

Assimilation of Pastors into Charleston Atlantic Presbytery

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are many and one of the missions of the church is hospitality and fellowship. A parish often provides much of this to a new pastor and the Presbytery realizes the need for more intentional when a pastor begins his/her call to a church within Charleston Atlantic Presbytery.

When COM approves a pastor, a *friend* will be assigned to this pastor. The *friend* will be a member of COM and will provide a report each month to the Commission. It is the friend's responsibility to initiate and maintain the connection with the pastor for a period of 6-8 months from the beginning of the pastor's call.

Expectations:

- During the first 10 days of the pastor's tenure, the friend will make contact by phone, email or text to introduce one's self and establish a mutually convenient time (30 minutes) for the initial telephone conversation. This is a great time to ask questions of the pastor such as what are the living arrangements (i.e., renting until later, bought a house, looking for a Realtor, etc), the feel of the community and the church, children, parents, schools, etc. This may initially sound like "small talk", yet it can be the foundation of the pastor's story.
- During the initial phone conversation, schedule a time about two-three weeks later to have another telephone – a good time to follow-up on some of the things from the first conversation. Also, a time to talk about upcoming CAP meeting, any concerns the person may have with community, church or other. Answer questions the pastor has about anything for which the friend can be helpful. Before conversation ends, schedule a convenient time in a month.
- The Friend should initiate a telephone call, lunch, an in-person visit if possible each month with the pastor through the first 6-8 months.

The hope is within a 6-8 month period, a true friendship will form and the meetings, conversations, etc will happen naturally.