Duties and Responsibilities of Members as Liaisons

OVERALL RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of each member of the Committee on Ministry (COM) can be seen in two major parts:

1. To act as liaison with assigned churches; to provide them with support; to understand them; and to make reports to COM with recommendations for action as needed.
2. To participate in committees, commissions, task forces, deliberations and decisions of the Committee on Ministry.

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The concept of assigning liaisons as the primary way through which COM carries out its work with congregations and pastors is rooted in the belief that knowing people and understanding the congregation and its setting form the foundation for effective Presbytery partnership with the pastor and congregation.

Each member is asked to be the primary liaison with 3 – 5 churches. The objectives as a liaison are:

1. to become familiar with the history and activity of the congregation of which they are most proud;
2. to become familiar with the current activity of the congregation (how do they do stewardship/what is mission to them);
3. to become acquainted with the pastor and, if at all possible, the pastor's family;
4. to become aware of how decisions are made, activities planned and carried out;
5. to become aware of the strong lay leaders among the congregation or session;
6. to become aware of the congregation's vision and strategies for reaching that vision;
7. to become aware of the points of tension within the congregation/session or between session and pastor/or among staff people; and
8. identify barriers to growth (growth being both numerical and growth of members personally).

Being able to meet the above objectives will require developing relationships of trust between you and the pastor, you and the session or members of the congregation. Developing this trust will require time, communication, actual presence among them and, most of all, genuine interest in another congregation—who they are and how God is at work in and through them.

DUTIES OF THE MEMBER AS LIAISON WITH ASSIGNED CONGREGATIONS

1. Pray for the pastor(s) and congregation.
2. Ask to be put on their newsletter mailing list.
3. Attend any special events they sponsor—chicken suppers/bazaars, etc.
4. Request the opportunity to sit in on session meetings just to bring greetings from COM, hear concerns, and then to observe what they do and how they do it.

5. Worship with them 2 or 3 times a year. (This is not a possibility for clergy, unless a pulpit supply can be arranged, or a pulpit trade).
6. Request birthdays and anniversaries for the pastor and pastor's family—send cards.
7. Arrange through the clerk of session, or other session members for a card shower showing appreciation of the pastor(s), or something similar for the pastor at least every other year or on a yearly basis.
8. Request pastor(s) to provide you with their ordination date (or obtain from Stated Clerk's office), so that Presbytery as a whole can recognize 10/15/25/30/35/40 year anniversaries. You can remember the ordination anniversary annually, and perhaps coordinate this with the congregation's way of showing appreciation of the pastor(s).
9. Guide the session and congregation during times of difficulty or during transitions between pastors. (Directions and training for all the parts of transition between pastors, from saying good-bye to saying hello will be provided) (Exit Interview; Training the PNC.)
10. Counsel the session in regard to the salary and benefits of the pastor(s).

<u>DUTIES OF THE MEMBER AS LIAISON WITH COM</u>

1. Report what you are discovering to COM.
2. Request assistance from COM when you encounter obstacles or points of confusion with congregation or pastor.
3. Remind COM of contract renewal dates if you are working with interim, or supply pastors.

Approved by Committee on Ministry, March 11, 2003.

LB:smm
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