

Shenandoah District Board

2010 Congregational Visit Format

Welcome & Introductions

Provide a brief time of welcome and introductions depending upon the size of your group and the circumstance of your visit. Thank the church and the pastor for allowing you to come and visit. Share a bit about your involvement on the District Board, your own enthusiasm for district ministries and what you see as the purpose of your visit.

Outline the format of your visit—a time for scripture & prayer, a brief presentation of district ministries, and time for discussion and questions. Assure the group that the District Board will give careful consideration to their comments and ideas.

Scripture Matthew 9:35-38

³⁵Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

As Jesus walks through Judea, he teaches, heals, and freely shares the good news of God's love and work in the world. Every step of the way, he exposes evil, destroying it with the word and works of God. Jesus takes notice of the people he meets and has compassion upon them. He challenges us to do the same. While your daily commute to work or to school may not be nearly as dramatic as his, Jesus' example challenges us to be workers in the Lord's harvest field.

We have been called to be leaders in the Shenandoah District. As leaders and as Jesus' disciples, we are called to go out among our churches to take notice of the ministries that you are accomplishing in name of Christ, to listen to your needs, and to talk about ways that we can work together to bring in God's harvest.

In the fall of 2008, we joined together at the Seeds for a Great Harvest event to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Church of the Brethren. Now the work of planting and nurturing those seeds has begun. Despite the chill in the air from the economic recession, we have noticed rays of sunshine and springs of water welling up from within our congregations as they minister in their communities in new ways. We believe that the Lord's harvest is plentiful! May our time together today affirm our love for Christ and our willingness to serve in the harvest field.

Prayer

Lord of the harvest, we thank you for the opportunities you have given us to minister in your name in this community and in your world. We thank you for this church, its leaders and its ministries that reach out with compassion and service. Just as your son shared the good news of your love, may we be challenged to find new ways to sow seeds of your love that will grow into a bountiful harvest. We thank you for each person gathered here today and ask that you bless our time together with understanding and insight that we might be able to discern your will for our lives, our church and our ministry as a district. Amen.

Presentation and Discussion:

PowerPoint Presentation:

Use the PowerPoint presentation to help you introduce and interpret the district's mission priorities for this year. The presentation will lead into the discussion time and includes slides with the following questions.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What is God doing in the life and ministry of your church as you seek to serve Him and minister to your community?
2. In what ways have the ministries of the district and its congregations impacted the life and ministry of your church?
3. Share ideas that you may have of how we--the district, your congregation and your sister congregations--can partner together to build up the body of Christ in our communities and our world.
4. What questions do you have for us?

Allow time for discussion of each question, but be sensitive to the time frame which you were given for the visit. Thank them again for their time and willingness to share. Close your visit with prayer.