



SIBURT INSTITUTE

for Church Ministry

Welcoming Your New Minister

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Preparation Work

- Open your hearts; decide now that you will welcome and love the new minister.
- Your new minister is on a tremendous learning curve to understand and serve your church well; commit to give them space to make a few mistakes along the way.
- If your new minister has a family, prepare to welcome them as well; spouses and children will each have distinct needs.
- Pray for your minister and their family daily.

Welcoming Work

- Make sure your new minister's office is clean and ready.
- If the church has a parsonage, make sure it is clean and ready.
- Attend to any housing needs that can be done ahead of time—cutting the grass, arranging landscaping, etc.
- Consider stocking the pantry and fridge; if appropriate, be sure to include kid-friendly foods and snacks.
- Provide a team of helpers on move-in day.
- If there are small children, consider offering childcare to help parents during those initial days of settling in.
- Connect the minister's children with other children in the congregation.
- Prepare directions and recommendations for local grocery stores, pharmacies, dry cleaners, etc.
- Provide a few gift certificates to local favorite restaurants.
- Host a welcome reception on your minister's first Sunday.
- On their first Sunday, dedicate time during worship for elders to lay hands on and pray for the ministry, the minister, and their family.
- Make sure that all members of the minister's family find their way to appropriate Sunday school groups, small groups, youth group, etc.
- Provide a pictorial directory to the minister.
- Identify a few persons or families who seem to have similar age or life experience; ask them to intentionally reach out and host a social event or quiet dinner for the minister and/or their family in the first weeks of their arrival.
- Congregational members should introduce themselves to the minister—repeatedly! You have one name to learn; your minister has many names to learn.

Ministry Transition Work

- Provide an up-to-date list of committees, ministry leaders, etc.
- Set up orientation meetings with key personnel—treasurer, day school director, etc.—beyond the church staff.
- Provide a list of hospitals, nursing homes, and community service agencies.
- Provide local media with a press release about the new minister.
- Introduce the minister to other leaders in the community—ministers, elected officials, leaders in business and education, etc.

And Remember

- Pray for your minister daily.
- Avoid prejudging your new minister's work, including sermons. Give them space to settle in. Your new minister will be different than your last minister—let them bring their own gifts and skills into the life of your congregation.