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## THE PASTOR-IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM – A BRIEF OVERVIEW

*For over 25 years, PIR Ministries (formerly known as “Pastor-in-Residence”) has been providing a safety net to pastors and their families who have experienced an exit from ministry; as well as resources to help pastors avoid the issues that can lead to crisis, burnout or moral failure – issues that place pastors “at-risk” for an exit from ministry. It is a restorative ministry – bringing hope and support to pastors during difficult transitions.*

### WHAT DOES THE PASTOR-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

The Pastor in Residence program is a ministry specifically designed for pastors and ministry leaders in transition. This restorative process provides a safe environment for working through the loss associated with an exit from ministry.

**IT IS AN INDIVIDUALLY TAILORED PROCESS SO THAT THE EXITED PASTOR AND HIS FAMILY CAN FIND HOPE AND BEGIN DISCOVERING THE NEXT STEPS GOD MIGHT HAVE FOR THEM.**

**DURATION:** The program is six months long and can be extended for another six months

**ELEMENTS:** During this time, the exited pastor and his wife will:

- meet regularly with a Support Team – both for encouragement and to work through carefully designed studies that allow the Pastor-in-Residence and his family to safely address both the issues that lead to an exit and the effects of an exit - including feelings of isolation, bitterness, and loss;
- participate in an assessment of individual passions, skills and styles;
- experience accountability through mentoring relationships; and
- engage in specifically selected ministry opportunities during the course of the process. (As determined by the church leadership)
- connect with the local church body for fellowship and participation in the normal routines of its life.

### CONTEXT: THE REFUGE CHURCH

In some ways, a Refuge Church can be compared to the "cities of refuge" that were established in Old Testament times. Scattered throughout the land, these cities were places of safety and security where a person in danger found protection (*Numbers 35:6-34*).

A Refuge Church is a church where people understand the importance of extending hope to those who are wounded in life. It is a church characterized by a vision for restoration and a willingness to serve God’s lost servants. It is a place of protection and security in time of trouble, instability, and loss. In that

environment, terminated pastors feel the freedom to be vulnerable and honest, and to work through their sense of loneliness and rejection. It is a safe place for the exited pastor and his family to find hope and begin discovering the next steps God might have for them. The Refuge Church:

- **Assists** a ministry family in navigating the loss associated with an exit from church ministry toward the future God has for them.
- **Supports** a ministry family as they make the many adjustments in daily living that comes with being exited.
- **Integrates** a ministry family into the life of the church and community.
- **Encourages** a ministry family through prayer, hospitality and listening care.
- **Simplifies** the return of a ministry family to vocational ministry when they are restored.

### THE HEART OF THE PROCESS – THE SUPPORT TEAM

Within the Refuge Church a Support Team is identified, 2 to 3 couples (basically a small group) who meet regularly with the exited pastor or pastoral couple. They are responsible for mentoring the PIR and his family through the program. A facilitator is selected who reports back to the pastor or his designate on the progress of the program.

**TRAINING:** PIR Ministries requires and provides training for the support team, conducted by a PIR Ministries representative. The typical time frame for training is 3-4 hours. The cost for the Training Workshop is \$600.00. Travel costs will be covered by the host church. This amount covers all the program materials, reference documents and two *PRO- D Assessments* for the Pastor-in-Residence and spouse.

**COMMISSIONING:** Once the Support Team is trained and ready to enter this ministry, we strongly encourage that they be publicly set apart in a service of consecration. This helps to invite the entire congregation into the process from the beginning.

**MATERIALS:** There are three resources, *Especially For Pastors* (an over view of the program), *The General Guide* (provides a reference for implementing the PIR program), and *Support Team Affirmations* (workbooks for the support team)

### THE PASTOR-IN-RESIDENCE

Those in the program are called *Pastor-in-Residence* (PIR) – this designation allows for a restored sense of dignity, as well as making it possible for the PIR to include this experience on his/her resume.

**ROLE:** It is a “quasi-staff” position, and each church is free to set the parameters for the PIR’s involvement in staff meetings, ministry activities and roles. This is defined in the “Covenant” that is signed by the Pastor-in-Residence and the pastor of the Refuge Church. We strongly encourage that any ministry roles and responsibilities be kept to a minimum. The primary function of this experience is to bring healing and renewal to the wounded soul of a pastor and family.

It is important to note that when a church welcomes a Pastor-in-Residence, they are not hiring a new staff person – although the exited pastor is given the title of “Pastor-in Residence.” It has proven

beneficial to maintain a clear understanding that involvement in the Pastor-in-Residence program is not a path to becoming permanent staff of the Refuge Church. This also can prevent any misunderstanding on the part of the church regarding the expectations of the Pastor-in-Residence. The process has a beginning and an end, creating the opportunity for the PIR to move forward into a new ministry role.

**FINANCES:** As a result, the Refuge Church does not pay a salary. The PIR's finances are typically raised outside the church setting – either by use of a severance package, working part or full time or by seeking financial support from family and friends. We do ask the Refuge Church to add a line item in its budget, designated for the PIR program, so that the PIR can have access to any donated funds.

**THE CALL:** The calling of a Pastor-in-Residence, and the process of setting up the program, are outlined on the *Pastor-in-Residence Critical Path*.

**PRO D ASSESSMENT:** available to both the PIR and his wife, the PRO-D Assessment is a state-of-the-art, professional development instrument for leaders that provides valuable insight into an individual's:

- Motivations (Missions)
- Abilities(Competencies) and
- Behaviors(Styles)

**SUGGESTED WORKSHOP:** PIR Ministries suggests the church take advantage of hosting a *Conflict Resolution* workshop during the course of the program. The goal of this workshop is to help the PIR, and the leadership of the Refuge Church, learn to manage conflict in the church redemptively; resulting in stronger relationships, less conflict, improved team-building, better job performance, and a more credible witness for Christ.

**CELEBRATION:** The conclusion of the Pastor-in-Residence program should be celebrated by the entire church in a public service.

**COACHING:** We encourage the PIR to take advantage of a *coaching experience* upon returning to a ministry position. PIR Ministries has enlisted the help of highly qualified coaches who can be of help in this area. It is a great way to solidify the issues learned during the PIR process. The Refuge Church may wish to consider providing a scholarship for this purpose.

## **AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR CHURCH**

PIR Ministries is always seeking churches interested in serving as Refuge Churches to the exited pastors among us.

If you know someone who would benefit from the resources PIR has to offer, or if you and your church family are interested in more information on becoming a Refuge Church, please contact your Regional Director or email us at [info@pirministries.org](mailto:info@pirministries.org). More information about PIR Ministries can be found on our website at [www.pirministries.org](http://www.pirministries.org).

## **SOME QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:**

**DOES PIR MINISTRIES HELP WITH PLACEMENT AT THE END OF THE PROCESS?** No; typically, the Pastor-in-Residence would work in conjunction with denominational or church placement services. We are confident that an exited pastor, once he completes the PIR process, will be better equipped for the next phase of ministry.

**DOES EVERYONE RETURN TO FULL-TIME PASTORAL MINISTRY?** No, but those who complete the process gain a better understanding of God's work in their lives and clearer insight into the shape of their calling for the future. They also make significant strides in being restored to a healthy relationship with the Church.

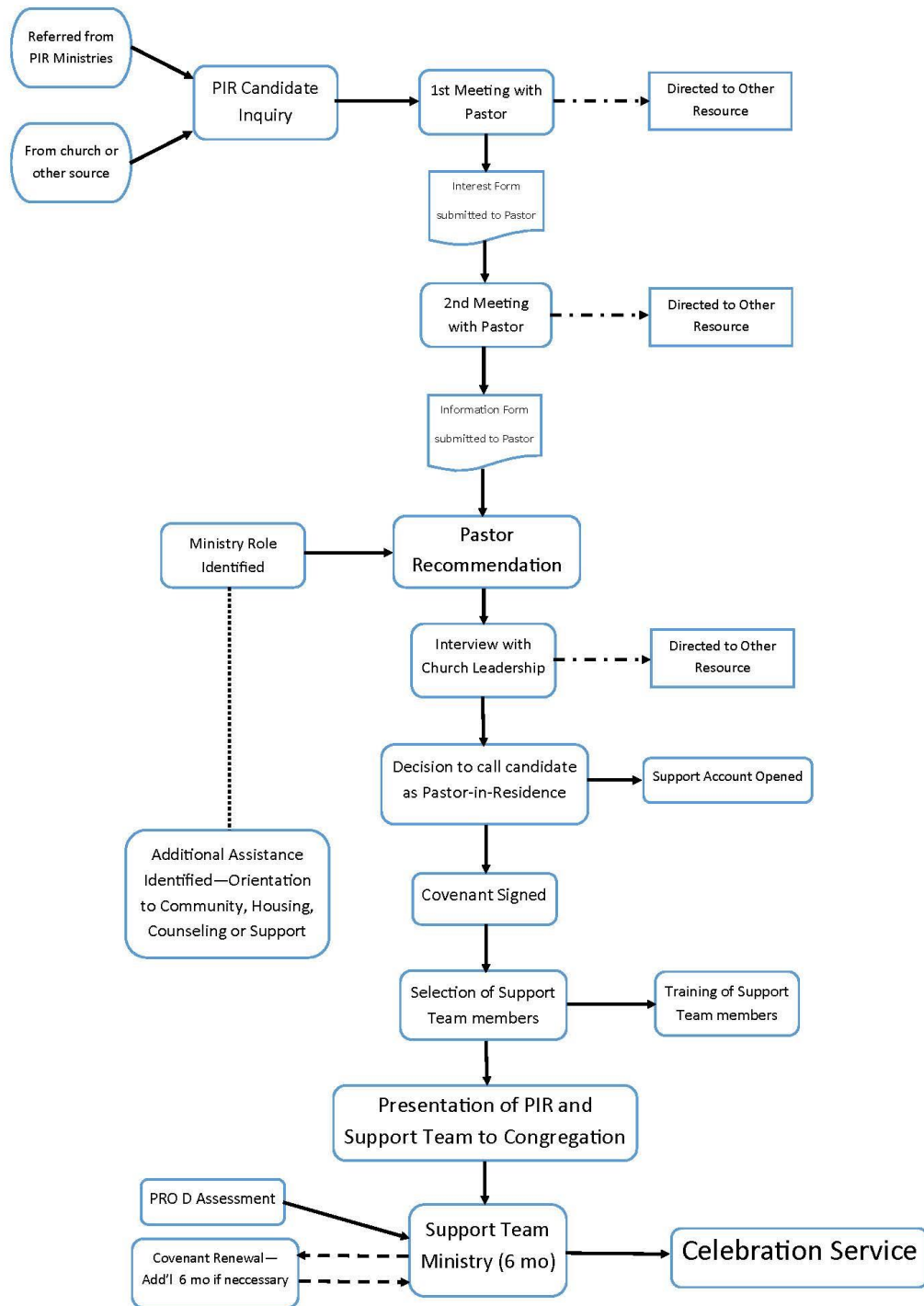
#### **WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF PIR MINISTRIES?**

PIR Ministries began in the heart of Dr. Chuck Wickman, who was grieved by the crisis experiences which drive many ministers from the local church permanently. Chuck's conviction was that the loss of a pastor was a tragic squandering of the talent, experience and ability meant for the Kingdom of God.

Dr. Wickman mentored the first Pastor-in-Residence at his own church in the mid-1980s. Since then, the ministry has broadened both its reach and scope. Building upon its core program, it now provides resources to "at-risk" pastors, addressing the critical issues of burnout, conflict resolution, moral compromise and failure.

*PIR Ministries is a 501(c)3 non-profit ministry, incorporated in the state of Virginia.*

### Pastor-in-Residence Program Critical Path



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