



Virginia Conference, The United Methodist Church

Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Training

Center for Clergy Excellence
Virginia Conference
P. O. Box 5606, Glen Allen, VA 23058
804-521-1126

Resources at www.vaumc.org, click Resources, click Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee

Begin with the Mission of The UMC

Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

Committee Basics from ¶258.2

Purpose of the Staff-Pastor Parish Relations Committee

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is the administrative unit in the local church where staff and congregational interests are integrated to focus on the mission of the church.

- The SPRC serves the “governing board” in an advisory capacity related to personnel administration.
- It does not exist to provide managerial or leadership oversight to the staff team (that is the work of the senior pastor).

Membership

- Between 5 and 9 persons (one shall be a young adult and one may be a youth)
- Must be professing members
- Divided into three year classes
- Members shall be able to succeed themselves for one three-year term (new in 2009)
- Oversees the work to all staff
- Pastor should be present, unless s/he excuses self or if D.S. is in attendance
- The lay delegate and lay leader are members and have voice and vote
- On charges, a representative & Lay Leader from each church
- Relates to and works with all staff (paid and non-salaried)
- People engaged and attentive to their own Christian spiritual development

Who we cannot be

- Staff members
- No more than one immediate family member from the same household
- Immediate family members of the pastor or staff

Meetings

- At least quarterly
- Written “minutes” of decisions/actions
- Pastor present, unless s/he excuses self
- Only with knowledge of pastor or district superintendent
- May meet with the district superintendent without pastor or appointed staff
 - *With due notice before and sharing immediately after*
- Shall meet in closed session (BOD ¶258.2e)

Confidentiality

- Issues are discussed during meeting, not between meetings
- All matters under discussion are kept in strict confidence, i.e., a “safe” place
- All input brought to the meeting is held in confidence, but is “owned” input
- If you cannot keep a confidence, then have the integrity to resign from the Committee.
- Joint statements owned & shared by all members
- Careful reporting to Council of each meeting

Resources for Pastoral Relations Committees

Effective and Ineffective Pastoral Relations Committees (PRC)

Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective PRCs

Effective	Ineffective
<p>Meet regularly and often</p> <p>Prepare for meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have an agenda• Stay focused on agenda and identify topics for future meetings• Allow adequate time <p>Establish partnership with pastor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep pastor informed• Take pastor into confidence• "We are in this together" attitude• Provide support and understanding	<p>Conduct annual evaluations only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withholds regular feedback• Lets issues build too long• Related to salary and appointment decisions more than to growth <p>Allow too little time and care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insufficient time to do task well• Insufficient care in getting input and preparing for evaluation <p>Behave unfairly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bringing unevaluated complaints• Bringing anonymous complaints• Giving all sources equal credibility• Doesn't put issues in perspective

What PRCs and Clergy Most Need from Each Other

<i>PRCs Most Need from Clergy</i>	<i>Clergy Most Need from PRCs</i>
<p>Cooperation and receptivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Willing to listen with open mind• Attempt to understand members' needs and concerns• Attempt to make some changes• Openness to improvement ideas <p>Clear and open communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pastor's vision for ministry• Candid assessment of what is going on in the church• Information about issues and needs	<p>Honest feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balanced, objective, thoughtful, and candid feedback• Treated as adults who can take criticism <p>Personal concern and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for pastor <p>Communication with the congregation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education of congregation• Feedback from and to congregation

Based on a comparison of pastoral relations committees deemed effective by both the PRC chair and the pastor and those deemed ineffective by the chair and pastor.

Lewis Center for Church Leadership
Wesley Theological Seminary www.churchleadership.com

When Folks Are Complaining

When a church member voices a concern to you about the pastor or paid staff:

1. Encourage him/her to speak to the pastor (or staffer) directly.
 - a. If they have already done so but are dissatisfied, you may encourage them to further direct conversation or reflection upon other positive responses and forgiveness.
 - b. If the person can't or won't speak to the pastor AND the issue seems important, then...
2. Have the person write down their concern, date and sign it.
 - a. If they decline, tell them that you cannot carry verbal concerns to the committee.
3. Convey the written concern to the chair of the S/PPRC.
 - a. The chair or secretary should write an acknowledgment: 'We received your concern and will discuss it at our next meeting.'
4. The chair should inform the pastor &/or staff person of the written concern.
5. At the next regular or called S/PPRC meeting, the whole committee decides if:
 - a. The concern has merit and deserves further attention, or
 - b. The concern has no merit and deserves no action. If not, then write a note thanking the person for their input and informing him/her that the Committee will remain aware.
6. The Committee discusses legitimate concerns with the pastor/staff person for a full understanding of situation. Together, decide on a course of action and follow up.
7. The whole committee decides if a joint statement is needed to the church or the individual who initiated the concern. All members are obliged to share only the approved, joint statement without additions or deletions.
8. The S/PPRC may receive individual's letters only, not petitions from groups. When trying to gain a sense of the entire congregation, S/PPRC should not conduct polls, but should make known (via newsletter, bulletin) who the S/PPRC members are so the general membership can approach them. Each S/PPRC member should keep a discreet list of who approaches them and give it to the Chair. The Chair can then determine if a few individuals are unduly influencing S/PPRC opinions.
9. S/PPRC is responsible for addressing situations with the pastor and any paid staff. The Lay Leadership/Nominating Committee is responsible for addressing situations with elected members of the congregation.

A COVENANT OF LEADERSHIP

Our Promises to God:

We promise to pray, alone and together, to thank God and to ask for God's help in our lives and in our work for our church, and we promise to listen to God's answer to us.

Our Promises to Our Church Family:

We promise to demonstrate our leadership and commitment to our church by our example.

We promise to support our church's pastors and staff, so their efforts can be most productive.

We promise to try to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what might be best for us or for some small group in the church.

Our Promises to Each Other on [the Governing Board]:

We promise to respect and care for each other.

We promise to treat our time on [the board] as an opportunity to make an important gift to our church.

We promise to listen with an open, nonjudgmental mind to the words and ideas of the others in our church and on [the board.]

We promise to discuss, debate, and disagree openly in [board] meetings, expressing ourselves as clearly and honestly as possible, *so* we are certain the [board] understands *our* point of view.

We promise to support the final decision of [the board], whether it reflects our view or not.

Adapted from *Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leaders*
by Gil Rendle, copyright © 2011 by the Alban Institute. All rights reserved.

Duties of Committee (¶258.2g)

Communication

- Confer and counsel with pastor & staff, advising them of ministry conditions
- Continually interpret to people the nature and function of ministry
- Counsel pastor & staff on relationships with congregation, priorities, skills, goals
- Interpret to congregation: preparation for ordained ministry, Ministerial Education Fund

Personnel Issues

- Develop and recommend to Council staff positions and job descriptions for staff other than pastor
- Recommend to Council personnel policies and monitor compliance
- Consult: pulpit supply, compensation, vacation, insurances, pension, housing -- making recommendations to Council.
- Enlist, interview, evaluate, review, recommend: Lay Speakers, Candidates for Ministry and missionary service
- Consult: continuing education, renewal
- *New in 2012*: “To encourage, monitor, and support clergy and lay staff pursuit of health and wholeness.” (¶258.2g(16))

Parsonage Issues

- With Trustee and Pastor, make annual review of parsonage
- *New in 2012*: “The committee will follow up to assure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting the health of the pastor or pastor’s family.” (¶258.2g(16))

Annual Evaluation

- Provide annual evaluations for pastor & staff to encourage effective ministry (April to June)

Appointment Issues

- Confer with pastor & cooperate with pastor, DS, and bishop in securing clergy leadership when it becomes evident that the best interests of the church and pastor will be served by a change.
- Such conferring and cooperating with DS and bishop are advisory only.

Duties of the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee

¶ 258.2, 2012 Book of Discipline, The United Methodist Church

2. There shall be elected annually by the charge conference in each local church a **committee on pastor-parish relations or staff-parish relations** who are professing members of the local church or charge or associate members (¶ 227), except in cases where central conference legislation or local law provides otherwise. People serving on this committee must be engaged in and attentive to their Christian spiritual development so as to give proper leadership in the responsibilities with which the committee is entrusted.

In conducting its work, the committee shall identify and clarify its values for ministry. It shall engage in biblical and theological reflections on the mission of the church, the primary task, and ministries of the local church.

The committee shall reflect biblically and theologically on the role and work of the pastor(s) and staff as they carry out their leadership responsibilities. The committee shall assist the pastor(s) and staff in assessing their gifts and setting priorities for leadership and service. It is the responsibility of the committee to communicate with the committee on lay leadership and/or the church council when there is a need for other leaders or for employed staff to perform in areas where utilization of the gifts of the pastor(s) and staff proves an inappropriate stewardship of time.

a) The committee shall be composed of not fewer than five nor more than nine persons representative of the total charge. One of the members shall be a young adult and one member may be a youth. In addition, the lay leader and a lay member of the annual conference shall be members. No staff member or immediate family member of a pastor or staff member may serve on the committee. Only one person from an immediate family residing in the same household shall serve on the committee.

b) In order to secure experience and stability, the membership shall be divided into three classes, one of which shall be elected each year for a three-year term. The lay member of the annual conference and the lay leader are exempt from the three-year term. To begin the process of rotation where such a process has not been in place, on the first year one class shall be elected for one year, one class for two years, and one class for three years. Members of the committee shall be able to succeed themselves for one three-year term.

When vacancies occur during the year, nominees shall be elected at the church council (or alternative church structure).

c) In those charges where there is more than one church, the committee shall include at least one representative from each local church.

d) The committees on pastor-parish relations of charges that are in cooperative parish ministries shall meet together to consider the professional leadership needs of the cooperative parish ministry as a whole.

e) The committee shall meet at least quarterly. It shall meet additionally at the request of the bishop, the district superintendent, the pastor, any other person accountable to the committee, or the chairperson of the committee. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the pastor and/or the district superintendent. The pastor shall be present at each meeting of the committee on pastor-parish relations or staff-parish relations except where he or she voluntarily excuses himself or herself.

The committee may meet with the district superintendent without the pastor or appointed staff under consideration being present. However, the pastor or appointed staff under consideration shall be notified prior to such meeting with the district superintendent and be brought into consultation immediately thereafter.

The committee shall meet in closed session, and information shared in the committee shall be confidential.

f) In the event that only one congregation on a charge containing more than one church has concerns it wishes to share, its member(s) in the committee may meet separately with the pastor or any other person accountable to the committee or the district superintendent, but only with the knowledge of the pastor and/or district superintendent.

g) The duties of the committee shall include the following:

(1) To encourage, strengthen, nurture, support, and respect the pastor(s) and staff and their family(s).

(2) To promote unity in the church(es).

(3) To confer with and counsel the pastor(s) and staff on the matters pertaining to the effectiveness of ministry; relationships with the congregation; conditions that may impede the effectiveness of ministry; and to interpret the nature and function of the ministry.

(4) To confer with, consult, and counsel the pastor(s) and staff on matters pertaining to priorities in the use of gifts, skills, and time and priorities for the demands and effectiveness of the mission and ministry of the congregation.

(5) To provide evaluation at least annually for the use of the pastor(s) and staff in an ongoing effective ministry and for identifying continuing educational needs and plans.

(6) To communicate and interpret to the congregation the nature and function of ministry in The United Methodist Church regarding open itinerancy, the preparation for ordained ministry, and the Ministerial Education Fund.

(7) To develop and approve written job descriptions and titles for associate pastors and other staff members in cooperation with the senior pastor. The term associate pastor is used as a general term to indicate any pastoral appointment in a local church other than the pastor in charge (see ¶ 339). Committees shall be encouraged to develop specific titles for associate pastors that reflect the job descriptions and expectations.

(8) To consult with the pastor and staff concerning continuing education and spiritual renewal, to arrange with the church council for the necessary time and financial assistance for the attendance of the pastor and/or staff at such continuing education and spiritual renewal events as may serve their professional and spiritual growth, and to encourage staff members to seek professional certification in their fields of specialization.

(9) To enlist, interview, evaluate, review, and recommend annually to the charge conference lay preachers and persons for candidacy for ordained ministry (see ¶¶ 247.8 and 310), and to enlist and refer to the General Board of Global Ministries persons for candidacy for missionary service, recognizing that The United Methodist Church affirms the biblical and theological support of persons regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, or disabilities for these ministries. Neither the pastor nor any member of the committee on pastor-

parish relations shall be present during the consideration of a candidacy application or renewal for a member of their immediate family. The committee shall provide to the charge conference a list of students from the charge who are preparing for ordained ministry, diaconal ministry, and/or missionary service, and shall maintain contact with these students, supplying the charge conference with a progress report on each student.

(10) To interpret preparation for ordained ministry and the Ministerial Education Fund to the congregation.

(11) To confer with the pastor and/or other appointed members of the staff if it should become evident that the best interests of the charge and pastor(s) will be served by a change of pastor(s). The committee shall cooperate with the pastor(s), the district superintendent, and the bishop in securing clergy leadership. Its relationship to the district superintendent and the bishop shall be advisory only.⁹ (See ¶¶ 430-433.)

(12) To recommend to the church council, after consultation with the pastor, the professional and other staff positions (whether employee or contract) needed to carry out the work of the church or charge. The committee and the pastor shall recommend to the church council a written statement of policy and procedures regarding the process for hiring, contracting, evaluating, promoting, retiring, and dismissing staff personnel who are not subject to episcopal appointment as ordained clergy. Until such a policy has been adopted, the committee and the pastor shall have the authority to hire, contract, evaluate, promote, retire, and dismiss nonappointed personnel. When persons are hired or contracted, consideration shall be given to the training qualifications and certification standards set forth by the general Church agency to which such positions are related. The committee shall further recommend to the church council a provision for adequate health and life insurance and severance pay for all lay employees. In addition, the committee shall recommend that the church council provide, effective on and after January 1, 2006, 100 percent vested pension benefits of at least three percent of compensation for lay employees of the local church who work at least 1040 hours per year, are at least 21 years of age, and have at least one year of permanent service. The church council shall have authority to provide such pension benefits through either a denominational pension program administered by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits or another pension program administered by another pension provider.

(13) To recommend to the charge conference, when the size of the employed staff of the charge makes it desirable, the establishment of a personnel committee. This committee shall be composed of such members of the committee on pastor-parish relations as it may designate and such additional members as the charge conference may determine.

(14) To educate the church community on the value of diversity of selection in clergy and lay staff and develop a commitment to same.

(15) Members of the committee on pastor-parish relations (or staff-parish relations) shall keep themselves informed of personnel matters in relationship to the Church's policy, professional standards, liability issues, and civil law. They are responsible for communicating and interpreting such matters to staff. Committee members should make themselves available for educational and training opportunities provided by the conference, district, and/or other arenas that will enable them to be effective in their work.

(16) To consult on matters pertaining to pulpit supply, proposals for compensation, travel expense, vacation, health and life insurance, pension, housing (which may be a church-owned parsonage or housing allowance in lieu of parsonage if in compliance with the policy of the annual conference), and other practical matters affecting the work and families of the pastor and staff, and to make annual recommendations regarding such

matters to the church council, reporting budget items to the committee on finance. The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the pastor's family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the pastor's family. The committee will follow up to assure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting the health of the pastor or pastor's family. The chairperson of the committee on pastor-parish relations, the chairperson of the board of trustees, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance.

(17) To encourage, monitor, and support clergy and lay staff pursuit of health and wholeness.

Calendar Flow

First Quarter:

- Organize Committee (select a vice-chair, secretary)
- Train new S/PPRC members
- Discuss and complete Appointment “Preference Form” (with pastor present)
- Review job descriptions for other lay and clergy staff
- Look at S/PPRC Goals and meeting dates for year

Second Quarter:

- Annual Pastoral Evaluation (between April and June): results are due in the district office by June 1 annually
- Parsonage Review -- not optional
 - Trustees and/or Parsonage Committee
 - Church’s property, pastor’s home
 - Keep it up like your own home.

Third Quarter

- Budget work:
 - Salary
 - accountable reimbursement/travel
 - continuing education,
 - any other budget items that relate to paid staff
- Review action items from spring time evaluation of pastor and staff.

Fourth Quarter

- Look at Church Goals for coming year
 - impact on staff priorities, training, division of tasks
- Appointment Review Process for clergy
- Look at long range plan for pastor and staff continuing education
- S/PPRC evaluates its own work in past year
 - How did we do?
 - What did we neglect?
 - Where did we shine?

Annual Evaluation

From the 2012 *Book of Discipline, The United Methodist Church*

¶ 350. *Evaluation—Evaluation is a continuous process for formation in servant ministry and servant leadership that must take place in a spirit of understanding and acceptance. Evaluation serves as a process for pastors to assess their effectiveness in ministry and to discern God’s call to continue in ordained ministry.*

1. The district superintendent, in consultation with the pastor-parish relations committee, will evaluate annually the pastors’ effectiveness for ministry (¶334.2c, 419, 635.2o, r), using criteria, processes, and training developed by the cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry. The pastors in local churches shall participate annually in an evaluation with the committee on pastor-parish relations for use in an ongoing effective ministry and for identifying continuing education needs and plans (¶258.2g[5]), using criteria, processes, and training developed by the Board of Ordained Ministry and the cabinet.

The Virginia Conference Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry have designed the annual evaluation process to be used for all clergy appointed to local churches. The forms will be sent from the district office on March 15 annually. The report form shall be submitted to the district superintendent by June 1 annually.

Kinds of Evaluation

- Summative Evaluation – moves toward a conclusion or judgment. “How well is the clergyperson advancing the overall mission of this congregation?” This helps a clergyperson and congregation decide if they have accomplished all that God needs done through this match. The end result is completion of the Appointment Preference Form. This is the **Appointment Review**.
- Formative Evaluation– helps the staff person move ahead. “What changes and enhancements can be made to aid the clergyperson to better lead the overall mission of this church?” The goal is more effective ministry based on identifying strengths and developing a specific action plan for growth. This is the **Annual Evaluation**.

Steps for an Effective Evaluation

1. Prepare by reviewing the materials ahead of time
2. Complete the measurable characteristics worksheet
3. Clarify boundaries and confidentiality
4. Chair and pastor together write final report

Annual Clergy Evaluation by the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee Virginia Conference

One of the duties of the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee is to “provide evaluation at least annually for the use of the pastor(s) and staff in an on-going effective ministry and for identifying continuing educational needs and plans” (2012 Book of Discipline ¶258.2(g)(5)).

The Virginia Conference uses two types of annual review of clergy:

1. A “formative evaluation” is about growing the working relationship between a pastor and a congregation. It helps the pastor refine or develop new ministry skills needed in the current appointment. It typically involves such questions as: “What can this clergy person do differently to better lead the overall mission of this church?” The goal is more effective ministry based on identifying pastoral strengths and developing a specific action plan for pastoral growth. The Annual Evaluation outlined in this document is ‘formative’. The DS will send a reminder and the forms to churches and pastors on March 15. It is to be completed by S/PPRC and sent to the DS between April 1 and June 1 each year.
2. A “summative evaluation” moves toward a decision or judgment. It helps a pastor and congregation decide if they have accomplished all that God needs done through this match. A typical question might be: “Are we at a good place to change leadership or do we have more of God’s work to do together?” The **Appointment Review** conversation by the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee in **November or December** each year is ‘summative’. The results of that conversation are reported on the Pastor Preference Form (for pastors) and the Appointment Request Form (for deacons). The DS will send a reminder and those forms in early November to be returned to the district office by **mid- January**.

Resources to use in the annual clergy evaluation:

- *Characteristics of Effective Clergy* (attached)
- *Responsibilities and Duties of Elders and Licensed Pastors* (2012 Book of Discipline, ¶340)
- Job Descriptions for Appointed Deacons and Associate Pastors
- Congregation’s Goals
- Congregation statistics from EVC on the conference website (www.evc.vaumc.org)

Annual Clergy Evaluation Process:

- Suggested questions:
 - To the Committee: Which three to five of these characteristics do you believe are strengths for this clergy person?
 - To the Clergy person: Which three to five of these characteristics do you believe are your strengths as you live out your responsibilities in ministry?
 - To the Clergy person: Which three to five of these characteristics do you believe are your weaknesses as you live out your responsibilities in ministry? What would strengthen your ministry in these areas?
 - To the Committee: Which three to five of these characteristics do you believe are weaknesses for this clergy person? What would strengthen this clergy person’s ministry in these areas?
- Develop an action plan to strengthen the identified areas of weakness.
- Submit *Report Form: Summary of Evaluation and Action Plan* (attached) for each appointed clergy person, signed by both the clergy person and the chair of the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, to the District Superintendent by June 1 annually.

Remember to:

- Begin and end meeting with prayer or centering worship.
- Allow adequate time for honest feedback.
- Remind participants of confidentiality.
- Communicate clearly, use specific examples, and listen carefully.

Characteristics of Effective Clergy

Virginia Conference

These are the leadership qualities and vocational competencies that define the effectiveness of clergy in the Virginia Conference. Additional measurable characteristics of congregational health are included to provide information for discussion of the clergy person's leadership and resulting effectiveness.

Leadership Qualities

- *Maturing Spirituality*: Exhibits a disciplined spiritual life, maintaining healthy boundaries and being accountable for one's work and actions, including participation in a program of personal spiritual enrichment and renewal.
- *Integrity and Authenticity*: Demonstrates consistent behavior that is in alignment with Christian beliefs, practices, and healthy relationship with God.
- *Sound Theology*: Understands, knows, and celebrates the power of Jesus Christ to bring healing and wholeness, forgiveness and reconciliation, justice and peace, to the lives of individuals, congregations, and communities.
- *Servant Leadership*: Exhibits servant leadership that cultivates the gifts of the Spirit and empowers others to claim their call and find their place in ministry.
- *Relational*: Exhibits the ability to listen, develop working teams, equip persons for ministry, and manage conflict in a way that leads to healthy resolution.
- *Self Care*: Maintains a healthy balance between self, family, and work and participates in the Virginia Self-Care Covenant.
- *Connectional*: Serves as a leader who knows and supports United Methodist theology and polity as defined in the *Book of Discipline*, gives clear support for connectionalism and obedience to his/her ordination vows.
- *Adaptability*: Demonstrates the ability to be flexible regarding geographical location, congregational constituency, and worship styles.
- *Performance Standards*: Exhibits a high level of work ethic and consistently produces quality results.

Vocational Competencies

- *Evangelism and Discipleship*: Demonstrates the ability to lead the congregation in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
- *Ministry Development*: Demonstrates a willingness to lead the congregation in establishing ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness.
- *Proclamation*: Possesses and articulates a working knowledge of biblical faith; demonstrates the ability to communicate and apply the gospel of Jesus Christ in culturally relevant ways to the diverse population groups of our conference.
- *Commitment to Inclusivity*: Models and embraces inclusiveness, demonstrating sensitivity to diversity.

- *Visioning and Implementation Skills:* Demonstrates the ability to partner with laity in identifying and articulating the vision plus the assessment and administrative ability to make the vision become reality.
- *Inspirational and Motivational Skills:* Relates to others in a way that inspires and encourages them in their life of faith.
- *Administration:* Demonstrates administrative, management, and supervisory skills.
- *Pastoral Care:* Devotes time for pastoral care appropriate to the ministry setting, encourages and equips laity for the ministry of pastoral care, establishes and adheres to visitation priorities appropriate to the ministry setting.
- *Conflict Management:* Demonstrates the ability to handle complaints, settle disputes and resolve conflicts.

Vital Congregations Characteristics

- Disciples worship (average worship attendance)
- Disciples make new disciples (number of people who join by profession of faith)
- Disciples engage in growing as a disciple (number of small groups, Sunday school classes and Bible studies)
- Disciples engage in mission (number of people from the congregation engaged in local, national and international mission/outreach activities)
- Disciples give to mission (total amount given by local church to other organizations for support of benevolent and charitable ministries, including apportionments paid and support for all United Methodist and non-United Methodist organizations active in work such as advocacy, education, health, justice, mercy, outreach, and welfare anywhere in the world)

Adapted from: *Standards for Clergy Leadership in the Virginia Conference and Characteristics of Effective Clergy in the North Georgia Conference*

Approved by Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry 5/20/2009

Approved by Virginia Conference Cabinet 4/20/2009

Updated by the Virginia Conference Cabinet 9/6/2011

The Appointment Process

The Appointment Review Process and Preference Form

1. The Appointment Review (see page 8): New incoming members meet with the current members in late November or early December and follow the guidelines for the Appointment Review.
2. In January, complete the Appointment Review conversation.
3. In January, fill out form with new S/PPRC only.
4. No polls, petitions, or straw votes are taken.
5. Signatures of committee and pastor are required on both forms.
6. Forms are advisory to Bishop and Cabinet

Profiles

- Two Profiles: Pastor and Church
- Laity responsible for inputting, editing, and updating the Church and Community Profile
- Profile utilization is only through EVC on the conference web site at www.evc.vaumc.org
 - Logon information from pastor or District Office
- Profiles are taken VERY seriously

The United Methodist Way

- The Bishop appoints (sent vs. call system)
- Itineracy
- Open-itineracy: willingness to receive appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age

Missional Appointment-Making

1. The Mission of the Church in relation to the conference
2. The needs/mission of a specific church as it relates to the community
3. The Needs of the clergy
4. Gifts and graces of the clergy
5. Housing and family needs
6. Salary

Steps in the Process

1. The cabinet meets monthly. During the months of February through May, appointment making is the major agenda.
2. The receiving district superintendent profiles the open church.
3. Other district superintendents nominate potential pastors using profiles and personal knowledge.
4. Conversation and prayer are held around the table.
5. The receiving district superintendent “projects” a new pastor for the church.
6. A “meet your pastor” meeting is held with the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee of the receiving church.
7. The announcement of the new pastor is made on Sundays.
8. The appointment is final when the appointments are presented at Annual Conference.

Virginia Conference

Appointment Review for Clergy

Process for **Appointment Review** in preparation for January Preference Forms (itinerating clergy) or Appointment Request Form (non-itinerating deacons):

1. The Pastor-Staff Parish Committee meets in late November or December with members of the incoming class to define:
 - a. Discuss the ministry of your church using the following questions:
 - i. What are the priorities for mission and ministry of our church?
 - ii. What are our church/charge's three greatest strengths? (be specific)
 - iii. In what area(s) does our church/charge need to develop strength? (be specific)
 - b. What are the current or anticipated needs for clergy leadership in this Congregation?
 - i. (Committee might list all roles or tasks of clergy – and rank them in order of importance for the mission/vision of the congregation)
 - c. What are the gifts and skills of clergy that are needed in the life of this congregation now?
2. At that meeting or at the January meeting, the Pastor-Staff Parish Committee would discuss:
 - a. What gifts and skills does the appointed clergy possess that are needed most in this church at the present time?
 - b. How does the appointed clergy effectively meet the defined needs for clergy leadership in the life of this congregation?
3. At the January meeting, the appointed Clergy would respond to these questions:
 - a. What are the needs for clergy leadership in this congregation at this time?
 - b. What are my gifts and skills that are needed most in this congregation at this time?
 - c. Do I want to be engaged in meeting the defined needs of this congregation in the coming year?
 - d. What are the areas of growth that are needed within myself that would help the church fulfill its mission and ministry?
 - e. Am I willing to continue to develop these skills for the coming year in serving this congregation?
4. Preference forms would be submitted to the Superintendent with written summaries of these discussions.

The Pastor's Job Description

(¶340 Duties of Elders & Local Pastors)

Word and ecclesial acts

- Preach the Word of God,
- Lead in worship
- Counsel the distressed and grieving
- Preside at weddings and funerals
- Visit in homes in church and community
- Maintain all confidences

Sacrament

- Celebrate the sacraments, Baptism and Lord's Supper
- Instruct parents & sponsors before baptizing infants / children,
- Encourage reaffirmation of baptismal covenant and vows
- Encourage profession of faith after instruction
- Explain meaning of Lord's Supper and encourage participation
- Select and train deacons and laity to assist / carry communion
- Encourage means of grace

Order

- "Branch manager" of the local church
- Support, guide, train lay leadership
- Create mutual accountability
- Oversee the educational program
- Goal setting, planning, evaluation
- Administer the temporal affairs of the church
- Administer the provisions of the Discipline
- Prepare Charge Conference reporting of ministries
- Give leadership for funding ministry
- Promote faithful, financial stewardship
- Full and faithful payment of all apportioned funds
- Participate in denominational and conference programs and training
- Lead in racial and ethnic inclusiveness

Service

- Embody the teachings of Jesus in servant ministries and servant leadership
- Discipleship in the world
- Build the body of Christ as a caring and giving community, extending ministry to the world
- Participate in community, ecumenical and inter-religious concerns and involve the local church

Definition and Duties of the Pastor

¶ 339. Definition of a Pastor

A pastor is an ordained elder, probationary deacon (according to 1992 Book of Discipline) or licensed person approved by vote of the clergy members in full connection and may be appointed by the bishop to be in charge of a station, circuit, cooperative parish, extension ministry, ecumenical shared ministry,²³ or to a church of another denomination, or on the staff of one such appointment.

¶ 340. Responsibilities and Duties of Elders and Licensed Pastors

The responsibilities of elders and licensed pastors are derived from the authority given in ordination. Elders have a four-fold ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order and Service within the connection and thus serve in the church and the world. Local pastors share with the elders the responsibilities and duties of a pastor for this four-fold ministry.

1. Word and ecclesial acts:

a) To preach the Word of God, lead in worship, read and teach the Scriptures, and engage the people in study and witness.²⁴

(1) To ensure faithful transmission of the Christian faith.

(2) To lead people in discipleship and evangelistic outreach that others might come to know Christ and to follow him.

b) To counsel persons with personal, ethical, or spiritual struggles.

c) To perform the ecclesial acts of marriage and burial.

(1) To perform the marriage ceremony after due counsel with the parties involved and in accordance with the laws of the state and the rules of The United Methodist Church. The decision to perform the ceremony shall be the right and responsibility of the pastor.

(2) To conduct funeral and memorial services and provide care and grief counseling.

d) To visit in the homes of the church and the community, especially among the sick, aged, imprisoned, and others in need.

e) To maintain all confidences inviolate, including confessional confidences except in the cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, or in cases where mandatory reporting is required by civil law.

2. Sacrament:

a) To administer the sacraments of baptism and the Supper of the Lord according to Christ's ordinance.

(1) To prepare the parents and sponsors before baptizing infants or children, and instruct them concerning the significance of baptism and their responsibilities for the Christian training of the baptized child.

(2) To encourage reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant and renewal of baptismal vows at different stages of life.

(3) To encourage people baptized in infancy or early childhood to make their profession of faith, after instruction, so that they might become professing members of the church.

(4) To explain the meaning of the Lord's Supper and to encourage regular participation as a means of grace to grow in faith and holiness.

(5) To select and train deacons and lay members to serve the consecrated communion elements.

b) To encourage the private and congregational use of the other means of grace.

3. Order:

a) To be the administrative officer of the local church and to assure that the organizational concerns of the congregation are adequately provided for.

(1) To give pastoral support, guidance, and training to the lay leadership, equipping them to fulfill the ministry to which they are called.

(2) To give oversight to the educational program of the church and encourage the use of United Methodist literature and media.

(3) To be responsible for organizational faithfulness, goal setting, planning and evaluation.

(4) To search out and counsel men and women for the ministry of deacons, elders, local pastors and other church related ministries.

b) To administer the temporal affairs of the church in their appointment, the annual conference, and the general church.

(1) To administer the provisions of the Discipline.

(2) To give an account of their pastoral ministries to the charge and annual conference according to the prescribed forms.

(3) To provide leadership for the funding ministry of the congregation.

(4) To promote faithful, financial stewardship and to encourage giving as a spiritual discipline.

(5) To lead the congregation in the fulfillment of its mission through full and faithful payment of all apportioned ministerial support, administrative, and benevolent funds.

(6) To care for all church records and local church financial obligations, and certify the accuracy of all financial, membership, and any other reports submitted by the local church to the annual conference for use in apportioning costs back to the church.

c) To participate in denominational and conference programs and training opportunities.

(1) To seek out opportunities for cooperative ministries with other United Methodist pastors and churches.

(2) To be willing to assume supervisory responsibilities within the connection.

d) To lead the congregation in racial and ethnic inclusiveness.

4. Service:

a) To embody the teachings of Jesus in servant ministries and servant leadership.

b) To give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for discipleship in the world.

c) To build the body of Christ as a caring and giving community, extending the ministry of Christ to the world.

d) To participate in community, ecumenical and inter-religious concerns and to encourage the people to become so involved and to pray and labor for the unity of the Christian community.

Self-Care Covenant

Virginia Conference, The United Methodist Church

For the benefit of my own life and the ministry to which I am called in Christ...

1. I will keep, as a regular practice, the following spiritual disciplines (beyond sermon and teaching preparation). List at least three: _____

2. I will regularly set aside time for family meals (at least weekly) and family activities (at least monthly). "Family" denotes immediate family, extended family, and/or network of friends.
3. I will adhere to the minimum standards for vacation and days off as articulated in the "Vacation Policy for Virginia Conference Clergy"* adopted by the Bishop's Cabinet.
4. I will adhere to the "Guidelines for Continuing Theological Education"* as required by the Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
5. I will work towards achieving and/or maintaining personal conformity with medically recognized health guidelines for height and weight unless such conformity is deemed unsuitable by my attending physician.
6. I will develop and/or maintain personal relationships with the following persons (friends, family, colleagues) to whom I can go for support in times of stress or difficulty. List at least 3 or 4:

7. I will participate in some form(s) of regular exercise appropriate to the particulars of my physical condition and with the knowledge and approval of my attending physician. Briefly describe exercise program: _____
8. I will endeavor to establish/maintain healthy practices with regard to personal nutrition.
9. I will order my personal administrative life through the establishment of legal documents appropriate to the particular circumstances of my relationships: e.g., a personal will, durable power of attorney, living will, and/or guardianship for surviving minor children. I will make known the location of these documents to the following persons (list at least two):

10. I will endeavor to establish/maintain healthy practices with regard to proper sleep.

*These can be found on the following web page: www.vaumc.org

I covenant all of the above with the following peer-support person or group with whom I will share mutual accountability for our self-care as clergy (please list):

Continuing Education, Study Leave, and Sabbaticals

The 2012 *Book of Discipline* in ¶351, *Continuing Education and Spiritual Growth* and ¶352, *Sabbatical Leave*, gives guidelines and support for clergy study leaves, continuing education, and sabbaticals. In addition, ¶351.4 addresses the issue of financial support. In terms of time, the requirement of the *Discipline* is that clergy shall spend at least one week each year and at least one month during one year of every quadrennium for continuing education. These leaves are not to be considered vacation. Study leaves of up to six months may be taken by clergy who have held full-time appointments for at least six years. All such leaves are to be scheduled in consultation with the local church pastor/staff-parish relations committee, the church council, and the district superintendent.

Financial support is offered to clergy who have completed basic educational requirements through the Ministerial Education Fund, which allows up to \$400 per year to clergy, certified professionals, and diaconal ministers who are appointed who have a base compensation of under \$50,000. For those with base compensation of over \$50,000, \$200 is available annually. In addition, other sources of funding include Foundations, local church, district, and conference funding.

In addition, ¶419.7 says that one of the responsibilities of the district superintendent is to “*receive written or electronic reports of the clergy’s continuing education, spiritual practices, current ministry work, and goals for future ministry.*”