

Appointment Process Protocol For Introduction/Take Out of Pastors in Transition

Conversations with incoming pastors: (Sending D.S. initiates the conversation and then makes arrangements for the receiving D.S. to contact pastor to share more complete information about the appointment)

Prepare – Do thorough homework (have complete facts about salary package, worship attendance, parsonage/housing, church staff, etc.)

Pray – Prepare your heart and mind.

- Do not make calls while driving. Make sure there are no interruptions while visiting with pastor. Find a quiet place for making call.
- Treat the pastor as if they were the most important person in that moment. (Remember, this is probably one of the most significant conversations they've had in the recent years). This is important to them.

Get to the point – “After prayer and consultation the Bishop and Cabinet have made your appointment to...”

- Rehearse rationale for appointment, emphasizing missional reasons, noting how the pastor's gifts intersect with the needs/opportunities present in church/community, etc.
- If possible, use language that communicates, “This meets your request and this serves the mission.”
- Receiving DS's job is to be cordial, pleasant, informative, affirming. Tell them a little about the church, mission field, ministry potential. Keep the conversation missionally-focused.
- Remind them that this is a confidential conversation.
- Invite them to prayerfully discuss with spouse and get back to sending DS in a specified, but limited time frame. (a.m. calls – respond in afternoon/evening. Afternoon or evening calls – respond the following day). Unless special circumstances dictate, don't allow an inordinate amount of time to mull over the decision.

(Confirmation of acceptance of appointment comes back to sending DS)

- Receiving DS should provide their phone numbers and contact information to incoming pastor and make themselves available.

“Can I say ‘no’?” – (Official response) “The appointment has been made. Both you and I are in an advisory capacity to the Bishop regarding your appointment, so what do you want me to share with the Bishop about why you’re reluctant to accept this appointment?”

- The point is to remind them that this is not a request, it is an appointment that has been made after considerable conversation, prayer and deliberation.
- (Personal response) Affirm that you think this is a good/right appointment that matches their gifts and serves the mission. Inform them graciously, but firmly, that should they turn it down, the next offer will not be as good (in terms of salary package) as this one.

Next Steps – (Receiving and Sending DS) Coordinate the explanation that there will be an introduction meeting at the new church as well as a meeting with PPRC at their current church to take them out. The pastor will be present to announce that they have accepted new appointment.

NOTE: The “introduction meeting” always takes place prior to the “take out” meeting.

Protocol for setting up meetings:

- Call PPRC chair to set up introduction meeting.
- As a courtesy, call the present pastor and let them know that an introduction meeting is scheduled to introduce the person to follow them.
- Make sure the dates are open on your calendar, incoming pastor’s calendar and PPRC/Church calendar.
- Never share identity of pastor with PPRC chair.
- “This is not an interview...this is an introduction. The appointment has been made.”
- Prepare incoming pastor to dress professionally. (Don’t be tardy, avoid mis-communications about time/place)

- Take them to dinner first to calm nerves, develop relationship and prepare them for the meeting. If possible, drive together to the meeting. Rehearse the order and flow of the meeting. (Introduction, prayer, pastor shares personal gifts/vision/successes, PPRC stories).
- Never mix PPRC business with these introductions. Official salary package discussions can take place between the pastor and PPRC chair after the meeting to go over the details.

The “Introduction” meeting:

- DS should take charge of the meeting/agenda.
- Begin in a positive manner: “One of the best parts of this job is to be present for these introductions where a new relationship between clergy and congregation...pastor and people is about to begin!”
- Let the PPRC know you’ve listened to them by lifting up qualities of the new pastor that intersect with their needs/desires, etc.
- Turn to pastor: “Tell us about yourself, your passions, your ministry call/gifts, some significant ministry you have shared, developed, etc.” (this should be brief, concise, positive – never overbearing).
- Then turn to the PPRC members: “Share about ministries here that mean a lot to you, about why you came to this church, why you stayed, what you love about this church.”
- If possible, a visit to view the parsonage after this introduction is always preferable...unless there are some troubling issues with the parsonage. If that’s the case, be intentional about setting up another date to visit and view the parsonage.
- Don’t forget to walk through the announcement process. “Help me understand the best way to communicate this news to your congregation.”
- Start and end the meeting with prayer (perhaps ask the new pastor to close with prayer).
- **Very Important** – Emphasize the critical role of the PPRC in making this transition successful and complete. (Use the Bishop’s airport gate image) A journey of a thousand miles can’t be completed unless the “ground team” makes the final connection. Careful evaluations, intentional consultations, prayerful deliberations have preceded this appointment – now it’s your job to bring it home in a gracious and positive manner. Make this connection complete. (Say good-bye to former pastor graciously and welcome this new pastor warmly).

The “Take Out” meeting:

- Call PPRC chair to set up meeting.
- The pastor will be present. Begin by saying, “Your pastor has something they need to share with you.”
- They should say something like: “The Bishop has offered and I have accepted...or I have decided and the Bishop and Cabinet have discerned...”
- The pastor must take ownership of this process. PPRC needs to hear that the pastor is ready to move and has fully accepted the appointment.
- Give space for the committee to share their emotions/appreciation for pastor.
- DS should then explain the process going forward.
- “It is no act of disloyalty to your incoming pastor to have genuine grief in saying good-bye and letting go of your current pastor. And it is no act of disloyalty to your current pastor to have genuine excitement and anticipation for welcoming a promising new relationship with the incoming pastor.”
- Then ask the current pastor to leave: “John, if you’ll excuse us we need to talk about a few transitional details...”
- Talk with the PPRC about process, future introduction meeting. Remind them that the salary package is the one voted on at Fall Charge Conference (unless prior adjustments have been approved).
- Remind them that the receiving church is responsible for moving expenses.

Appointment Process Protocol for introduction/take-out for pastors receiving new appointments.

Missouri Area United Methodist Church

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Prepare: do homework, have in mind facts about salary, housing, church
rehearse reasons for the appointment: missional reasons, gifts of person
coordinate with the district superintendent for that pastor

Pray: prepare your heart and mind
do not make calls while driving
be sure there are no interruptions while visiting with pastor, find a quiet place
for making the call
treat person as if she or she was the most important person in that moment

Get to the point: “after prayer and consultation you have been appointed...”
share reasons for appointment
note their gifts, how appointment meets their preferences
share information about mission field – why you?
information on salary, housing
invite person to pray, discuss with spouse, get back to me by ____
remind them that this is confidential conversation

Can I say ‘no’?: the appointment has been made
I don’t make the appointments but I’ll gladly share with the bishop any
response you want me to (official response)
I think this is a good thing... (personal response)

What happens next?: there will be an introduction meeting at the new church
there will be a PPR meeting to take you out – & you will be present to announce

At the end of the conversation there is a ‘hand-off’ to the new superintendent. If we have talked with person about possibility of being lifted up for an appointment and person has given permission the understanding is the appointment is already made. If person asks “what if I say ‘no’” remind them that a ‘no’ to an appointment means you lose the guarantee of an appointment. If a person says ‘no’ a second offer will be less than the first.

Appointed clergy calls “sending D.S.” to share response and begin to think about “take-out” meeting.

Receiving clergy returns call to newly appointed pastor and begins to schedule the “introduction” meeting (which takes place prior to “take-out” meeting).

Pastor A – church A

Pastor B – church B

Call Pastor A

Call PPR chairperson of Church B to set up introduction meeting

Courtesy call to Pastor B

Hold introduction meeting at Church B, plan for announcement
Call to PPR chairperson of Church A
Take-out meeting at church A, pastor to be present
Plan for announcement

Introduction meeting:

Call PPR chairperson to set-up meeting, describe meeting as introduction and not interview

Call current pastor

Set time and place of meeting

Before introduction meet new pastor in separate setting and share questions you will ask

him/her to be ready to answer at the meeting

Questions: tell about your call to ministry

tell about significant ministry you have shared in/developed

Have bio in hand for the introduction

Introduction of new pastor:

Biography

We have appointed ____ to ____ so that ____

Ask new pastor to answer questions you shared in advance (brief answers)

Ask question of the PPR committee – introduce self, share what about this church

caused you to fall in love with this church/become involved in this church

Emphasize the roll of the SPPRC to welcome and help the transition

Avoid details about compensation, benefits. DS, new pastor, PPR chairperson can meet

after the meeting to go over details

Plan for announcement

Start/end meeting with prayer (perhaps have new pastor do closing prayer)

Pre-arrange a quick tour of the parsonage in most cases

Take-out Meeting:

Call PPR chairperson to set meeting

Pastor present – ‘your pastor has something to share’ (pastor shares news of new appointment)

“Bishop has offered and I have accepted or I have decided or I have discerned...”

Pastor takes ownership of this process

Let committee share appreciation for pastor

DS explain process going forward

Process used to make new appointment

Note introduction meeting to come

Plan announcement

Be mindful that some on PPRC may not understand UMC process and this may be new

Remind PPRC they will be responsible for moving costs in transition & mention

Conference

assistance with cost (depending on apportionment payments)

In 'take-out' meeting you can share ways to say 'good-bye' to a pastor; how to say 'hello' to a new pastor. You can also share that 'grieving for Pastor A is not a betrayal of Pastor B, and being excited for Pastor B coming is not a betrayal of Pastor A'. The PPR is the ground crew in making connection for the appointment – pastor leaving, pastor coming.

Phones: do not answer phone when in conversation with a pastor or PPR

Lateness: do not be late for any introduction or take out meetings.