

Discussion Guide for Participants in a "Periodic Support Consultation"

The conversation between the participants should at least include consideration of the following issues and questions. Please bear in mind that this form is not to be considered exhaustive, nor will all these issues be applicable in all settings. The participants should use their collective judgments to ensure that time is not wasted on relative irrelevancies, and that all important matters are discussed. Please bear in mind that a brief report (1 to 2 pages) is requested from the person authorized for ministry, from the representatives of the ministry setting, and from the Ministry Team for Authorized Ministry (MTAM) representatives within two weeks of the meeting, and should be forwarded to the Prairie Association Ministry Team for Authorized Ministry in care of the Prairie Association office.

(Please note that in the following the word "pastor" will be used for the person authorized for ministry, and "church" for the setting of ministry. Please make appropriate substitutions when necessary.)

Growth of the Person

In what ways has the pastor continued to grow? In what other areas might growth need to be pursued? How have the church and/or association encouraged growth, and how can they encourage future growth?

The Ministry Setting

Does the present ministry setting continue to require authorization of ministry? Does the local church express support of and interest in the ministry of the pastor?

The Fulfillment of the Person

Does the pastor find fulfillment in his/her work? Does the church sense that the pastor is fulfilled in and excited by that work? Are there elements of staleness, or a sense of inadequacy expressed by either partner in the covenantal relationship? Are there new or emerging dimensions in this pastor's ministry that the church and/or association could encourage?

The Sense of Call

Does the pastor and those with whom she/he works continue to sense God's call in the pastor's work? Are there tensions or conflicts between the person's sense of call the actual day to day requirements of the pastor's work?

The Terms of the Call

Are the original terms of the call being honored by all the parties, and have those terms been regularly reviewed and updated? Are there specific changes which need to be considered at this time?

Covenantal Relationships

Do the pastor and church regularly review their work together? Does the association provide assistance, resources, and program that address the needs of the pastor and the church? Does the church participate constructively in the life of the association?

Participation in the Wider Church

Is the pastor encouraged to participate in the wider church?

The Functions of the Ministry

What are some of the pastor's plans, hopes and concerns regarding the following areas of ministry?

- " Preaching, worship and the sacraments
- " The various teaching ministries appropriate to the pastoral office (e.g. with children, youth, adults, etc.)
- " Other rites of the church (e.g. funerals, weddings, etc.)
- " Leadership and vision. (e.g. Does the pastor have a vision for his/her work? Does the pastor challenge the church to sharpen its understanding of and life in its own vision?)
- " Service and mission
- " Pastoral care
- " Administration and organizational issues
- " Stewardship education and financial issues

Does the church share these and other ministries with the pastor?

The Ministerial Codes and the Church's Expectations

Are the covenantal partners familiar with the content of the codes? Conversation and reflection about the person's faith affirmations, understanding of ministry, denominational and ecumenical commitments, knowledge and skills, and personal qualities and characteristics will be helpful.

The Ethics of the Person

Is the pastor aware of and sensitive to the ethical standards valued in the UCC?