

Form: Sample Letter

(Month, Day, Year)

To: Session Moderator and Clerk of Session
Presbyterian Church
Address
City, State, Zip Code

From: Committee on Ministry (COM)
Congregational Relationships Subcommittee
Presbytery of North Puget Sound

Subject: COM Visit with your Session and Pastor on (Month, Day, Year)

The COM is required by the Book of Order to make regular visits with Ministers and Sessions within the Presbytery. In accordance with this guideline, on (date), elder (name) of (name) Presbyterian Church and the Rev. (name) of (name) Presbyterian Church will meet with your Pastor at (time) and Session at (time). Each meeting will last approximately one to two hours. We appreciate your making time for us.

We come as listeners and consultants, eager to have the opportunity to better know your congregation and what you are all about. We come to hear about the hopes, the joys, and the concerns of the Pastor and the people, and stand ready to offer Presbytery assistance as appropriate. The information shared is considered confidential and is shared only with the COM and the Presbytery Executive, when appropriate, in order that your Congregation might be better known and supported by them.

An overview of COM (4.000) has been included to help you understand more about who we are. In order that the COM team might know more about who you are, we are encouraging each elder to be prepared to briefly share with the COM team: who you are "outside the congregation," what responsibilities you have within the congregation, the one greatest joy you feel your congregation has experienced in the last two years, and the one most pressing need/problem/concern you have for your congregation.

It would be helpful to have copies of your Mission Statement, annual report, newsletter, bulletin, and any other information about your Congregation which will help us know you better. We would appreciate someone being prepared to share the structure of your Session, Board of Deacons, and other pertinent organizations in your Congregation. Once this groundwork has been established, the atmosphere will be ready for open dialogue. Your questions, joys, concerns, and observation about your Congregation, the Presbytery, and the greater church are encouraged.

Following you will find a list of topics which might be explored during our time of discussion. You are also encouraged to bring any topics you wish to discuss at the meeting.

Possible Topics of Discussion with the Session:

- What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of your congregation?
- In what ways might Presbytery be of help to your congregation?
- What does Presbytery do well and what areas provide opportunity for improvement?
- In terms of gifts, talents, and skills that we expect in a minister, where does your pastor excel? Where are there opportunities for improvement?
- How does the session and congregation minister to your pastor and family?
- Do you encourage your pastor to take time for continuing education?
- What would you like to see happen in your congregation in the next few years? How can it be achieved?
- What involvement does your congregation have in Presbytery? General mission?

Possible Topics of Discussion with the Pastor:

- What are your goals for the ministry in this congregation?
- What is your perception of the mission and health of this congregation?
- Are the organizations of the congregation functioning as they should?
- Do you have any concerns in regard to family, finances, working conditions, housing, etc. that you would like to share, or with which you may need assistance?
- Do you have continuing education plans?
- What help or resources do you need that could be provided by Presbytery?
- Do you have a personnel committee? Is it functioning well?
- How do you feel about your role and relationship with Presbytery? Synod? General Assembly?

As representatives from COM, we look forward to our visit with you.

Servants in Christ,

Elder (name)

Reverend (name)