Transitions Seminar
United Methodist Conference in South Carolina
Mark Tidsworth, Facilitator

Rev. Mark Tidsworth, Pinnacle Leadership Associates
May 3 – Leaving Well
May 10 – The Transition Process
May 17 – Best Practices For Pastor and Church For Taking Hold
May 24 – Church Assessment: Identifying Types and Considering Strategies

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Each Seminar’s Flow

- Welcome
- Devotional Moments
- Flow Review
- Presentation
- Responding – Break Out Rooms
- Q and A – Verbal and chat box
- Resources
- Blessing
The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul. I was overjoyed when some of the friends arrived and testified to your faithfulness to the truth, namely how you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

3 JOHN: 1-4
Purpose = To equip pastors and churches for their best pastoral transitions yet

Anecdotal Outcomes So Far
- Descriptions of swift relational connecting
- Descriptions of increased focus during the first year of ministry together
- Decrease in frequency of problems due to pastoral transitions

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PRIMARY TEXT FOR THIS TRANSITION PROCESS

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THE TRANSITION PROCESS

Establishing The Transition Team
Planning And Implementing An Effective Goodbye
Planning And Implementing An Effective Hello
Planning and Implementing Home Gatherings
Feedback and Ministry Planning With Leadership
Congregational Feedback And Vision Sharing
Launching Ministry With First Year Ministry Plan

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1. Estimating the Transition Team - SPRC or New Team (Capacity)

- 8-12 persons who know the church and are trusted OR the SPRC itself
- Temporary Team, 7 months, June-December
- Help moving pastor to leave well
- Organize home gatherings
- Sounding Board for new pastor
Managing the leaving process of current pastor is directly linked to the joining process of the arriving pastor.
First six weeks of new pastorate

Resource: 50 Ways To Welcome Your New Pastor Or Associate Pastor, Lewis Center For Church Leadership

During this time the Transition Team is organizing home gatherings

3 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE HELLO
4 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING HOME GATHERINGS

Purposes

• To build relationship between church and pastor
• To raise awareness about who this church is for everyone involved
• To help shape the short-term, first year ministry plan
Logistics

- In-home gatherings of 16 people or less
- Host provides space, others bring snacks or desserts
- Sit in a circle-like space where you can see each other
- Pastor facilitates guided conversation
4 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING HOME GATHERINGS

Format

- Host or appointed person welcomes everyone, logistics
- Pastor welcomes everyone and invites brief introductions
- Pastor prays for this gathering, laying out flow of gathering
- Pastor asks 3 questions, going around the room, recording input
- Pastor thanks everyone, shares about feedback process, closes in prayer
Questions Pastor Asks:

- 3 questions on page 30 in Your Best Move
- Mark’s suggestions
  1. Why this church? Out of all the churches in this community, here you are. What is it about this church that you choose to live out your discipleship through this church?
  2. What might God be calling us to do or become in this new chapter of life? (Up to 3 answers)
  3. If we could only make one move to live into God’s mission more fully, what would it be?
  4. What level of tension or conflict exists in this church now, on a scale from 0-10?

- It’s up to the pastor to design the preferred questions
Pastor compiles and interprets learning, turning into a feedback report…”Here is what I believe I learned about you”

Pastor gives/receives feedback to/from Transition Team

Pastor gives/receives feedback to/from Staff Team and Council

Pastor, transition team, staff, council identify 3-4 short-term, achievable initiatives for this first year – yielding the Short-Term Ministry Plan (first year)
Timing – Early Fall, at a convenient time (Sunday School hour, between services, after worship, Sunday evening gathering with dessert)

Pastor gives feedback of what was learned during home gatherings

Pastor shares the resulting Short-Term Vision, created collaboratively with church leadership

Congregation reflects on and affirms vision

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7 LAUNCHING MINISTRY WITH FIRST YEAR MINISTRY PLAN

Provides opportunity for mission advancement and early wins

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Frequent Outcomes

- Builds relationship between pastor and church quickly
- Raises awareness about who this church is and where it is in its journey
- Congregation learns this pastor is interested in them
- Congregation learns this pastor listens
- Congregation learns this pastor is motivated and focused on God’s mission
- Prevents much conflict, pain and suffering
- Provides a strong start
RESOURCES

- Your Best Move, Robert Kaylor
- The Changeover Zone, Successful Pastoral Transitions, Jim Ozier & Jim Griffith
- Transition Coaching For Pastors, Six Months – July – December, Community of Practice Group or Individual Coaching
- https://www.dropbox.com/t/2vYGQuPlDyoQTclD
- Five Active Dynamics Every Church Must Address, Free Video on Pinnacle Youtube Channel: https://youtu.be/EbntDzeSL48