



## SIX MONTH VISIT GUIDE

After a new pastor has been installed in a congregation, there will be a visit to/conversation with the Congregation Council and Pastor by the Dean of the conference, to review the progress of the ministry of the congregation and the pastor.

**TIME:** Six months after the new Pastor is in the congregation.

**WITH WHOM:** The Dean will meet separately with the Pastor and the Congregation Council.

**DURATION:** Approximately one hour.

**PURPOSE:** To review with Pastor and Congregation Council, the progress of the ministry of the congregation for which Pastor and congregation are mutually accountable.  
To encourage open communication between Pastor and Congregation Council.  
To offer the resources of the Bishop and the staff of the synod to respond to needs.

**MATERIALS:** Copy of the Congregation Profile developed during the vacancy, particularly the goals set for the congregation.

**PROCESS:** The Dean contacts the Pastor shortly after the Pastor commences ministry in the congregation, to welcome them into the conference and to set a date for a meeting with the Pastor and Congregation Council, approximately six months after the Pastor begins. The meeting should preferably not be part of a regular meeting of the Congregation Council, but should be devoted to the visit of the Dean.

The Dean should confirm the date in writing and enclose a list of the goals set by the congregation at the time the profile was developed (see page 6, item 36, of the Congregational Profile). The letter should indicate that progress in attaining these goals will be discussed.

The president of the Congregation Council should open the meeting with prayer, introduce the Dean and ask the Dean to proceed.

Following a brief explanation of the purpose of the meeting, the goals should be read and a discussion of the progress made toward the accomplishment of each goal should be engaged in. There should be opportunity to discuss other aspects of the ministry about which the congregation is excited or concerned, and time should be set aside to talk about new goals that are emerging and other positive things that are taking place in the congregation.

If appropriate, the opportunity should be taken to encourage the Congregation Council to set new and perhaps more specific goals for the ministry of the congregation.

During this discussion, there should emerge a rather good impression of how well the pastor and congregation are working together. Bring this portion to a productive conclusion.

Next, ask the council to comment on how well the relationship between the pastor and congregation has been progressing. The Pastor should also be requested to comment on how well they feel the relationship has been progressing.

Offer the resources of the Bishop and the staff of the synod to respond to the needs of the congregation.

REPORT: Complete a brief report to the Bishop, with copies to the pastor and Congregation Council, including:

- Date of the meeting
- Name and address of the congregation
- Name of the pastor
- Progress achieved on each goal
- Concerns which emerged about which the Bishop should be aware
- Comments

NOTE: **This process is not used for Assistant/Associate Pastors.**

In the case of Assistant/Associate Pastors, the Dean should contact the new Pastor to welcome them into the conference. Contact should also be made with the senior pastor, suggesting that they conduct an assessment of the ministry and the developing team relationship approximately six months after the Assistant/Associate began, using as the basis for the evaluation the position description developed for the Assistant/Associate.