

STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

2010 – Virgie Botts & Rob Burrus, Chair

2011 – Matt Gournay, Annmarie Barajas

2012 – Charlie Crane, Tonya Vining

Lay Member of Annual Conference – Jane Heydanek

Lay Leader – Mike Beauchamp

Reverend Mary Beth Hardesty-Crouch

Introduction

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

The "Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (PPRC)" is truly a Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) because the committee relates to all staff, both bishop-appointed staff and employed staff. The S/PPRC has some of the same functions of a personnel office or Human Resources department in other organizations.

The S/PPRC has primary responsibility to work with staff so that the mission of the church is realized. The S/PPRC should have a clear understanding of your local church's mission and vision, built upon the mission of the wider Church. Clear understanding of your church and prayerful listening to God's direction will guide both the development of job descriptions and the assessment of staff.

The S/PPRC works with individuals and groups, including:

- the lead pastor
- all ordained leaders-both elders and deacons-appointed by the bishop
- the lay staff
- the congregation (individually and corporately)
- the community outside the walls of your building
- the district superintendent

the United Methodist conference and general church staff.

Remember that The United Methodist Church has an appointive system rather than a call system for clergy leadership. The S/PPRC consults with its district superintendent about congregational needs. The S/PPRC members must be attuned to the movement of God's Spirit so that they serve as guides, teachers, mentors, managers of conflict, and interpreters of ministry both to staff and the congregation.

-From [*Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2005-2008: Pastor-Parish Relations*](#), pp. 6-7. Copyright © 2004 by Cokesbury. Used by permission.

Primary Tasks of the Committee

Specific tasks for the S/PPRC include:

- explaining the nature and function of ministry to the staff and the congregation
- conferring with the congregation and the staff/pastor about ministry direction
- assessing the ministry of the congregation and the staff/pastor at least annually
- conferring and consulting with the district superintendent
- supporting lifelong learning for all staff (continuing education)
- identifying and supporting individuals from the congregation whom God seems to be calling for ordained ministry
- making recommendations regarding compensation, travel, benefits and housing to the church council

recommending needed staff positions and develop written job descriptions and titles for associate pastors and staff

-Adapted from [*Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2005-2008: Pastor-Parish Relations*](#), (Cokesbury, 2004), p 7; and [*Job Descriptions & Leadership Training for Leaders in Local Church Congregations, 2005-2008*](#) (Discipleship Resources, 2004).

Organization and Relationships

The committee has between 5 and 9 members who are representative of the congregation or charge. Members include a young adult and may also include a youth. The lay leader and a lay member of the annual conference area are also required to be members of this committee.

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The committee must not include an immediate family member of the pastor or staff or more than one person from the same household.

The committee membership should be divided into three groups or classes that rotate. With the exception of the lay member of the annual conference and the lay leader, members are elected to three-year terms. At the end of the three year term, a committee member cannot immediately serve again.

The committee works in cooperation with all other administrative and programming committees and councils and is responsible to the church council.

-Adapted from [*The Book of Discipline 2004*](#) Copyright © 2004 by The United Methodist Publishing House.