

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, full time and part time

- the congregation (individually and corporately)

- candidates for licensed and ordained ministry

- 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 the district superintendent about congregational needs. The S/PPRC members must spend time

in prayer and Bible study in order to interpret the movement of God's Spirit in this consultation process among the district superintendent, staff, and congregation.

-From Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2009-2012: Pastor-Parish Relations, pp. 6-7. Copyright © 2008 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 developing written job descriptions and titles for associate pastors and staff

Read more from The Book of Discipline, ¶ 258.2 Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

-Adapted from Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2009-2012: Pastor-Parish Relations, (Cokesbury, 2008), p 7; and Job Descriptions & Leadership Training for Local Church Leaders, 2009-2012 (Discipleship Resources, 2008).

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 also required to be members of this committee. In cases where a charge includes multiple churches, the committee should have at least one representative and the lay leader from each of the local churches.

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. Retiring members of the committee can succeed themselves for one additional term.

-Adapted from The Book of Discipline 2008 Copyright © 2008 by The United Methodist Publishing House.

Read more from The Book of Discipline, ¶ 258.2 Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

Guidelines for Leading your Congregation 2009-2012: Pastor-Parish Relations The material above gives only a basic description the purpose and responsibilities of the Pastor-Parish Relations committee. The booklet, Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2009-2012: Pastor-Parish Relations, will provide practical and concrete suggestions and resources for helping you carry out these important ministry responsibilities. For example, you will find a planning overview that will help guide the work of the committee throughout the year. You will also find helpful information about how to plan and conduct effective meetings; how to better communicate and to mediate conflicts; how to assess the effectiveness of the ministry of the staff; and how to encourage, develop and improve the skills of the staff so they can more effectively carry out the ministry of the church. [Click here to purchase this book](#)