

## The Journey of the Site Team<sup>3</sup>

The journey of each Site Team will be unique. Therefore, this scenario is only suggestive of some of the landscape of the journey of a Site Team. It is not meant to be a set of directions but a set of clues by which we may pace our journey.

### September

- Welcoming and including: it's important to be intentional about saying hello.
- Becoming acquainted: Site Team and student may share a meal together.
- **Serving/Learning Covenant negotiated, signed and due in the SM Office October 2.**
- Covenanting together as a Site Team, deciding how we want to work together, when our meetings will be held, and describing a format for our meetings. We will each want to begin to define our role and responsibilities so that each Site Team member, the pastor/mentor, the pastor (if not the pastor/mentor), and the intern can see “where we fit.”

**Note:** When the intern is on professional staff of the ministry site, it is important to understand that the role of the Site Team is not the same as that of a Pastoral Relations Committee. The Site Team deals exclusively with the needs and growth of the staff person who is the intern in terms of his/her learning goals for the year in TFE.

### October

- See that we have put our Site Team covenant in writing so that it is explicit and can serve as a guide for continuing reflection and evaluation.
- Be open to one another as we share first experiences together.
- Encourage the intern to share freely and openly by offering our readylistening and willingness to risk sharing ourselves.
- Recognize that we are each unique and different; there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit.

### November

- Together with the intern, reflect on this process of becoming involved, or more deeply involved, in ministry as a professional in terms of **her/his own learning objectives.**
- What does this experience feel like? What does it mean? What is happening with her/him vocationally, spiritually, emotionally and theologically? Further, what is happening to us? This is a time for naming some of the dynamics of the journey and discerning the meaning of these dynamics from the perspective of our Christian faith.

### December

- Already it is time to turn attention to the preparations for the Mid-Year Reflection on Learning. The Mid-Year Reflection on Learning brings us to the horizon of new possibility. Consider the Serving/Learning Covenant. Perhaps some contents of the Learning Agreement need revising.

<sup>3</sup> Also available on the TFE website “TFE Handbook and Selected Documents.”

- Perhaps we see ways in which we can communicate more effectively with our intern. Do we need to be more disciplined in our meetings, to make adjustments in our format in order to be more focused on our intern's concerns?
- Are we getting to issues of ministry which are vital to the intern's learning process and our shared ministry?
- Do we need someone to resource us? Might it be the time to call upon the Supervised Ministries team of the seminary for some assistance?

## January

- We have all been busy through Advent/Christmastime. We may need a longer meeting to complete work on the **Mid-Year Reflection on Learning due January 3**, to re-group ourselves and to take a look ahead from now until May when our covenant with the intern will come to an end.
- Time seems to be going so fast. We've hardly begun and yet there is so much to accomplish. We may need to be selective about the content of our time together. We may need to be more direct with each other. We have done some trust-building. Perhaps it is time to rely on that trust and to invite more risk-taking. Are we challenging the intern and allowing the intern to challenge us? Have we evidenced appropriate support for the intern and yet held her/him to accountability in both his/her learning and in her/his ministry tasks?

## February

- Are we seeing real progress in our intern? Are we celebrating her/his growth? And are we celebrating and claiming our growth as well?
- What is the quality of our sharing? What about that covenant we made as a group in the beginning? Are we living out that covenant or do we need to write a new one in accordance with who we are now?
- Theological reflection? What is it? Is it happening here among us when we meet together? What does it look like for us? Can we be more intentional about looking at our group life through the meaning of Christ in our lives?

## March

- Our student has raised a lot of questions. How have these affected each of us personally? How have we been growing and changing?
- The inquiry about participating in TFE at Palmer Seminary next year will be arriving at the ministry site soon. Do we want to indicate our interest in continuing with this educational program to the Pastor/Mentor or our pastor?
- The relationship with the intern is affecting us and the ministry site as well. It might be time to consider its impact on the congregation and what that means for our mission and ministry to the community.

## April

- Already we are moving toward the **Year End Evaluation which is due April 13**. We have experienced a lot of mutual sharing, reflecting and evaluating. Are we the best setting for our intern's continued growth as a minister? Are we needing to make some changes in ourselves in order to challenge this intern another year? If our intern is leaving, let's identify what yet

needs to happen before we say goodbye to one another. If our intern is part of our pastoral staff, do we have recommendations for goals for another year of TFE?

- It is important for us to be intentional about saying goodbye for the summer or permanently. Ending the year of TFE with appropriate ritual, celebration and grace allows all TFE partners to move forward well from this experience. How can we help the congregation or ministry site say goodbye to the intern? How can we recognize this particular experience had by the intern and ministry site during this year?

## **May**

- The journey with our student has been a dynamic one. It has had some fulfilling moments. Let's identify these. It has had some struggling moments. Let's reflect also on these. All of these moments have been opportunities for new insights. Let's name these insights. These have been the forerunners of gifts we have shared with one another. Let's acknowledge these gifts whether born out of joy or pain; let us receive the gifts God has offered each of us through this relationship and pilgrimage. Let the closing prayers together be the fulfillment of prayers said with one another along the way.

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Supervised Ministries, Palmer Seminary

## **Thank You**

Palmer Theological Seminary is very grateful to the persons serving on Site Teams. The Supervised Ministries Office seeks to serve committees by providing training opportunities and by conferring with Site Team members upon request (email [mwoodard@eastern.edu](mailto:mwoodard@eastern.edu)) about any matters of concern. Thank you for your essential role in the education of a student in training for ministry.