



Pastor Appreciation is a wonderful event for any pastor and church. We appreciate your interest in celebrating Pastor Appreciation and exploring new opportunities to better encourage and support your pastor. Unlike lay people, pastors are called into a unique occupation with its own set of complexities and demands. A pastor's role seems never finished as he/she gives his/her very all to the church: He/she may be feeling alone, sacrificing family time, having to perform at a high standard, with his/her efforts and needs often going unnoticed. Everyone likes being appreciated. Pastors are no exception.

Pastoral Care, Inc. is the leader in providing care and assistance to pastors, churches, and denominations. One of our goals is to provide educational support to encourage pastors to stay in the ministry. America is losing too many of its pastors, many of whom feel underappreciated.

Pastoral Appreciation is a great opportunity for individuals and the church, as a whole, to show their love and appreciation to their pastor. As with any thing of value, it requires time and planning. We encourage you and others to explore the possibilities, being objective and creative spending the time and resources needed for success. Pastoral Care, Inc. has provided suggested ideas for your convenience and consideration. May God bless you in your efforts in blessing your pastor!

Pastoral Care, Inc. Staff

Why Honor Our Pastors?



Some people may ask, “Why should we have a Pastor Appreciation Day”? Listed below are some reasons to consider for having an appreciation day.

- If we believe God has sent us a pastor for such a time as this, giving thanks and appreciation to our pastor is really showing thanks and appreciation to God.
- Pastors are people we turn to for help. Many of our pastors “burn a candle at both ends”, working long hours, balancing heavy demands, experiencing stress and burnout, and unrealistic family demands. Pastors usually give out more than they receive, often feeling unappreciated.
- Many of our pastors state that they do not have a close friend and often feel isolated, set apart from everyone else, giving their all for the ministry, without receiving much thanks and validation.
- According to one study:
 - a. 72% of pastors report working between 55 to 75 hours per week.
 - b. 84% of pastors feel they are on call 24/7.
 - c. 53% of pastors report that the seminary did not adequately prepare them for the ministry.

- d. 78% of pastors report vacations or other family times have been cut short due to ministry duties and expectations.
 - e. 70% of pastor do not have someone they consider a close friend or someone they can confide with.
 - f. 57% of pastors believe they do not receive a livable wage.
 - g. The #1 reason for pastors leaving the ministry is that they feel they have a vision and direction for the church but the church isn't willing to go there. They feel they are not making a difference.
- Pastors are people too. Everyone likes to feel appreciated.
 - Most agree that every church wants to be known as a loving church. A loving church openly shows the community a love for their shepherd.
 - When a pastor is appreciated and encouraged, his/her performance usually improves. Strong pastors will lead strong churches. Strong churches will make an impact within their community. If you want to make a positive impact in your community, then strengthen your pastor!
 - The retention rate in keeping a pastor is much higher for a church that shows love and appreciation than for those who do not. Too many churches have a reputation for pastors coming and going. They never learn the importance of respecting the office of a pastor.

Planning is the Key

The following are suggested ways to start your planning of your Pastor Appreciation Day.

1. Form a committee to oversee the planning on your event. They should include people from your church with a representation of different ages, gender, and race. It should be kept small enough to be effective. Some committees want this to be a surprise for the pastor, small groups are better at keeping secrets.
2. Plan dates, details, theme, and responsibilities. Most churches start out with a date (usually sometime in October) choosing a theme for

the event. This allows the committee to brainstorm on various ideas and start delegating responsibilities early enough to make the event successful.

3. Plan for the necessary resources and funding for your event. Some churches may or may not have enough funds to complete the event. Some will rely on a fundraiser while others may ask the church board to include pastor appreciation within their budget. Planning also include availability of other resources, reservation for parks, convention centers, equipment, etc.
4. Make the proper announcements to the church and community. This is a great opportunity for the church to show its community love and respect for their pastor. Most people want to be in a church that is caring.
5. Meet regularly to monitor your progress. A sound plan includes completion to the end. Avoiding “surprises” should be a goal.
6. Be sure to thank everyone who has donated items or time to make Pastor Appreciation a success! From entertainment to cleanup, everyone should be recognized. This will ensure future success in next year’s pastor appreciation event.

Pastor Appreciation Ideas

Listed below are suggested ideas on the many ways churches or individuals can show their appreciation to their pastor. This event is more than just glorifying a man or woman. The celebration should be more focused on honoring the role of a pastor, openly acknowledging appreciation, respect, and love for the person who holds that position. Churches and believers cannot afford to show disrespect to God by not honoring the messenger He has sent to them.

We hope and pray these ideas will be a help to you and your church in honoring your pastor. Be sure to include the whole family when honoring your pastor.

- Plan a church banquet, picnic, fair, luau, or other types of festive events. Be sure to plan for the facilities, speakers, music, singers, family members, special guests, flowers, plaques, etc.
- Ask your mayor to proclaim this day is “Rev. _____ Day.” Have the mayor present this certificate during the service.
- This Is Your Life. Get pictures of the pastor and his family, showing them in a presentation to the church. Have recordings of past influential people the pastor knows and have them share what your pastor has meant to them or perhaps tell a funny story they both have shared. Bring in someone special to the service for a surprise, such as a grandparent, parent, or old friend. Honor your pastor with gifts and cards.
- Give your pastor and family a much-needed vacation. This is not only a blessing for your pastor and family, but it is also a testimony to your community of who you really are as a church. Even the weakest member will tell others of what their church is doing for their pastor.
- Provide a significant gift. Be aware of the pastor’s needs, such as a new car, suit, golf clubs, computer, golf membership, or special love offering. The cost of any gift could be covered through special offerings or budgeting the amount needed.
- Create a Money Tree. Have members of the church donate money and clip it to the branches on a tree to present to him. Churches will differ on how they present this. Some will bring it out on the day of the event. Others may want the pastor to see the tree grow with “appreciation leaves”.
- Have different departments of the church or Sunday school classes make their own banners to be a part of the celebration. Encourage them to sing a song or write a poem to their pastor.
- Have the youth group present a drama/skit with the theme of honoring the pastor.
- Have a sign-up sheet for everyone in the church to take the pastor and family out to dinner. Try to do this for a whole month.
- Have a sign-up sheet for everyone in the church to volunteer to clean or do odd jobs for the pastor and his family. Encourage people to be creative, such as washing and cleaning the pastor’s car each week. Have someone help with the housework and cleaning of their house. Do small repairs to the home, such as painting,

mowing, etc. Give the family baseball or theme park tickets for the day.

- Encourage members to bring cards of encouragement. People may want to make their own cards, include poems, or share special times with the pastor. Many things in life are very simple. An act of kindness and/or encouraging words are always a heart-felt way to show appreciation.
- Provide a fruit basket and flowers. Include unusual and creative gifts that bring a smile.
- Conduct a “captain” theme. Have someone dress up as a pirate or seaman coming into the service dragging a treasure chest. Put out a note for everyone to bring snack foods, such as candy, chips, beef jerky, cheese crackers, cracker jacks, etc. a few weeks before hand. Open the chest stating the pastor is the captain of our ship, bring out a captain’s hat signifying he is the captain, then bring out a compass as every captain needs to navigate our course (with the Lord’s help), collapsible glass to be constantly looking for our destination (Heaven) and yelling “land ahoy!” to its crew, rope to keep our vessel from drifting (we have the Bible to keep us from drifting), an anchor to hold us secure (anchored in Jesus) and then give the pastor the rest of the treasure. Each time the pastor eats from this chest, he/she is reminded of what the church has given to him/her.
- Use special talents in blessing your pastor. Some members may be talented in sewing and embroidering, woodwork, painting, metalwork, etc. and provide their special gift to the pastor.
- Relieve your pastor from speaking duties for a month. You can approach your pastor for a list of people he can trust to bring a message that is complimentary to his vision.
- Have the whole church sign a huge card, sign, or quilt. This involves everyone in the church and can bring a lasting reminder of the appreciation.
- Make/provide T-Shirts for the pastor and his/her family to wear during the event with a logo or words that state “Pastor Appreciation 20__.” This adds a little fun and it is something that the pastor can wear in the community to brag a little on his church.
- Allow your pastor to share his/her vision for the church.
- Encourage each member to do and say something special to the pastor sometime within the month specified.

- Schedule a testimonial service where people stand openly to share what the pastor and his family has meant to them. Contact a few key people to come to share in front of the church of how much the pastor and family has meant to them.
- Bombarding the Pastor Day with texts and emails. We do not necessarily suggest this with larger churches due to the overwhelming numbers. This could keep your pastor from his/her personal time, performing tasks and other duties around the church. (Pastoral Care, Inc. often tries to limit the pastor from being on the phone day and night or creating an atmosphere where pastor is on a 24/7 reply to his/her messages)
- Buy gospel music or books for your pastor.
- Decorate your church, church bus or vans with balloons and signs.
- Some communities have a theme or plan of improvement, such as planting certain type of trees across the community or having an object/statue donated. Plant a tree in honor of the pastor. Take up money to donate a statue to a park in the pastor's name. Make a new park and name it in honor of your pastor. Name a wing of your church in honor of your pastor. Bro. _____ Auditorium, etc.
- Advertise your event to everyone in the community.
- Provide a tie of the month to the pastor for a whole year.
- Provide a plaque honoring this day. Be sure to include a gift card/love offering to bless your pastor.
- If your pastor has been there for awhile, show pictures of the progress and building projects completed.
- **New Idea:** Make posters that can be placed in the front yard of every church member stating: We Love Our Pastor at_____. You Will Love Him/Her Too!
- **New Idea:** Place banners outside of your church with the words "Pastor Appreciation Day" as advertising for the community to see. You can use these banners every year!
- **New Idea:** Create an atmosphere of thanks. Have the church board to personally thank the pastor, pastor's spouse, and children individually and in front of their church congregation. Do this in a sincere manner. The leadership can set a personal example of thanking God for the one He sent to your church.

Continued Support

A healthy church will continue to show love and support for their pastor year round. Here are some reasons to continue encouraging your pastor.

- An energized pastor will keep on going, creating, improving, and giving himself/herself to improve the church with greater outreaches to the community.
- Develop a pastoral care team to examine and develop ways to continue to bless your pastor with an adequate compensation and benefits.
- Encourage your pastor to attend conferences and church growth seminars. Pay for his/her way to the conference.
- Encourage pastoral care team to plan an idea for a sabbatical for the pastor.
- Be aware of the needs of the pastor's family, which includes their children. Provide financial help to attend church camps, scholarships, and jobs for them if needed.
- Surprise the pastor with unexpected gifts and trips.
- Be sure to remember the pastor's birthday, anniversary, and Christmas, as well as the members of his/her family. Too often family members are not ever recognized.
- Become involved in the pastor's vision for the church, openly listening to sermons, being on time, say "amen" during the service at appropriate times, attending activities, and only saying positive things about the pastor and church. Be loyal.
- Invite your friends to church as a way of witnessing and supporting your pastor's vision.
- Tell your pastor, "Thank you for being our pastor!"
- Constantly look for ways to show appreciation. Develop ways to keep your pastor at your church. Honor his/her office.
- Be protective of your pastor's personal time with his/her family. Respect boundaries and personal time off.
- Volunteer to work in the church.
- Take personal responsibility to create excitement and enthusiasm.

- Help eliminate stress and negativism in the church. Help teach and mentor younger and weaker Christians to have a spirit of unity.
- Support pastoral care ministries like Pastoral Care, Inc. so that resources will be available to your pastor when needed. Encourage your pastor to call such ministries for help.
- Pray for your pastor and family. There are tremendous pressures and demands that are associated with being in the ministry that most lay people never fully understand. Pray for God's direction and protection.

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