

Date  
Rev. (pastor)  
(name), moderator  
(name) Church UCC  
(address)

Dear (pastor) and (moderator),

Greetings and blessings to you all at (name) Church UCC in the early years of your mutual ministry.

The early years of a new pastorate are a time of adjustments and learning for all in covenant. Section D of the Committee on the Ministry offers its services to facilitate a covenantal check-in for the lay leaders and new pastor. This is *not* an evaluation of either pastor or congregation, but rather, an opportunity for all to reflect upon the vision which drew the congregation and pastor to one another, and on the realities of their ongoing ministry together. The goals of the check-in are clarification, affirmation, recommitment, and rejoicing.

The group from your congregation which meets for this review consists of people of your own choosing, and might include members of the Pastoral Support Committee, Church Council, former Search Committee, etc. as you determine. Generally, 5-7 total participants from your church would be best. Section D would send 2-3 people (at least 1 from your own Association, plus your Associate Conference Minister) to be present as representatives of the wider United Church of Christ, and to facilitate the check-in. All discussion is completely confidential, except for those ideas and dreams which the church and the minister agree to share beyond the gathered group.

The check-in might last 1-2 hours and be structured along the following lines:

1. An opening prayer asking for God's blessing on the process
2. Discussion questions for the congregational leaders and the pastor individually.
3. Discussion questions for both congregational leaders and the pastor.
4. Discussion of possible next steps.
5. Closing affirmations, prayers and hopes.

We believe that support of congregations for one another makes a positive difference for us all in the United Church of Christ. (Name) of Section D will

follow up this letter in the next week with a phone call. She will be happy to answer any questions you may have about this process. Then she and you can work on finding a date for this covenantal check-in.

Enclosed is a brochure describing the general scope of services offered by Section D, and "Frequently Asked Questions" about this covenantal check-in process.

Yours in Christ,

Mary Susan Gast

Encl.  
Section D brochure  
Frequently Asked Questions