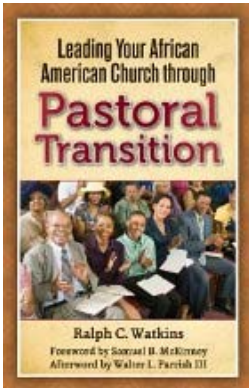


New Book Helps Churches Navigate the Challenges and Opportunities of Pastoral Transition



Valley Forge, PA – Transitions in pastoral leadership are intense experiences for congregations. How churches handle these periods of transition and succession are critical to their success. In his new book, *Leading Your African American Church through Pastoral Transition*, Ralph C. Watkins guides both the incoming pastor as well as the church leaders through this often challenging time.

Watkins focuses specifically on the African American church which, perhaps more than any mainline church culture, is facing massive pastoral transition. Civil rights-era pastors are retiring, and the next generation is up to lead. Thus, African American churches are doing more than simply moving from one pastor to the next; in these transitions are generational-divide issues like never before.

In addition to biblical principles, helpful insights, and practical strategies, Watkins offers real-life examples of churches that have navigated a significant pastoral change. He looks at transitions in which:

- A woman assumes the pastorate for the first time in a church's history
- A new leader must fill the shoes of a popular pastor who led the church for decades
- An iconic, legendary pastor retires and chooses his replacement
- The new pastor unknowingly walks into a contentious and difficult situation

Finally, Watkins provides a practical postscript with:

- Keys to a quality goodbye
- A congregational survey to determine "who we are as a church"
- Guidelines for establishing a screening team
- Suggestions for a new pastor position description
- The search/call/appointment process and contract issues

About the Author: Ralph C. Watkins, DMin, PhD, is assistant dean of African American Church Studies and associate professor of Society, Religion and Africana Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary. He is also director of Christian education for First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Los Angeles. An active teaching scholar, Dr. Watkins has more than 250 publications and conference presentations to his credit. He is the author of *The Gospel Remix: Reaching the Hip Hop Generation*, and co-author of *From Jay-Z to Jesus: Reaching & Teaching Young Adults in the Black Church*, both from Judson Press.

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