



East Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

HEALTHY TRANSITIONS
WORKSHOPS

Creative Ideas for *Transition*

Saying Goodbye

- Send notes and cards (or have drop-off place) to send love and prayers to the outgoing pastor.
- Create a memory/appreciation book for the outgoing pastor and parsonage family.
- Consider a parade of cars to go by the home or office at a time when the pastor will be there and can wave and carry away a warm memory of appreciation.
- Find out how to help with moving day. Gift cards or help with some food needed as the kitchen is getting packed. Make appropriate accommodations for social distancing when delivering food to the parsonage.
- Post appreciation signs in the parsonage yard.
- The pastor can say goodbye by writing a newsletter article, sending a letter, or even posting a video saying good-bye to the congregation.

In order to say goodbye to a retiring pastor, the church as a body, classes, youth groups, and individuals could respond to the following suggestions:

1. Tell the pastor about a sermon or teaching that sticks in your mind and has influenced your behavior.
2. Tell the pastor about a time in your life when he or she touched you deeply.
3. Tell the pastor why you are grateful for them.
4. Tell the pastor how you were challenged to grow or change in the past few years.
5. Ask your pastor how you can help the church, and the pastor, move on to the next thing God has planned.
6. Please include the pastor's spouse and or family in these questions.

Remember to be creative. You can write answers to these and other questions. You can record your answers using audio, video, in groups, individually, or by families. By all means, pray and use your imagination to be creative. Choirs could record favorite hymns and tell stories to share with the pastoral family.



East Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

HEALTHY TRANSITIONS
WORKSHOPS

Creative Ideas for *Transition*

Saying Hello

A new pastor is coming to serve in your congregation. The pastor knows little about you, and you know little about the new pastor. This makes it possible to have all kinds of fun getting to know one another! You could take some time to pray about, think about, talk with others in the church about, what the community is like, what the church is like, and how to best welcome a new person to your community and church. You can share ideas in writing, by audio, and by video. Use your imagination! One of the best things you can do as individuals, families, committees, and classes is to spend time praying for the pastor who is leaving and the pastor who is coming. Don't let the sorrow of saying goodbye, take away from the joy of saying hello! Pray for God to give you an open heart and mind. Pray for God to show you what is wonderful and loving about the new pastor

- Ask kids and teens to make welcome signs (8 ½ X 11 with yarn attached) to be hung on doorways of the parsonage (one person can enter with social distance before the family moves in.) If there are kids in the pastoral family, consider attaching a piece of candy (as appropriate for that family - after checking about food allergies).
- Before move-in day, check in advance about food preferences and offer gift cards for fast food or drop off carefully-handled food once (instead of having many people make numerous deliveries of different items).
- Welcome drive-by parade of cars.
- A collection of welcome cards and letters that include a family picture.
- Gift certificates to carry-out food establishments in the community.
- Newsletter article introducing the pastor and his/her family to the congregation.
- Introductory message to post on the church website, YouTube, etc.

Developing a Plan for the First 90-days of Ministry

- Update list of contact information for parishioners and key community businesses which might be helpful. Note those who can meet via Zoom. Consider some Zoom introduction meetings.
- Offer a personalized map of the area with recommended places noted.
- If cottage gatherings are difficult for some, ask persons to write a personal description of their own history with that church and their hopes for the future of that community. Share these, after getting permission from the writers to share some of what is gathered.
- Help the pastor make necessary contacts for the first Sunday worship. If the first service is done virtually, make sure the pastor is connected to the people who will help with the service.