

Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Result Expected:

This committee works with the lead pastor and other staff so that the staff can work effectively in managing the ministry of the congregation for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. An effective committee will fulfill legal and ethical responsibilities related to staff.

Qualifications for Job:

Spiritual gifts: Exhortation (encouragement), wisdom, discernment, apostleship, administration, shepherding, teaching, leadership.

Experience, Skills: Committee members should be diverse in age, experience, and interests in order to bring all ministry opportunities of the congregation to the attention of the staff. Some experience in human relations, personnel management, and communications is helpful. These individuals must listen well to both staff and people of all ages in the congregation while keeping a focus on the mission of the church. These leaders must be able to maintain confidentiality.

Responsibilities:

Through the year, this leader maintains a healthy and growing personal spiritual life and leads the PPRC committee members to do the same. The committee shall engage in biblical and theological reflection about the mission of the church. The chairperson, along with the pastor and others, has primary responsibility for the appointed and paid staff who lead the vision and mission of the church. This leader is the congregation's primary connection with the district superintendent and bishop related to the appointed leadership of the congregation. This individual leads the PPRC committee by preparing and communicating the agenda for meetings, leading the meetings, following up actions by assigning responsibility for implementation. This person should become familiar with United Methodist resources and organization.

Responsibilities of the Committee

- The committee leads the congregation to encourage, strengthen, nurture, support, and respect the pastor(s) and staff and their families. It helps the staff set priorities that strengthen the congregation's total ministry.
- The committee consults with the lead pastor to recommend staff positions to support the strategy of the church leadership team (church council).
- The committee recommends staff compensation, travel, housing, and other financial matters to the church council through consultation with the finance committee. The finance committee includes the salary total in the budget, and the PPRC works with staff on allocation.
- The committee provides for annual evaluation of the pastor(s) and other staff for ongoing effective ministry.
- The committee creates and updates written policy for hiring, evaluating, promoting, retiring, and dismissing staff members who are not subject to episcopal appointment. (Procedures must comply with

- local and state laws). This is recommended to the church council for adoption.
- The committee conducts proper screening (including background checks) for lay employees and volunteer staff.
- The chairperson is the congregation's primary connection with the district superintendent and bishop related to appointed leadership of the congregation.
- The committee meets with the district superintendent and/or the bishop in an advisory capacity related to clergy leadership. Considerations include the age and stage of the congregation, an understanding of feelings and desires within the congregation about the pastor's leadership and appointment, and the culture and needs of the community around the church.
- The committee enlists, evaluates, and annually recommends to the charge conference candidates for professional ministry.

Resources:

Getting started

- Soon after new members are elected at charge conference, convene a meeting of the pastor/staff-parish relations committee to get acquainted, share hopes and concerns, and begin to plan your work for the year. There are responsibilities for each quarter outlined in *Guidelines for Leading your Congregation: Pastor Parish Relations Committee: 2013-2016*. You might watch together the one-hour webinar that outlines your role and responsibilities.

People and Agencies

- Your pastor(s), district superintendent, bishop and district/conference boards of ordained ministry.
- Adults in your church, especially for mentoring and identifying candidates for ministry vocations.
- **InfoServ**, (link: <http://infoserv.umc.org>), provides current information about United Methodist resources, programs and staff services.
- Betsey Heavner, bheavner@gbod.org, GBOD, P.O. Box 340003, Nashville, TN 37203-0003; (877) 899-2780; www.gbod.org.
- General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007; (615) 340-7389; www.gbhem.org.

Web and Print

- [*Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2013-2016: Pastor Parish Relations.*](#)
- [*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2012*](#)
- One-hour [webinar overview](#) of the committee's role and responsibilities
- Church staff policy [sample and checklist](#)
- Changing pastors – several [archived webinars](#)
- Clergy Health, [The Center for Health](#)
- Guides developed by [East Ohio Conference:](#)
 - Setting the Pastor's Salary
 - A Guide to a Good Move for Pastor's and Families
 - A Guide for a Good Move (for church laity)
- [Interpreter Magazine](#)(United Methodist Communications)
- [Mentoring: A Guide for Ministry](#) by Cheryl Lawrie
- [Safe Sanctuaries®](#) (link: [/lead-your-church/safe-sanctuaries](#)). There are several resources described on the web page.
- [Winds of Promise: Building and Maintaining Strong Clergy Families](#) by Anne E. Streaty Wimberly and Edward Powell Wimberly