***The following article has been copied from the website of Rev. Ron Edmonson.***

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**Reverend Ron Edmonson: "*I have some advice to give congregations on how to best help the [new] pastor and pastor’s family feel welcome and acclimate."***

**10 SUGGESTIONS FOR WELCOMING A NEW PASTOR:**

**PRAY FOR THE PASTOR DAILY – It’s something I’m almost expected to say, but there is truly no greater comfort for a pastor than to know people are praying for them by name. As a pastor, I could literally feel people praying for me at times. On an especially stressful day, I would sense God’s protection by the prayers of God’s people. I believed in prayer so much I always had a personal prayer team. (I’m in the process of organizing one now in my new role with Leadership Network.)**

**LOVE AND HONOR THE PASTOR’S FAMILY – This includes helping them acclimate to the community. Especially if there are still children at home, they will need more family time at home, not less. The family is stretched and stressed – out of their comfort zone and pulled in so many directions. Let the pastor have adequate time at home. Let the family time be honored as much as their time at church.**

**TELL THE PASTOR AND FAMILY YOUR NAME EACH TIME YOU MEET – And, then tell them again. And again, if necessary. Learning names may be the hardest thing a new pastor has to do. Give them ample time to learn yours and, please, never trick them or ask them, “Do you remember my name?” That may be one of the hardest questions I received as pastor, because I always wanted to and couldn’t always. (Frankly, sometimes on Sunday mornings I couldn’t remember my own name.)**

**DON’T GOSSIP ABOUT THE PASTOR OR FAMILY – There will almost always be changes when a new pastor comes to a church. If you don’t understand something simply ask. Be very careful not to propagate misunderstandings. Be a positive voice for the future. And, stop gossip and rumors as soon as you hear them.**

**SPEAK ENCOURAGEMENT – Say, things like, “Pastor, I’m here to help.” And, mean it. Find positive things with which to encourage the pastor and family. Send a personal, hand-written note. And, don’t write, “I’m thankful for you, but…” Just say thank you. Those notes are kept forever.**

**INTRODUCE THE PASTOR TO LEADERS – In the church and in the community, it is helpful if the pastor knows the influencers whom they will likely encounter during their ministry. The earlier they can know them the better.**

**LET THE PASTOR SET THE PACE – It will take a while for a new pastor to figure out their stride. Give them your understanding during this time. They may not make every visit you want them to make. And, depending on the size of the church they may not ever make every visit you think they should. There’s only so much time in a day. They may not place priority where you think it needs to be placed. They may not introduce change as fast as you want them to or change may seem too fast for you. This is all part of the newness in a time of transition. Let them set the pace – especially in the early days.**

**DON’T OFFER A MILLION SUGGESTIONS – There will be time for that, but the new pastor needs time to learn the church. Most likely you’re already doing lots of things – some good and maybe some not so good. Let them learn who you are as a church, before you fill their head with too many new ideas.**

**DON’T PREJUDGE THEIR PERFORMANCE – A new pastor will make their own mistakes. Don’t hold a previous pastor’s mistakes against them. Don’t assume, based on their history or your expectations of them, that they will perform a certain way. They may. They may not. When I went to my last church I had come out of the church-planting world and into an established church. I think some people assumed I’d wear sandals my first Sunday. I didn’t. The whole time I was there. (And, I regret that. Just kidding.)**

**EXTEND THE HONEYMOON – Honestly, it usually seems too short anyway. If the pastor begins to make any changes at all, some people lose faith in them. A new pastor needs time to acclimate. They need time to learn you and the church. Keep loving and supporting them, even when changes become harder to make and harder to accept. If God brought the pastor to your church, God wants to use them there. Let God do as God intended.**

**Those are my suggestions. Of course, this is a general post. It is one of principle, not a specific post to your exact context. Most likely, for those reading this, I won’t know your church or your new pastor. I do hope these can help a few churches.**