



Pastoral Expectations

What should I expect of my pastor?

Grace Communion International (GCI) deeply appreciates the wonderful job its pastors are doing in the service of the people of God. Because a pastor is a servant-shepherd to his parishioners, and because he is an ordained minister of GCI, many expectations are placed on him— expectations by church members, by family, by peers, by the pastor himself and by the denomination. To help each pastor better fulfill his duties and meet expectations, the following items will help him be aware of some of the criteria by which his job performance is judged by his denominational supervisors.

Pastors are expected to

Model and teach spiritual formation. Spiritual formation involves teaching and practicing the spiritual disciplines, so each member and the congregation as a whole continually grows in imitating Jesus and in extending his ministry in their lives. Jesus commanded the church to teach people –to obey everything I have commanded you (Matthew 28:20). Pastors must admonish members to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Preach and teach the gospel. Pastors must preach and teach that salvation is by grace through faith. Christians have repented and accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Jesus Christ is totally sufficient for the Christian. The Christians relationship with God is through Jesus Christ, not through our obedience to the law. Pastors should be able to teach orthodox Christian belief and practice. Pastors are expected to support and teach the Statement of Beliefs of the Grace Communion International.

Provide inspiring worship services. The pastor should model and teach participation in corporate worship. Weekly and annual worship services should include congregational input and involvement in designing the worship. Every part of the worship service should be directed toward God, to honor and praise him. This includes well-prepared, transformational sermons. Topical sermons and special sermons such as dramatic renditions may be appropriate on certain occasions, but expository sermons should be the norm.

Be a transformational leader. A transformational leader is not simply a manager who tries to maintain the status quo. Pastors should lead their congregations to Jesus Christ and to a full understanding and acceptance of historic, orthodox Christianity. The ministry of all believers should be a prime focus. Various needed ministries should be encouraged and developed. Pastoral leadership encourages and sees that these ministries are taking place properly. The goal throughout is that members be transformed to become more like Jesus Christ in their thoughts and behaviors.

Model and teach stewardship. Pastors should teach members to practice stewardship in all aspects of their lives—in the use of their time, their energy and their resources. Pastors should teach that financial giving is an aspect of worship. Pastors should model proper Christian stewardship for their congregations. It is the corporate policy of GCI that all employees tithe.

Promote small group ministry. Pastors should continually educate the members of their congregations in the importance of being a part of a small group, and they should keep the congregation apprised of how to start or enter a small group. It is a denominational goal to involve as many of our members as possible in small group ministry.

Prepare congregations for relational evangelism. Pastors must teach and motivate congregations to fulfill the command Jesus gave his disciples in the great commission (Matthew 28:19-20). The goal of outreach ministries is not just to do good works but to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Pastors should focus their congregation's attention on mission, evangelism and discipleship.

Participate in continuing education. Pastors are expected to fulfill the continuing education goal set by Church Administration by either enrolling in an approved graduate school or seminary degree program, or participating in our Pastoral Development in-service education classes.

Pastors should meet the performance standards, time frame and established goals for the reading, listening and writing assignments set by Church Administration.

Serve the congregation faithfully. Though many duties can be delegated, and small groups can provide much care and nurture for the members, the pastor should be present at the serious times of transition in the lives of the members. The pastor's presence is expected in times of serious illness and in times of serious conflict within families or

among church members. The pastor is expected, as much as is reasonably possible, to be present for funerals, weddings and other important occasions in the lives of the members.

Identify, develop, mentor and empower leaders. Pastors should seek to promote church growth by identifying gifted people in the congregation who can provide leadership for congregations now and in the future. Pastors are expected to be developing more pastors and other ministry leaders and are encouraged to plant new congregations in the community.

Be faithful to the Statement of Beliefs and the policies, practices and procedures of the denomination. In addition to abiding by the Code of Ethics for Elders, all pastors should adhere faithfully to denominational teachings, guidelines, policies and parameters. All necessary reporting of information, church reports, ministerial expenses and other information required by denominational headquarters should be completed accurately and within the time frames allotted.

The U.S. Church Administration staff takes these expectations seriously and uses them as criteria by which the effectiveness of pastors is measured.

The regional pastor evaluates and reports on the performance of each pastor in his region. Church Administration maintains regular communication with pastors and with church members by telephone, electronic and postal mail. The data resources we have at headquarters along with files, reports and surveys will help monitor how pastors are doing in regard to these expectations.

Denominational administrators are thankful for the wonderful jobs being done by pastors in GCI and try to pass on positive comments as much as possible. We also communicate any complaints or causes for concern.