

Dear Pastor Bates, we welcome you most cordially to our hearts. The pastoral relationship is one that demands the utmost confidence on the part of each of the contracting parties. Without this no successful work can be accomplished, no lasting results realized. This quality so essential to pastoral success will, we are assured, be a prominent characteristic of our mutual relations. We want you to enter also into our affection. Our attitude towards each other must be essentially more than formal. We must live heart to heart. This we desire to do. This by the grace of God we shall do. You are our spiritual leader; to you our warmest Christian love is due. To you we feel assured we shall be closely knit in the bonds of Christ-like service and fellowship. We shall realize this more and more as we labor together in the Lord and there comes to us a clearer and deeper appreciation of the truth of the lines,

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love."

Very gladly, too, do we open wide to you the door of our homes. We shall be glad to meet you there, as often as it will be possible for you to enter them. There will always be a warm greeting for you. We do not expect the impossible for you in the matter of visiting. We recognize the fact that there are very many homes in our town and it would be selfish to expect that any or all of these should be visited with great frequency. But we want you to feel that your visits as often as they can be made will be generously appreciated. We shall be glad to see you in our seasons of joy and prosperity; in times of grief we shall eagerly anticipate your coming with your words of comfort, sympathy and hope.

We welcome you also to your peculiar duties as pastor in the house of God. As you preach the word to the people upon the Lord's day and as you open to us the Scriptures upon the week night evening we do not want you to feel that you are in any sense separated from us, but rather, at these most important and sacred seasons that we are one with you—in sympathy, in

prayer, in appreciation. And so in all our duties may it be that we shall realize in a marked degree the highest ambition of the Christian service,

"Laborers together with God."

The record you have already made as preacher and pastor warrants us to entertain the largest hopefulness for the future. But our formal welcome to-night is not prompted simply because of what you have done, but the impression you have already made upon us since we first met you has been such as to inspire us with the fullest measure of confidence and love and to elicit from us expressions of welcome, spontaneous, and the warmest of which we are capable.

We want this expression of welcome to carry the full significance which properly attaches to it. To be sincere it must imply our readiness to fulfil all our obligations to the pastor,—to minister to his support in material things, to be jealous of his reputation, and to stand shoulder to shoulder with him in all our mutual interests. This is the meaning of the service of this evening.

With equal sincerity and cordiality do we welcome Mrs. Bates to our Church life. To you and yours we wish at the very outset to say, "We desire you to feel thoroughly at home among us." You have not come to us as strangers but as those who are already one with us because of your great interest in the extension of our Lord's dominion and your devotion to the cause of righteousness.

And now again, dear pastor, let me present to you our hearty assurances of our kindly welcome and most generous goodwill. This has already been clearly manifested by the hearty and unanimous manner in which our choice fell upon you to be our leader in the great work to which our Master has called us. The church of God has but one head, Jesus Christ, the risen and glorified Redeemer, but we adore His matchless name that He has set overseers over His heritage. We honor and love those whom He has thus appointed. We receive you, dear pastor Bates, as the messen-