

AN EXIT INTERVIEW

Appendix "C"

The Bishop or Bishop's representative may wish to conduct an exit interview with the outgoing pastor.

An exit interview can be very valuable. It is time for debriefing, for learning any details that may have been unknown, for hearing the pastor's hopes for the congregation, and for clarifying the relationship the departing pastor will have with the congregation after departure.

Unless there are very unusual circumstances, the interview can be most beneficial for both pastor and congregation. Members of the church council should be present for the interview with the departing pastor.

The interview can be informal and lighthearted while also being frank and substantial. Two cautions: Don't try to reverse the resignation decision. Don't debate and argue with the pastor. Listen carefully and designate someone to take notes. During the exit interview the following questions may be posed:

- What were your expectations regarding the congregation when you came here?
- In what ways are we different now from when you came?
- What five areas have given you the greatest sense of satisfaction and fulfillment during your ministry with us?
- What were your five areas of greatest frustration?
- How do you view the next ten years of this congregation's life?
- What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this congregation?
- What do you see as your strengths and weaknesses?
- What influenced you to decide to move?
- What can we do to support our new pastor?
- How can we help you (and your family) in your transition?

It is imperative to clarify the relationship the departing pastor will have with the congregation after his/her departure. The synod constitution, Article VII, Section 8 states:

- “No ordained minister shall preach or perform any ministerial act within the parish of another pastor except at the latter's request or consent, or visit or perform ministerial acts in time of service by an interim pastor except by invitation of its Congregational Council.”