After the intro which contains important info for everyone, and some basic introductions, use the four sections to choose questions that keep the conversation moving from the personal reflections to the congregation, to the work on issues of housing and homelessness, and to the wrap up and checking out their interest in future follow up. Important: you will not go through all these questions! You will also likely spend more time in the first couple of sections. It’s your role to listen for chances to learn about the visitee’s self-interest in working with your congregation and the collaborative, and surface insights about how their life is touched by the affordable housing crisis. If there are questions that your congregation wants to include as well, you can bring those into Section 2.

The one-to-one conversation

Intro:

- Thank them for taking the time to do a one-to-one conversation; let them know you have some questions to guide us but it’s not a survey – that the goal is really to get to know people in our congregation, and find others who are interested in working together so that all people have a home in our community.
- Share that the congregation is part of Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative and an example of how your congregation participates (ie working to build homes like Prairie Pointe or Emerson Village, pass the Bring it Home, MN bill, work on local policy initiatives, etc).
- Share that congregations all over the metro are having over 1000 of these conversations at the same time, because we’re building the power to ask our elected officials to invest in the biggest solutions to homelessness.
- Explain that you will be taking some notes because we are sharing what we learn from these conversations, but that when we enter the notes they will be kept separate from people’s names.
- Share that at the end of the conversation you will also ask if they would like to receive Beacon’s action alerts and news updates. It will be optional to share contact info with Beacon. You can tell them that they may have questions too, and that our Beacon team is happy to follow up to talk more!
**Section 1: Getting to know you**

*Pick a couple of questions to begin to get the conversation flowing, depending on whether you already know the person or not, and how familiar they might already be with your congregation’s work with Beacon or other social justice work.*

Where was home for you growing up? What did home mean to you back then? Has that changed over time?

Tell me about where you grew up – what did it mean to be from Duluth, for example.

When did you first notice that people were experiencing homelessness in your community? What were the early messages you learned about homelessness?

(If engaged already with Beacon) How did you get involved in our work with Beacon? How did you first get involved? What has kept you connected?

(If engaged with social justice work broadly) What was the first time you felt moved to take action on an issue of social justice? Did that experience teach you something that has stayed with you?

If you had the power to change something in the world right now, what would it be? What might hold you back?

**Section 2: Our congregation**

Tell me about the place of our faith community in your life. Where have you been involved and found purpose or connection?

Where else do you find yourself living out the values of our faith community?

How does the work of our congregation (with Beacon or otherwise) give you opportunities to make a difference in issues that are important to you?

How do you think our congregation could more fully live into our mission? How comfortable do you think we are voicing our values in a public way?

What do you think are the unique contributions we bring to the collaborative? (Beacon is made up of 100 congregations)
Section 3: Our work for housing justice

Transition:

- Thank them for sharing about their life and connection to our faith community.
- Reflect back and relate to some of the statements of self-interest or other insights about themselves they may have shared: ie “I was interested to hear you say you were nervous the first time you spoke out. I have felt that way too, and it has gotten easier over time.”
- Share a little about your own self-interest and why you are hoping to help find others who care as much as you do about the issues of housing and homelessness.
- Explain that it will take a lot of us working together, to ask our elected leaders for solutions as big as the problem.
- Explain that last year we built a lot of awareness and support – but we have a long way to go to pass Bring it Home, MN – which would stabilize hundreds of thousands of Minnesota families who can’t afford their rent, and to continue demanding that electeds invest our common resources in housing for people with the lowest incomes.

How is the need for affordable housing touching your life? (If they don’t think it is, prompt further with questions such as, Why do you think that is? Or has the pandemic changed how you see it? Or What do you think homelessness looks like in your community?)

Is there someone in your life – perhaps you – who has worried about keeping their home or finding housing they can afford? What was that like? If that was resolved, what was the solution?

Beacon’s vision statement is that all people have a home – do you think our broader society shares that vision? If so, what’s in the way of making it true? If not, what do you think faith communities can do to grow that understanding? What might hold our congregation or clergy back from proclaiming that vision?

Do you see housing justice as connected with racial justice? How so? How might we do more to lift up that intersection in our congregation’s racial justice efforts?
Section 4: Invitation

Wrap up:

- Tell them that you’re close to the end of your time, and I thank them again for the gift of your time and thoughtful sharing today.
- Reflect back what you heard about the visitee’s self-interest, if it seems to align with your congregation’s work with Beacon.
- Share that there will be many ways to add your voice to the organizing we will do toward the Bring it Home MN bill and/or the housing and policy work with Beacon; that people can participate at any level, from responding to quick 5 minute action alerts to serving on teams and meeting with electeds. It all makes a difference, because none of us can do it on our own.

Would you mind if a member of our Beacon team follows up with you for opportunities to be involved this year? (yes/no)

Would you like to receive Beacon’s emailed newsletter? (yes/no – if yes get email address)

Would you like to receive policy action alerts? (yes/no – if yes get email address)

Would you like to follow Beacon on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter?
  Facebook: @beaconinterfaith | www.facebook.com/beaconinterfaith
  Instagram: @believeinhome | www.instagram.com/believeinhome
  Twitter: @believeinhome | www.twitter.com/believeinhome

If they shared a personal story about experiencing housing instability: I appreciate you sharing with me about your own experience. Is that something that you would be willing to share again in the future? If yes get their contact info and let them know someone will follow up.

Tips to keep in mind:

- **Listen for chances to follow up for deeper understanding.** You (the visitor) will spend 70% of the time listening, and 30% of the time relating to what the visitee has shared and asking follow up questions.
- **Listen for statements of self-interest.** These might sound like: “I have always been very concerned with fairness, since a young age.” Or “In my retirement I am looking to make a meaningful impact in my community.” Or “My own family had
to move a lot when we were young, and now I want to make sure other kids don’t go through that.” When you hear those statements, reflect them back to the visitee and write them down, and prompt further discussion with a question like “I wonder what that was like for you” or “Would you tell me more about what you learned from that time in your life?”

- **If you notice that the visitee sees things very differently from you**, it’s also ok to reflect that, as you are looking for areas of commonality. It’s not a place to judge but to share that this matters to you and you care what matters to them.

- **If someone shares that they have experienced homelessness** or have a loved one who has, it is a gift to listen without making assumptions. They may not have shared this with many people, or they may speak very freely about it. You can follow up to ask if they would ever consider sharing this again to help educate people about these experiences. If not it will stay anonymous.

- **If someone shares that they are currently going through a crisis**, pause to ask if they need referral for any assistance, and remember to put them in touch with clergy. Beacon staff might also be able to point someone in the direction of help. Remember, a one-to-one is not meant to be counseling or pastoral care – that is not your job in this conversation!

- **Be sure to obtain consent** in that last section for sharing contact info/name. Add as much as you can, since there is a reason for each type of info. For example, if someone would rather not give their address, ask if you can put the town they live in.

- **Not everyone will want to get more involved and that’s ok!** You don’t need to convince the visitee of anything. Their time and insight is a gift and so is yours. Finding out why people in your congregation are hesitant to get involved is also very valuable info.