

As you enter the retired relationship, it is important for you to remember that the annual conference policy states that pastors are not to return to a previous appointment. This applies to all pastors, including those who are retiring.

¶4015. Returning to a Previous Appointment

1. As of the effective date of a new appointment, a pastor shall immediately cease all pastoral counseling and pastoral visitation with members or member families in the previous appointment. Since appointments are generally announced several weeks in advance, each pastor has adequate time in which to effect closure and make appropriate referral to another for the pastoral care of members.
2. Pastors shall have a clear understanding with former congregations that they will not return to officiate at baptisms, weddings and funerals, or do pastoral counseling or pastoral visitation in that parish. Pastors, active or retired, shall respectfully decline to participate in such duties when invited by members of a former congregation. Declining all such invitations is the responsibility of the previous pastor. The present pastor, at his or her discretion, may invite the previous pastor to return for pastoral functions. However, the present pastor should never be under any pressure to invite the previous pastor. This policy is ongoing and doesn't have an expiration date.
3. Several weeks prior to concluding a pastoral appointment, a pastor shall inform all members of the church of this policy by printing sections one and two verbatim in either a pastoral letter to be sent to each member or a church newsletter to be sent to each member and encourage them to support the policy by their prayers and actions.