

Preparing for a Congregational Visit

1. Make the visits as quickly as possible. If scheduling becomes a problem, work it out so that either you or your partner goes ahead with the visits (whichever of you is available when the minister or the session can meet.) If the minister and spouse are not both available when you can meet, then just go ahead with the minister. If dinner is not a convenient time, do breakfast or lunch or no meal. **Meet** however possible!
2. Telephone the minister (and the Clerk of Session if necessary) and inform them that their Session has been scheduled for a congregational visit this year. Indicate that the process involves your team meeting with the minister (and the spouse, if possible) and later with the Session. Let them know that a questionnaire will be sent along that will guide the process with the intention of making it more meaningful.

Do not ask for the questionnaire to be returned to you. Work out an agreeable time when you can meet with the minister and also a later date, soon after your meeting with the minister, when you can meet with the Session. This can be at a regular Session meeting.

If you are going to meet with the minister over a meal, have the minister select a restaurant near the minister's home for that meeting.

3. When you meet with the minister, use the questionnaire as a basis for your discussion. However, be flexible and discuss other strengths and weaknesses/problems as the minister sees them. Feel free to widen the scope of the discussion in order to get a good feel for how things are going in the minister's life and in the life of the congregation.
4. Send in a voucher to Lana Dumrauf at the Presbytery office for reimbursement of meal expenses.
5. Confirm with the minister the date and time of the meeting with the Session. Normally, you would attempt to be the first item on the docket of a regular Session meeting, taking about one hour for your discussion. The opening of the meeting would take place with the pastor present and then the minister may be excused while you meet with the Session. Once again, the agenda for the conversation with the Session should be loosely based on the questionnaire.
6. After the meeting a **Follow-up Report should be filled out by your team and submitted to Lana Dumrauf, at Presbytery.** The Report is a simple check list but please do add some kind of narrative report when there are concerns or affirmations that should be called to the attention of the Pastor to Presbytery for that particular congregation.
7. Do send a "Thank You" letter to both the minister and the Clerk of Session.
8. If you have questions, get in touch with Linda Williams (412-366-3627); lbwlortz@aol.com or Dennis Molnar (412-561-2431) dmolnar@wallacememorial.org

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