

**CONGREGATIONAL VISITATION PURPOSE and PROCESS**  
**The Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod**  
**Revised May 2022**

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of a congregational visitation is for the presbytery to exercise its pastoral oversight in a way that is personal and intentional.

The visitation **seeks to learn about:**

- the spiritual health of the congregation and its minister(s)
- the sense of vitality and vision for the congregation's future
- current inspiring ministries that exist and can be encouraged/supported
- current challenges that hinder ministry
- ideas and experiences that can assist other congregations
- the overall tone, well-being and strength of congregational leadership
- particular needs and concerns of leaders

The visitation **seeks to provide:**

- guidance and/or resources to address particular needs
- prayer for particular needs of the congregation
- continuity and consistency of care over years
- recommendations that will strengthen ministry
- the supportive presence of other Presbyterians
- reports that build on one another and assist the leaders
- an overview to presbytery of the overall ministry of the congregation

**PROCESS:**

**Before the Visit:**

Once the presbytery approves the visitation, the Clergy and Congregational Care Committee (CCCC) names the Visitation Team. The General Presbyter is a resource for all Visitation Teams.

A letter is sent from the Convenor of the Visitation Team to the Minister, Clerk of Session, chair of the Board of Managers or Finance Team outlining the goal and purpose of the visitation, team members, and requesting that the minister confirm a date for the visitation.

An announcement about the purpose and date of the Presbytery Visitation will be sent to the Minister(s), from the Convenor of the Visitation Team for use in the Sunday Bulletin.

Visitation teams are encouraged to have some of the team visit the congregation on a Sunday previous to their visit. This visit would be announced, and members of the congregation invited to have conversation with the team members about concerns and celebrations.

The Convenor of the Visitation Team will access the previous Presbytery Visitation Report which will be available on the presbytery website, and will request copies of the latest Annual Report. These documents are to be shared with the Visitation Team.

Questionnaires will be sent by the Convener of the Visitation Team to the Minister(s), Clerk of Session, and Chair of the Board or Finance Committee. All forms are to be returned to the Convener of the Visitation Team. The Representative Elder is responsible for reminding elders, and Board or Finance Members to return their completed questionnaire.

The Visitation Team will meet prior to the visitation to:

- 1) review the responses
- 2) set up the format for the visit
- 3) decide who would take the lead with each group
- 4) decide the procedure of note-taking
- 5) decide the time line for the completion of the report

**At the Visit:**

The Convener of the Visitation Team will ensure that all conversations are held in a private and confidential area. Sufficient time is allocated for the visitation. (Suggested time: Minister 45 minutes; Session 45 minutes; Board/Finance Committee 30 minutes; members who wish to meet with team – 30 min).

**\*\* ministers who are part of teams will be interviewed individually**

The Convener will explain the process and goal of congregational visitation, as well as the time-line expectations i.e. when the draft report will be ready for the leaders in the congregation and the anticipated date of consideration by Clergy and Congregational Care Committee and presbytery.

**After the Visit:**

A draft report, with recommendations, will be sent to the Minister, Clerk of Session, and Chair of the Board of Managers/Finance Committee within approx. 2 weeks of the visit. These people should send suggested edits to the Convener of the Visitation Team within 1 week of receiving the report.

The Convener will submit a final report to the Convener of Clergy and Congregational Care Committee within 2 weeks of receiving feedback (4-5 weeks after the visit). Clergy and Congregational Care Committee considers the full report and includes it in the report to the next presbytery meeting.

Each Clergy and Congregational Care Committee Report to presbytery will provide an update on the progress of Sessions in fulfilling the recommendations approved by presbytery. This will continue until all recommendations are completed.

Sessions are encouraged to publicize the outcomes of the visitation within the congregation.