



## Clergy Appointment Process



### Foundational Values and Understandings



- The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples for Jesus Christ. All appointment making is to strengthen this disciple-making mission. Through prayerful discernment, the Holy Spirit moves throughout the process of appointment making.
- In making appointments, the Bishop and Cabinet match clergy gifts and skills with the needs and opportunities of congregations to reach the next level of disciple-making.
- Pastors are part of covenant community. Pastors are sent to serve churches. Churches are not here to serve pastors. Therefore, movement in the appointive process will not necessarily always mean step-by-step raises or increase in the size of the congregation.
- The West Ohio Conference practices open itinerancy. Appointments are made without regard for race, gender, or age.

- Every appointment needs to focus on disciple-making possibilities. However, each situation will have unique circumstances impacting the disciple-making potential of that congregation. Strategic appointments are called for when conditions in church and community present unusually compelling opportunities for new forms of ministry and disciple-making. Strategic appointments will be made without regard to the pastor's previous salary level. These appointments may include supplementing salaries.
- We exist in a time of tension between our historic commitment to full itinerancy and the current culture. We reaffirm full itinerancy. The Cabinet also seeks to be sensitive and just to family, personal, and health issues of clergy. When a pastor requests a limit on the geography of an appointment, we will continue the practice of asking that the pastor indicate willingness to accept a different relationship with the conference if no appropriate appointment is available.
- While all appointments are year-to-year, longer pastorates can encourage effective disciple-making. It is our goal as a cabinet to encourage appointments of 5-10 years.
- It is the Cabinet's intention when there are difficulties in the relationship between a congregation and pastor, to intervene quickly with appropriate responses including conflict resolution.
- Though there are times when appointments must be made throughout the year, it best serves congregations when moves and retirements happen in accordance with the regular conference-time move schedule.

### Expectations of Trust

To the best of his/her ability, the DS will communicate full and accurate information about the parish to the pastor ... and about the pastor to the parish.

The pastor being considered for a new appointment should limit consultation about the appointment to the DS, immediate family members, and others agreed upon by the DS.

It is important to maintain the order of "who know what when". There should be no conversations between the proposed pastor and the current pastor or others in that congregation before appropriate notifications are agreed upon with the DS.

The outgoing pastor will support and affirm the incoming pastor, arrange for conversation to share pertinent pastoral information that will facilitate the transition, and remind the congregation that he/she will not return to the parish or community for pastoral service.

The outgoing pastor will publicly acknowledge having accepted the new appointment.

A congregation's ministry is a continuing journey of faith. The new pastor will treat the predecessor's work and memory honorably.

### What and When is "Consultation" in Appointment-Making

The Book of Discipline, 2008 paragraph 431 requires consultation by District Superintendents with Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committees and Pastors in the appointment making process.

Consultation takes place in a wide variety of locations and situations. Each personal contact by the District Superintendent within a congregation or with the pastor(s) becomes a part of the consultation process. Sunday worship, Charge Conference, and educational or social events are included. In addition, the following specific contacts are consultation:

#### PASTOR

- Annual Consultation with DS
- Appointment Request Form
- Any special meeting regarding appointment
- Regular Profile update
- Specific telephone calls

#### PASTOR/STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

- Annual Consultation with DS
- Appointment Request Form
- Any special meeting regarding appointment
- Regular Profile Update
- Conversations with Chairperson

# Clergy Appointive Process

The consultation process always has concern for all those related to a specific appointment including the pastor(s), the congregation(s), the pastor's family members.

When appointing an associate pastor and when making appointments to cooperative parishes and urban ministry situations, there are other parties included in the consultation process.

**Associate Pastors:** The senior pastor is consulted. An exploratory conversation is arranged with the potential associate, the senior pastor, the chair of the Staff/Parish Relations Committee, and the District Superintendent. If all are in agreement, the regular process of introduction continues.

**Urban Appointment Making:** The urban ministry staff person from the district involved will be consulted.

**Cooperative Parish Appointments:** The Director of the Cooperative Parish will be consulted.

## The Annual Consultation with the District Superintendent

District Superintendents will provide an annual administrative/pastoral consultation with each pastor under appointment or assignment to a congregation as well as with pastors in extension ministries within the district.

This annual "one-on-one" will include the following:

1. Pastoral Care
2. Supervision
3. Pastor's articulation of vision for ministry in current situation
4. Review of continuing education plans
5. Receiving and clarifying information about the pastor's present appointment, review of personal/family considerations with regard to health, spouse, employment, dependents, and other factors related to itinerancy

## Appointments and the Extension Minister

Extension Ministers (ministers not appointed to local churches) are appointed by the Bishop after the appointment is approved by the Cabinet. The request for the appointment is brought to the Cabinet by the Superintendent of the District where the Minister is serving or has his/her charge conference membership.

Extension Ministers are required to report annually to the Bishop, the District Superintendent of the District where their charge conference is held, and the Board of Ordained Ministry. Report forms are provided by the Episcopal Office.

Day-to-day supervision and evaluation of the Extension Minister is the responsibility of the employing agency or institution.

## Appointments and the Full Member Deacon

Deacons in full connection may be appointed to serve as their primary field of service: a) through agencies and settings beyond the local church, b) through United Methodist related agencies or schools or c) within a local congregation, charge or cooperative parish. Deacons are responsible to seek out their service appointment in consultation with the appropriate personnel body and with the District Superintendent, Bishop, and Cabinet.

When the primary appointment is to a) or b) above, there must be a secondary appointment to a local congregation/charge conference, in consultation with the pastor, District Superintendent, Bishop, and Cabinet. A possible process for this is found on page 23 of the Ministry Interpretation Handbook. (The District Superintendent should have a copy of the handbook.)

An annual report form will be supplied to the Deacon who must report to the Charge Conference, District Superintendent, Bishop, Board of Ordained Ministry, Conference Secretary, and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Specifics regarding the appointment of Full Member Deacons are found in Paragraph 331 of [The Book of Discipline, 2008](#).

## The Appointive Process

### PROFILES AND REQUESTS FOR A CHANGE OF APPOINTMENT

- Annually pastors and Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committees update profiles.
- During the mid-year, District Superintendents consult with the Bishop, a change of appointment list is developed district-by-district.
- In January, the Cabinet refines this list and shares profiles of pastors and churches. Then the Cabinet begins work on appointments.

A request for a change of appointment may be initiated by the pastor, the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, or the District Superintendent. A request for a change of appointment does not guarantee that such a change will occur.

#### Initiated by the Pastor:

- Pastor contacts the District Office and asks to receive a Request for a Change of Appointment form.
- The District Secretary sends the form to the pastor and sends a corresponding form to the Chair of the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee.
- The District Superintendent reviews pastor's profile with pastor.
- The District Superintendent reviews with the PPRC/SPRC the profile of the church, the ministry goals, and the process that will follow.
- The District Superintendent consults with the Bishop and Cabinet.

#### Initiated by PPRC/SPRC:

- The Chairperson of PPRC/SPRC contacts the District Office and asks to receive a Request for a Change of Appointment form.
- The District Secretary sends the form to the chairperson and sends a corresponding form to the pastor
- The District Superintendent reviews with PPRC/SPRC the church profile, the ministry goals, and the process that will follow.
- The District Superintendent reviews the pastor's profile with the pastor.
- The District Superintendent consults with the Bishop and Cabinet.

#### Initiated by Superintendent:

- Superintendents may determine that a change of appointment is in the best interest of a congregation and/or pastor. If the District Superintendent is placing a church and pastor on the change of appointment list, the District Superintendent will inform the PPRC/SPRC and the pastor. The District Superintendent will review profiles with each. In the course of the appointive season, missionary opportunities, strategic appointments, and other shifts will emerge, and pastors and churches not on the change of appointment list initially, may be considered for such a change.

## Making an Appointment

When the Bishop and Cabinet, through prayerful discernment, study of the profiles of pastors and churches, and much discussion have agreed on the appointment then:

- The current District Superintendent calls pastor to be appointed and arranges for conversation with the receiving District Superintendent.
- The receiving District Superintendent describes congregation(s) and the context for ministry to pastor.
- After prayerful consideration, the pastor is requested to respond within 24 hours to the receiving District Superintendent.
- The receiving District Superintendent arranges introductory meeting of the PPRC/SPRC and pastor (and spouse) and also arranges a pre-meeting conversation, generally over dinner, with the Chairperson of PPRC/SPRC, pastor, and District Superintendent. Spouses of all parties are included as appropriate in the pre-meeting.
- The current District Superintendent informs Chairperson of current PPRC/SPRC when pastor is going to an introduction.
- The District Superintendent arranges for the pastor to visit the parsonage.
- Introductory meeting takes place with PPRC/SPRC. Following a time of conversation, the pastor (and spouse) are asked to step out and feedback is received from the committee. Also, the District Superintendent steps out and receives feedback from the pastor. At any point in the process, if any party identifies concerns that merit further consideration, a reconsideration of appointment may be requested and the Bishop and Cabinet will review this request.
- Details of salary, housing, moving date, announcement date, etc. are discussed and agreed upon at the conclusion of this introductory meeting. A Cabinet form, "Statement of Benefits," will be completed by the District Superintendent and signed by pastor, Chairperson of PPRC/SPRC, and District Superintendent.
- The receiving District Superintendent informs Cabinet of introduction results.
- Receiving District Superintendent sends copies of the Statement of Benefits along with other necessary paperwork to pastor, church/charge treasurer, present District Superintendent and chair of PPRC/SPRC.
- The process begins again with the newly open church.