the established chair of the restoration

3. We plan our first meeting for orientation of the committee (without the candidate present) at which time documentation of the investigative report(s) is ready to be presented. The report(s) should include the following information:
 - 1) Specific occasion(s) when the behaviors of moral failure occurred, with dates, times, places, and complete descriptions of relationship issues involved.
 - 2) Descriptions of how the complainant reacted or responded to these behaviors.
 - 3) Effects of the behaviors upon the complainant, whether physical, emotional, spiritual, social, job-related, etc.
 - 4) Names of possible witnesses or persons to whom the complainant reported these behaviors.
 - 5) A statement from the complainant about what she/he needs in order to feel safe and secure again. A carefully worded summary of this testimony needs to be written and signed by the complainant testifying that the document truly represents what happened.
 - 6) The interviewers need to co-sign with the complainant, and date their signatures.
 - 7) A report of how discovery was made and processed, and efforts made to this point to assist the victim(s).
 - 8) The committee will examine the reports, and in addition:
 1. Gather phone, e-

- d. We listen for: sense of responsibility, repentance, defensiveness, minimization, denial, empathy for victim and larger group around them, insight into self.
- e.

interrupt powerfully in such encounters, so coaching and preparation of both sides must be done in advance, knowing that there is danger of revictimization or personal injury.

9. Public meeting at the end of the process:
 - a. In some cases, we have arranged for a public meeting to which we invite people from the involved church.
 - b. We send out invitational letters which invite the attendees to express their concerns and hopes for the candidate.
 - c. At the meeting a statement from our district office is read about the purpose and nature of the committee's process, with its features, and limitations.
 - d. Leaders of the restoration committee report on the general process that has been accomplished, and their satisfaction with the results.
 - e. The candidate repeats words of repentance and requests for forgiveness.
 - f. Prayer for the candidate is led by several. Care needs to be taken not to confuse this with a re-ordination which can only be done by a local church body. In some cases, however, the candidate has been asked to turn in ordination papers to church authorities at some level. Re-establishing these would need to be done under the guidance of a district executive minister.
 - g. Public meetings of this sort can bring painful memories to the awareness of abuse victims who happen to be present. The committee should have a couple of professional people in the wings to counsel people who may express need for immediate counseling help at the meeting; referrals may be needed. No mention of any victim's name is to be made at this meeting!
10. Finally, we prepare a letter that is given to the candidate which carefully states:
 - a. We do not certify the candidate – we only report on our process; we don't promise placement or protection for the candidate.
 - b. We can, however, offer counsel to any search committee that seeks information about the candidate's process with us.
 - c. The letter summarizes the process with the candidate, tells how many times we've met, and the general features of the work we did together.
11. We invite the candidate and the original church involved to re

- b. Personal spiritual disciplines, formation, and mentorship
- 3. Is the candidate willing to take accountability for daily decision-making and attitudes concerning dealing with sexual feelings and exercise of influence?
- 4.

Interfaith Sexual Trauma Institute: www.csbsju.edu/isti [a huge bibliography and many articles on this site.]

Faithful and True Ministries: www.faithfulandtrueministries.com.

Advocate web: www.advocateweb.org.

A thorough discipline/restoration policy from the Christian Missionary Alliance Church can be read at: <http://www.sheridanhope.com/files/PDFs/DISCIPLINE%20POLICY.pdf>. This policy lacks a description of a thorough process, but adds helpful information on steps to be taken by denominational officials.

A thoughtful article (accessed 11-23-10) from a Seventh-Day Adventist author:

<http://www.atoday.com/magazine/2002/01/second-chance-can-fallen-pastors-be-restored>.

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There are historical documents useful to this work of restoration: (1) "Guidelines for Restoration of Ministers" available from the Minnesota-Iowa Baptist Conference office (published in 1989). (2) "Moral Failure: Model Policies and Procedures for the Baptist General Conference Churches, Districts and National Office" (published in Feb., 1997. Both Rev. Boyd and I were members of the commission that wrote that policy.).