

Dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship
THE EXIT INTERVIEW – PASTOR

Introduction:

This conversational interview is to take place in person as soon as possible and completed within 30 days of the pastor's departure with representatives from the Committee on Ministry. The COM members will lead the exit interview, and provide a written report to the Committee.

The Pastor should have the Presbytery's policy on Ethics for Departing Pastoral Leaders

These guidelines are organized for dissolutions that are pastor or church initiated.

Purpose of Meeting:

The purpose of the exit interview is:

1. The COM would also like to hear about reasons for departure, the way the "good-bye" was addressed, recognition of service, and closure.
2. To reflect upon the strength and weaknesses within the system to identify issues which may need to be addressed.
3. To give the pastor a chance to voice feeling and to be affirmed about the future.
4. To provide a source of information for use by the COM in working with the church
5. To provide data/counsel for the next pastor, if appropriate

Dissolution Pastor Initiated:

If the pastoral relationship has been a healthy one, the exit interview may take place before the pastor has moved.

Questions on feelings:

1. What are your feelings at this point?
2. What are your anxieties or regrets?
3. What do you feel good about?

General Reflection Questions:

1. The mission and ministry of the church is a response to God's call to serve both within the church and beyond its doors. What are some of this church's effective ministries within the congregation? What are some of the effective ministries to the surrounding community and beyond?
2. In what ways did you help in these ministries?
3. How has the church changed/grown during your tenure as pastor?
4. Describe your working relationship with session, with committees and individuals.
5. If any, what surprises did you encounter after you came to _____? Were there any barriers or disappointments to effective ministry?

6. What has been your greatest satisfaction(s) during the time you have been here? What has been your greatest frustration(s)?
7. How did the housing arrangement work out for you?
8. If applicable, how was your family received?
9. Has the session and congregation appropriately thanked the pastor for his/her faithful service?
10. . What would you like the COM to know in order to offer guidance to the PNC/APNC as the church begins a search for the next called pastor(s)?

Dissolution Church or Presbytery Initiated:

If the pastor is leaving under duress/conflict, the interview may be after the pastor has left the community. An exit interview for such a pastor can be an opportunity to help the pastor to say goodbye, leave with closure and set the stage for the future. The interview may help the COM improve and help with the church's future.

Questions on feelings:

1. What are your feelings at this point?
2. What are your anxieties or regrets?
3. What do you feel good about?

General Reflection Questions:

1. The mission and ministry of the church is a response to God's call to serve both within the church and beyond its doors. What are some of this church's effective ministries within the congregation? What are some of the effective ministries to the surrounding community and beyond?
2. In what ways did you help in these ministries?
3. If any, what surprises did you encounter after you came to _____? Were there any barriers or disappointments to effective ministry?
4. Describe your working relationship with the session, with committees and individuals.
5. Please describe the areas of conflict and where they existed.
6. How did the housing arrangement work out for you?
7. If applicable, how was your family received?
8. Are you aware of any grief or regret associated with your ministry or departure? How might the issues be addressed? What would be helpful?
9. Identify the strength and weaknesses within the system which may need to be addressed before calling the next pastor.