

SUPPLY PASTORS FOR THE NORTHEAST ASSOCIATION

****If a Sunday service is canceled it is expected that the congregation will pay the supply pastor the agreed upon fee.
The expected honorarium is between \$200 and \$400, based upon the size of the congregation.*

Title	First	Last	Phone	Email	Notes
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MAKING YOUR PULPIT SUPPLY ARRANGEMENT GO SMOOTHLY

Drafted by veteran pulpit supplier, Rev. Judy Brain

Dear church leader,

Here are a few guidelines that will help you create a good working relationship with the person you choose to fill your pulpit in your pastor's absence.

The initial call or email.

Be detailed in your invitation: include date, time of service, location of the church as well as the name, expectations of the supply preacher, and the compensation* you will provide. If you send an email or leave a message, be clear about how to respond and to whom.

After you have settled on a date.

Here is the information that the supply preacher/worship leaders will want to have in order for them to plan well. Provide this information to them as soon as possible.

- Tell them exactly what they will be responsible for.** Do lay leaders handle any parts of the service?
- Send them a copy of the bulletin** so they can see all the moving parts. Let them know if it will be a communion Sunday.
- Provide contact information for support people** – the *liaison person* who will be there on Sunday morning to walk the guest pastor through the service and handle details like the sound system and offering plates, *office personnel* who print the bulletin, *music director or organist* so that planning hymns can be collaborative.
- Consider the details:**

In our free church tradition, the style and structure of our worship services are astoundingly varied; and yet the guest preachers have to step in and lead with confidence. They must be comfortable with the flow of the service in order for the congregation to be able to sink into a cared-for attitude of worship. Here are some examples of what they'll want to know:

 - Do you follow the Revised Common Lectionary?
 - How do you handle announcements and prayer requests?
 - How is the offering received?
 - What hymnal(s) do you use? Do you announce hymns?
 - What is your communion protocol? (Many details there.)
 - Is the benediction delivered from the front or the back?

* **A word about compensation.** The guest pastor is likely to be a minister between calls or a retired person with years of experience. These are highly trained and educated individuals. With preparation, communication, travel, and time in worship, they can spend 8 to 10 hours serving your congregation. Consultants with their level of experience and ability can expect, at minimum, \$50 per hour. Churches rarely have the capability to pay that, but \$300 per service should be a target. (*note – the website does suggest a range of compensation*)

Your pastors will feel at ease on their time away if they know things are well under control. Guest preachers can bring fresh energy to your congregation. May this relationship flourish as the Spirit of Christ guides.