

ON BEGINNING AGAIN! THE ROLE OF THE NEW PASTOR

Most of you know what it means to “begin again”. And hopefully you feel good about your new appointment. That will make it much easier. You also know how to make a smooth transition, so the suggestions here are minimal reminders.

1. Become familiar with laity expectations:

Please take the time to have conversations with key laity early in your new appointment.

2. Remember your family!

Remember, if you have family, schedule time to be with them. Often pastors have a ready group of people with whom relationships will develop and fresh challenges will be met. However, in this time of stress and transition, one’s own spouse/child may suffer loneliness.

3. Expect grief:

Do not be surprised if you suddenly miss your former congregation more than you thought you would. The familiarity and comfort of your former church may control your thoughts during the early days of your move.

4. You are still a stranger:

Remember: This new congregation does not love you yet nor should it be expected to. More likely they love your predecessor. We are not called to be loved BUT to love and serve. Serving others with compassion, sensitivity, openness and competence will win their respect. The love will come later!

5. Meeting with PPR Committee:

Once you move, arrange a meeting as soon as possible with the PPR Committee and discuss their expectations.

6. Moving plans:

Be clear with PPR chair and your predecessor concerning your plans for arrival on moving day. Discuss with the chair of the PPR Committee your feelings about the best way and time to be introduced to the congregation. Arrive at a mutual agreement. You may wish to consider the “Service of Celebration of An Appointment” during your first service. (attached)

7. Basic commandment:

Remember the fundamental commandment: “Speak no ill of your predecessor.”

8. Parsonage ready?

Every effort is being made for the parsonage to be ready for you when you arrive. If there are problems, deal with them thoughtfully and avoid unnecessary disputes. If there are major problems, please call the District Superintendent who will be prepared to deal with your concerns.

9. Things to remember:

Some things to bear in mind as you begin your new pastorate:

Do not lose heart.

You come to love more than to be loved.

You seek to understand more than to be understood.

You are willing to listen even if not heard.

Never lose your nerve!

Affirm everyone and everything you can.

Pray. And pray some more.

Have Fun!