

Resource Guide for Staff Parish Relations Committee

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Iowa Annual Conference of
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Dear Staff Parish Relations Committee:

You have a very important role in the life of your congregation. You are the group that supports the pastor and staff by:

- Interpreting ministry to the congregation
- Counseling the pastor/staff in regards to that ministry
- Evaluating effectiveness of staff in helping congregation meet its ministry goals
- Conferring and consulting with the pastor and district superintendent about pastoral changes
- Enlisting persons to go into ministry

This booklet is being provided as a guide to you in your ministry with your pastor and staff.

May God bless you all in a successful, faithful ministry together.

In Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian K. Wiegand".

Conference Superintendent

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Part 1 - Staff Parish Relations Committee

- The Committee Task
- Staff Parish Relations Committee Duties and Responsibilities
 - The Book of Discipline 2008 ¶ 258.2
- Possible Monthly Agenda for SPRC
- Chart for Planning Meetings of SPRC

THE COMMITTEE TASK

What the Committee Does	With Whom	Content
Interprets	Congregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Nature and function of ministry (general, ordained, and diaconal) and the challenge to hear God's call into representative ministry . The work of pastor(s)/staff . Ministerial Education Fund . Open itineracy
Counsels	Pastor(s)/staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Their ministries re: congregational goals and objectives . Professional growth including continuing education . Spiritual development and renewal . Sharing ideas
Evaluates	Pastor Other employees Parsonage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Effectiveness . Effectiveness . Once-a-year inspection by chairperson and trustee
Confers and consults	District superintendent Pastor Church council Finance committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for pastoral appointment(s) . Pastoral change(s) . Pastoral changes . Compensation recommendations
Enlists	Congregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . In responsibility to identify and recruit persons into ordained and diaconal ministry

Staff-Parish Relations Committee
Duties and Responsibilities
The Book of Discipline, 2008 - ¶ 258.2

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 **and the lay leader** 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 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.

Staff Parish Relations Committee Monthly Agenda

This is a suggested monthly agenda. The order may be changed to fit your local church setting.

- January**
 - Orient committee members of their role and responsibilities
 - Review roles of representative ministry as ordained elders/deacons, diaconal ministers and ministry of the laity.
- February**
 - Check out status of pastor/staff expectations.
 - Conduct annual review of pastor(s)
 - Inquire about and provide support (as needed) for members of pastor/staff's family
- March**
 - Conduct annual review of other ordained staff
 - Review pastor/staff self care, including: days/time off, time for spiritual renewal, vacation plans, continuing education, etc.
- April**
 - Develop (or review) plan for identifying, encouraging and supporting persons with gifts for ministry who may serve as lay or ordained ministers.
 - Consider promoting (co-sponsoring) a church wide emphasis on Spiritual Gifts Inventory
- May**
 - Conduct annual review of parsonage(s) with Trustees
- June**
 - Plan and implement an expression of appreciation for pastor/staff
- July**
 - Check out status of pastor/staff expectations
- August**
 - Plan to interpret and promotion of Ministerial Education Fund.
 - Schedule a "Ministry Sunday" to emphasize and interpret the various forms of representative ministry. (Third Sunday in September is suggested)
- September**
 - Review and recommend pastor/staff compensation and expense packages for the next calendar year.
- October**
 - Update ministry profile to be used for clergy appointment
 - Conduct annual review of lay staff
- November**
 - Review and plan for pastor/staff continuing education needs
- December**
 - Organize and implement an expression of appreciation for pastor/staff

Staff/Parish-Relations Committee
Schedule of Meetings

Month	Date	Purpose
August		
September		
October		
November		
December		
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		



Part 2 - Pastor

- Pastoral Duties ¶ 340 of the 2008 The Book of Discipline
- Iowa Annual Conference Code of Ethics for Professionals in Ministry
- Annual Conference Covenant Expectations
- Standards for Credentialed Ministry
- Residence in Ministry Covenant for all first time pastors
- Vacation and Leave Policies as adopted by 2011 Iowa Annual Conference

Pastoral Duties ¶ 339-340 of the 2008 The Book of Discipline

¶ 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, or to a church of another denomination, or on the staff of one such appointment.

¶ 340. *Responsibilities and Duties of Elders and Licensed Pastors*

1. The responsibilities of elders are derived from the authority given in ordination. Elders have a four-fold ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order and Service and thus serve in the **local church and in extension ministries in witness and service of Christ's love and justice. Elders are authorized to preach and teach the Word, to provide pastoral care and counsel, to administer the sacraments, and to order the life of the church for service in mission and ministry as pastors, superintendents, and bishops.**
2. Licensed pastors share with the elders the responsibilities and duties of a pastor for this four-fold ministry, **within the context of their appointment.**

a) Word and ecclesial acts:

- (1) To preach the Word of God, lead in worship, read and teach the Scriptures, and engage the people in study and witness.²⁴
 - (a) To ensure faithful transmission of the Christian faith.
 - (b) To lead people in discipleship and evangelistic outreach that others might come to know Christ and to follow him.
- (2) To counsel persons with personal, ethical, or spiritual struggles.
- (3) To perform the ecclesial acts of marriage and burial.
 - (a) 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.
 - (b) To conduct funeral and memorial services and provide care and grief counseling.
- (4) To visit in the homes of the church and the community, especially among the sick, aged, imprisoned, and others in need.
- (5) 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.

b) Sacrament:

- (1) To administer the sacraments of baptism and the Supper of the Lord according to Christ's ordinance.
 - (a) 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.
 - (b) To encourage reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant and renewal of baptismal vows at different stages of life.

- (c) 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.
- (d) 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.
- (e) To select and train deacons and lay members to serve the consecrated communion elements.

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

c) Order:

- (1) To be the administrative officer of the local church and to assure that the organizational concerns of the congregation are adequately provided for.
 - (a) To give pastoral support, guidance, and training to the lay leadership, equipping them to fulfill the ministry to which they are called.
 - (b) To give oversight to the educational program of the church and encourage the use of United Methodist literature and media.
 - (c) To be responsible for organizational faithfulness, goal setting, planning and evaluation.
 - (d) To search out and counsel men and women for the ministry of deacons, elders, local pastors and other church related ministries.
- (2) To administer the temporal affairs of the church in their appointment, the annual conference, and the general church.
 - (a) To administer the provisions of the Discipline.
 - (b) To give an account of their pastoral ministries to the charge and annual conference according to the prescribed forms.
 - (c) To provide leadership for the funding ministry of the congregation.
 - (d) To **model and** promote faithful, financial stewardship and to encourage giving as a spiritual discipline **by teaching the biblical principles of giving.**
 - (e) To lead the congregation in the fulfillment of its mission through full and faithful payment of all apportioned ministerial support, administrative, and benevolent funds.
 - (f) 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.
- (3) To participate in denominational and conference programs and training opportunities.
 - (a) To seek out opportunities for cooperative ministries with other United Methodist pastors and churches.
 - (b) To be willing to assume supervisory responsibilities within the connection.
- (4) To lead the congregation in racial and ethnic inclusiveness.

d) Service:

- (1) To embody the teachings of Jesus in servant ministries and servant leadership.
- (2) To give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for

discipleship in the world.

- (3) To build the body of Christ as a caring and giving community, extending the ministry of Christ to the world.
- (4) 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

OUR COVENANT RELATIONSHIP
(adopted by Iowa Annual Conference, June 2011)

OUR COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

We as Ministry Professionals* recognize and affirm the covenantal relationship we have with each other in the Iowa Annual Conference, the obligations we have to God, the people we serve, the world at large, exemplifying and maintaining the highest standards of Christian conduct as set forth in the *Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church. Within that covenant, we understand and agree that each of us shall have...

A Personal Responsibility to:

- Be conscious of the sacredness of one's high calling.
- Abide by the covenant and *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church.
- Continue to move onward toward perfection through personal and corporate discipline: prayer, study, contemplation, covenant group, and scripture reading.
- Engage in continuing education for personal growth, spiritual formation and competence for ministry.
- Maintain spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional fitness.
- Keep time commitments faithfully and use time responsibly.
- Follow high moral standards in speech and conduct. Be above reproach in integrity, honesty, and faithfulness.
- Take care that manners, attire and grooming do not detract from ministry effectiveness.
- Be above reproach in all business transactions. Be sufficiently free from unnecessary financial debt and accept financial responsibility as to not burden one's congregation or the Annual Conference. Does not leave a community to accept a new appointment without arranging for payment of local obligations.
- Maintain a healthy emotional and social balance and maintain boundaries between pastoral identity and self-identity; private and community life; self and others.
- Keep faith with loved ones, giving the time and attention needed for a healthy marriage and family.

B Parish Responsibility to:

- Perform the responsibilities and duties outlined in the current *Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church for ministry professionals.*
- Accept appointment and serve as pastor, preacher, teacher, and administrator, observing diligent and healthy work habits.
- Be a spiritual leader of all members of the congregation and those within the community appointed that are unchurched and/or in need of pastoral care.
- Be in ministry, with the understanding that service is primary and remuneration is secondary. Seek no gifts, bequests, or material benefits for self or family members from any organization or individual.
- Affirm that "Full-time Service" means the pastor is not substantially supported in non-pastoral work (job or activities that would hinder the appointment to which they are assigned) without the consent of the District Superintendent and the Staff-Parish Relations Committee.
- Honor the confidentiality of all persons, unless otherwise required by law to reveal information. Represent and support the policy, mission and program of the Annual Conference The United Methodist Church fairly and appropriately.

- Represent the itinerant and connectional process honestly and justly.
- Be open to service in the community of the charge as opportunity provides in ways that grow the presence and spirit of Jesus Christ.
- Leave church and parsonage property in good condition. Accept financial responsibilities for damage to the parsonage beyond normal wear and tear or age.
- Maintain connectional responsibilities which include providing updated records for the next pastor and seeing that calendared appointments are current.

C Pastoral Responsibility to:

- Respect the parish of another pastor. Upon leaving the appointment, including retirement, sever pastoral relationships with the parish, recognizing that all future weddings, baptisms, communions, counseling, visitation, and funerals shall be performed by the current pastor, unless in an unusual circumstance, and then only by the initiation of the current pastor.
- Seek to uphold, enhance, and support the work of other professionals in ministry, without undermining their efforts to serve.
- Act with integrity in all matters of references to one's predecessor and one's successor.
- Endorse programs, agencies, and persons that perform duties acceptable by the United Methodist *Book of Discipline* and within the United Methodist "Social Creed."
- Promote United Methodist curriculum as basic to the educational program of the church.
- Accept responsibilities in the greater community as long as they do not interfere with pastoral responsibilities of the charge at which one is appointed.
- Honor the sacred trust between clergy/parishioner or those in pastoral care and not seek sexual, social, or business favors at any time. Refrain from all sexual involvement with those who have sought and/or received pastoral care at any time. Refrain from a dating relationship with any parishioner who has received direct/structured counseling by the pastor.
- Maintain the highest standards regarding the use of modern technology, strictly avoiding even the perception of inappropriate use of the internet at work or at home, and understand that email, text, internet messages are not a private domain and should not be treated as such.
- Recognize the need for open access of church staff to SPRC for consultation and evaluation. Be open to questions regarding one's leadership and administrative style by SPRC and Cabinet.

*The term "ministry professionals" in this document shall include all those who maintain status of Full Member (Elder or Deacon), Provisional member, Associate Member, Local Pastor, Diaconal, Ministerial Candidate, and others who are accountable to the Bishop and the Iowa Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

With thanks to the following: Iowa Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Ministerial Ethics Committee, Louisiana, Southwest Texas and West Ohio Conferences; and the task force members: Beverly Spencer, Brenda Hobson, Betty Stout and Charles Luers.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE COVENANT EXPECTATIONS

Every United Methodist pastor and local congregation is in a covenant relationship with every other United Methodist pastor and congregation. We sometimes refer to this covenantal relationship as our "connection." Within this relationship, as in all relationships, there are expectations on both sides. Following are some of the covenantal expectations of pastors:

- To be a spiritual leader for the congregation
- To practice spiritual and physical self-care
- To abide by the clergy ethics approved by the clergy of the Iowa Annual Conference
- To complete annual conference continuing education requirements
- To lead congregations in fulfilling their primary task
- To foster mutuality in ministry
- To be itinerant (even though all appointments are reviewed annually, the Cabinet attempts to make appointments which will hold for a minimum of five years and a maximum of twelve years)
- To lead a church to pay its apportionments in full monthly
- To support and interpret connectional ministries
- To adhere to and to teach the United Methodist social principles
- To keep accurate church records
- To complete reports accurately and on time

Standards for Credentialed Ministry Iowa Annual Conference, UMC

“The mission of the Iowa Annual Conference is to develop leaders who proclaim the gospel and transform the world...so that every United Methodist congregation and faith community in Iowa can fulfill its mission through its primary task of making disciples.” (Iowa annual conference, June 1993)

The following standards are to help us define the parameters of our ordained ministry leaders.

Standards:

- 1) Expresses personal faith in God through Jesus Christ.
- 2) Nurtures and cultivates spiritual disciplines and patterns of holiness.
- 3) Cultivates a pattern of leadership that equips the ministry of all believers.
- 4) Understands scripture as foundational to Christian faith and can express its relevancy within the present social and cultural context using reason, tradition, and experience.
- 5) Has a deep sense of being called by God to the ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service, following Jesus’ pattern of love and service.
- 6) Conducts worship, fellowship and study that enable participants to experience the presence of God.
- 7) Has effective oral and written skills for sharing the Christian faith.
- 8) Accepts and maintains the United Methodist Church’s Discipline and its division of authority.
- 9) Demonstrates love for all persons through acts of service in the local church, community and world.
- 10) Thinks theologically and leads others to theological reflection.
- 11) Provides leadership in understanding, using and teaching church history and polity.
- 12) Inspires trust and confidence by demonstrating strong moral and ethical behavior in all areas of life.
- 13) Demonstrates sound psychological and physical health that enables effective communication of the gospel.
- 14) Demonstrates a clear sense of appropriate care while helping persons in crisis events.
- 15) Makes a prophetic witness when dissonance exists between the acts of a community and God’s purpose.

Approved by Clergy Session 2007.

Residency in Ministry Covenant

Your church has been chosen for a special mission: the development of your pastor's ministry. Similar to the medical field, a pastor's first appointment is like a doctor's residency. In your church, the pastor will develop healthy habits and practices for professional and personal growth. Pastors have a rigorous training process during their first three years in ministry. You have an important role in helping the pastor to develop the gifts that the Iowa United Methodist Church has seen in him or her.

Role of the Congregation

- To pray for your pastor's growth daily.
- To form a supportive environment for ministry and frequent S/PPRC meetings to discuss growth and development of the pastor
- The S/PPRC chairperson and lay leader will meet monthly with the pastor to find ways of giving support to the pastor's growth.
- To provide the required time-off for educational, covenant groups, and mentoring. (These times are *not* counted as vacation. Every pastor has responsibilities to the conference. Your pastor's *primary* responsibility to the conference is the Residency in Ministry (RIM) program of the conference. Mileage will be reimbursed by the local church for these events.)
- The congregation in consultation with the pastor will make arrangements for pastoral duties to be covered when the pastor is participating in RIM events.
- The S/PPRC will interpret this covenant to the congregation and advocate for the pastor's development and growth.

Role of the Pastor

- To pray for the congregation daily.
- To participate in the RIM covenant groups, mentoring relationships, and continuing education events.
- The pastor will participate in the New Professional in Ministry Orientation; Covenant group retreat; School for Ministry; additionally, the pastor will meet six times with a covenant group and six times with a mentor (dates for these meetings will be scheduled during the year).
- To insure that the church has adequate pastoral care during time away.
- To develop habits and practices conducive to healthy ministry.

Role of the Congregation

- The RIM committee will assign a mentor and arrange for continuing education events and a covenant group.
- The district superintendent will work with the pastor and congregation to foster a healthy relationship during the residency program.
- The Board of Ordained Ministry will oversee the RIM committee and will be apprised of the pastor's participation in the program.

_____ (signature of Pastor)

_____ (signature of S/PPRC chair)

_____ (signature of District Superintendent)

Vacations and Leaves, from the Item 320 "Re-authorization of Standing Item" adopted by the 2011 Iowa Annual Conference

I. MINISTERIAL QUALIFICATIONS AND RELATIONS

- I. **Clergy Leaves and Vacations.** This policy covers all clergy under appointment to serve churches in the Iowa Conference. All leaves shall be planned in consultation with the charge's Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the district superintendent to determine ministry responsibilities in the pastor's absence and funding sources. Vacations and leaves may not accumulate from year to year.

1. Vacations.

- a. The vacation year is from July 1 to June 30. The clergy and the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or supervisor should discuss the vacation plans of the clergy early in the conference year. Vacations may not accumulate from year to year.
- b. Clergy serving full-time or less-than-full-time shall be given a minimum annual vacation with pay based on total years of relationship with one or more Annual Conferences as follows:
 - (1) First year under appointment: two weeks vacation, including two Sundays.
 - (2) Subsequent years under appointment: four weeks vacation, including four Sundays.
- c. To provide for a balance of time spent between serving the local church and providing for other professional opportunities and responsibilities as a connectional church, part of the leadership responsibility must be filled by clergy and lay persons working in district and conference agencies, including the Iowa Conference camping program and other connectional tasks. Clergy will consult with the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the District Superintendent. These connectional responsibilities such as Annual Conference, Iowa UMC camping programs, and other connectional responsibilities shall not count as vacation time.

2. Paid Holidays

The following days are to be considered paid holidays:

New Year's Day; Martin Luther King Jr. Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; Friday following Thanksgiving Day; Christmas Day. When a holiday falls on a Sunday or the clergy's day off, it is to be observed on an alternate day within seven-days of the holiday.

Good Friday and Christmas Eve are part of the Church's sacred days. Most clergy have major local church responsibilities on these two days. To allow for clergy to observe the meaning of these two days with special religious significance, clergy will select another day within a seven-day period for their observance of Good Friday and Christmas Eve.

3. Continuing Education and Spiritual Growth (§ 351)

- (1) The Iowa Conference requires that clergypersons earn two continuing education units each year, July 1 to June 30. Clergypersons shall be allowed two weeks each year, including two Sundays, and one month, including Sundays, each quadrennium for continuing education and spiritual growth (for a total of ten weeks per quadrennium). The education and spiritual growth opportunities need to be scheduled through consultation with the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee or agencies to which they are appointed. Qualifying events include educational and spiritual growth events such as

School for Ministry, Schools of Christian Mission, and Academies of Spiritual Formation.

(2) Each clergy person serving a charge in Iowa is expected to earn a minimum of two CEUs each conference year and shall include copies of the certification with his/her continuing education report to the district superintendent and Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. One CEU equals ten contact hours.

(3) An exception shall be made for Course of Study, where up to four weeks will be given for this formation event.

- b. A leave for up to six months may be requested by a clergy person who has been under full-time appointment for a minimum of five years. The status of the clergy person's appointment is not affected during the leave.
 - c. The plans and expected outcomes of the leave shall be outlined by the clergy person. The leave shall have the approval of the district superintendent, the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the church council(s).
 - d. Salary during the first month of the leave shall be funded at 100%. The remainder of the leave may be a paid leave, if this request is approved by the district superintendent, the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the church council(s), or it may be unpaid. Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP) contributions made by the charge will be adjusted if compensation is reduced. No CRSP contributions can be made if no salary is paid.
 - e. If the clergy person's salary is reduced or eliminated during the leave, the clergy person may appeal to the Cabinet for assistance from the Sustentation Fund. The Cabinet will consider each request on a case by case basis.
 - f. During the leave the charge and the clergy person shall continue to pay their respective shares of health insurance. The conference shall continue to pay for Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).
 - g. The Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the district superintendent shall consult and determine in advance how pastoral responsibility for the church(es) will be handled during the leave. Compensating supply clergy persons shall be the responsibility of the charge, not the clergy person.
4. **Maternity/Paternity Leave (¶ 356).**
- a. Maternity or paternity leaves of up to one quarter of a year are available to clergy at the birth or adoption of a child. The status of the clergy person's appointment is not affected during the leave.
 - b. During the leave the charge and the clergy person shall continue to pay their respective shares of health insurance. The conference shall continue to pay for Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).
 - c. At least the first eight weeks of the leave shall be at full pay. The remainder may be a paid leave, if this request is approved by the district superintendent, the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the church council(s), or it may be an unpaid leave. Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP) contributions made by the charge will be adjusted if compensation is reduced. No CRSP contributions can be made if no salary is paid.

- d. The Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the district superintendent shall consult and determine in advance how pastoral responsibility for the church(es) will be handled during the leave. Compensating supply clergy persons shall be the responsibility of the charge, not the clergy person.
1. **Sick Leave.**
 - a. Clergy shall be granted up to two weeks, including two Sundays, of sick leave during the conference year (July 1 - June 30); this shall not accumulate from year to year.
 - b. Sick leave is for periods of incapacity which are beyond the clergy person's control and which are not work related. The leave should be taken in consultation with the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.
 - c. Sick leave also may be taken by the clergy person to care for an immediate family member during an illness, upon approval of the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. Immediate family includes spouse, child, daughter/son-in-law, step-child, grandchild, parent, parent-in-law, and step-parent. In certain situations, a leave may be granted for the illness of another relative or a close friend.
 2. **Bereavement Leave.**
 - a. Clergy shall be granted up to five days of bereavement leave if there is a death in the immediate family. Immediate family includes spouse, child, daughter/son-in-law, step-child, grandchild, parent, parent-in-law, step-parent, grandparent, and sibling. In certain situations, bereavement leave may be granted for the death of another relative or close friend.
 - b. The clergy person shall consult with the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee when taking bereavement leave. With the approval of the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, sick leave may be used to extend bereavement leave.

Iowa Annual Conference Guidelines Concerning Clergy-Spouse Divorce (as adopted by the 2006 Iowa Annual Conference)

Areas of Concern

The United Methodist Church is concerned for persons in marriage and in families.

We believe the family to be the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect and fidelity. We affirm the importance of both fathers and mothers for all children. We also understand the family is encompassing a wider range of options than that of the two-generational unit of parents and children (the nuclear family, including the extended family, families with adopted children, single parents, stepfamilies, and couples without children.) We affirm shared responsibility for parenting by men and women and encourage social, economic, and religious efforts to maintain and strengthen relationships within families in order that every member may be assisted toward complete personhood. (¶ 161.A., 2008 Book of Discipline, The United Methodist Church.)

This basic human community is an adventure in companionship and means commitment to a relationship in which people covenant to value, nurture and appreciate each other through a process of growing and changing; the outcome of which they cannot foresee.

We need to offer growth opportunities which will help people prepare for marriage. And for those who are married we must emphasize their need for spiritual foundation and growth. When marriages are alive, the persons will nurture each other and their family. There is a need for all people to appreciate the power of our traditional Christian standard of permanence and fidelity and of the role of Christian faith and commitment as men and women attempt to achieve lasting love. Never before, have so many men and women looked for so much from their marital relationships.

When a relationship comes to a point, however, where it is marked more by death than life, more by hurt than healing, and when genuine efforts to renew and revitalize it have failed, it is important to bring that relationship to as redemptive an end as possible.

The United Methodist Church does recognize the possibility of divorce as a legitimate option for a Christian.

God's plan is for lifelong, faithful marriage. The church must be on the forefront of premarital and post-marital counseling in order to create and preserve strong marriages. However, when a married couple is estranged beyond reconciliation, even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the midst of brokenness. We grieve over the devastating emotional, spiritual, and economic consequences of divorce for all involved and are concerned about high divorce rates. (¶ 161.C. 2008 Book of Discipline, The United Methodist Church.)

The Church sees itself in cases of divorce--clergy or lay--as involved more in ministry than in judgment. The Church is not so much a court, attempting to clarify who has been at fault, as it is a hospital, saying to each member of the distressed family unit, "You hurt, and we care." Any concerned person can do this kind of ministry.

Divorce among the clergy, while always present, appears to be more tolerated in the Church in this generation, and increasing. "To be sure, parsonage families are among the most stable in American society today. Exact figures are not available, but some observers estimate that not more than one in twenty-five clergy marriages end in divorce." (*Handbook on Clergy Divorce*, Council of Bishops, The United Methodist Church, 1978, p.1). There may be new and increasing areas of stress for parsonage families, and divorce may be more easily chosen in this generation as the solution to this stress than in earlier generations.

The Church is examining its ministries to the married and to the divorced. Guidelines are needed on how

persons in the Church can be helped and how the Christian standards for permanency and fidelity in marriage can be upheld. There is also a need for guidelines for church administrators, pastors, and Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees, as they minister to and relate to clergy, married and/or divorced. The traditional models of administrative-pastoral relationship to persons can be effective. Additional models which bring new days of ministering are also needed.

In case of divorce of clergy, there is a need on the part of Administrative Leaders' Bishops, District Superintendents, Boards of Ordained Ministry-for a pastoral style of administration. But it is frequently hard to reconcile the pastoral and the administrative roles. The authority and power of the appointment system is inevitably present. This does not mean that persons in positions of authority cannot be pastors, too. Many of them are seen as pastors by those who work under their supervision. Nevertheless, the officers of the Annual Conference might remember that there are other persons who also serve in the pastoral role for each of the clergy. Among them may be the Director of Pastoral Care and Counseling, other pastors, and lay members of the Church.

Pastoral supervision on the part of Bishops and District Superintendents is neither wholly an administrative function nor wholly a pastoral function. "Shepherding (caring about the person) and overseeing (organizing, evaluation, calling to the task, confronting) cannot be separated in the ministry of Jesus Christ." (*Handbook on Divorce*, Council of Bishops, The United Methodist Church, 1978, page 5.)

One of the messages of the Bible is that people are always given a new opportunity. Out of the difficulties of life - the tragic and all the hurt that comes - redemption and reconciliation through love can still heal. God can bring newness and hope, even in the aftermath of divorce. As seen earlier in the paper, divorce is "recognized" by the Church - that is, permitted. We need to consider how the Church can permit divorce without advocating it; how in a particular case it may be seen as the "circumstantial will of God" though not the "intentional will of God", (*Leslie D. Weatherhead, in The Will of God, distinguishes between 1) the intentional will of God, 2) the circumstantial will of God, and 3) the ultimate will of God.*)

When a couple enters into the covenant relationship of marriage, it is God's will that they will grow together in mutual acceptance, love, and understanding. Surely this is God's intentional will for the relationship we call marriage. Within the dynamics of marriage, the love that exists is either growing and deepening, or it begins to wither and may die. It does not stand still; either it is expanding or diminishing. Sometimes, in a marriage, something will happen to destroy this wonderful, but fragile, relationship we call marriage. After the couple has sought to be reconciled but that reconciliation does not come about, then the relationship is ruptured, and it may be that the legal contract is about the only factor that is keeping them together. In these kinds of human settings, it may be that divorce is "the circumstantial will of God," to use Weatherhead's phrase.

What is God's ultimate will for this couple whose marriage has been terminated by divorce? Divorce is probably the most powerful and shaking experience of personal change that persons can undergo. Drs. Thomas H. Holmes and Richard Rahe, who are psychiatrists on the faculty of the Washington University School of Medicine, have created a rating scale to determine the degree of stress that people experience in these life-changing events. Divorce and marital separation rank *second* and *third* after the death of one's spouse. Persons who are working through the experience of being divorced will likely know and feel grief, shame, guilt, and low self-esteem. If the experience of falling in love means experiencing one's self as chosen, then the trauma of divorce leaves one to experience what it means to be *unchosen*. Henry T. Close speaks of the process of creatively becoming unmarried, and the steps of the process may suggest something of God's ultimate will for these persons who have consciously decided to be *unchosen*. As they need to be able to forgive each other for feelings of pain and resentment, so God would will that they might be able to free themselves from carrying about the destructive feelings of bitterness towards each other,

and that they may know that God's mercy and forgiveness is offered to them. God wills that they might be able to forgive themselves (often times persons are able to forgive each other but find it exceedingly difficult to forgive themselves for their part in the death of the relationship); that they grieve the disruption and loss of the relationship and be able to accept the loss, to finish the work of grieving, and to face what lies ahead; that they learn from the death of the marriage that what persons expect from themselves, from each other, and from the marriage may be unattainable and beyond all rational expectation; and that they will be able to reach out and love again. There is a deep hunger within people to reach out to others, to touch and be touched, to love and to be loved.

What is God's ultimate will? That out of the pain of divorce, the shame and grief, the guilt and low self-esteem, there may be a re-birth. That out of death new life might emerge, and that love and healing and wholeness will be experienced by the "unchosen."

The Church can open her arms to lives hurt by the broken marriage relationship. It is possible that the Church could bring loving healing to these persons. In fact, persons experiencing divorce may be unable to find full healing without that love. Divorced persons need the Church as a healing community. The community can be instrumental in helping the person realize his/her self worth. The people of God can be an instrument bringing God's forgiveness to bear in the lives of those who have been divorced. Strength may be found by the divorced in an intentional worship experience at some time in their journey. Such a worship experience might be in the privacy of a counselor-pastor's office, or it may be in a gathering with some close friends. In an empathetic understanding and caring way, a service can express the hurts of the person involved in divorce and invite hope into the drama of brokenness. It can celebrate forgiveness and the hope of a new beginning. The invitation to forgive one another, to forgive and affirm one's self, to grieve, to find one's self and to love again, is worthy of inclusion in guidelines for caring for the divorced person.

To show love, care, and concern for the divorced person in no way denies the Biblical teaching that marriage is a sacred, lifetime covenant. This call can be held up before the Church, without at the same time condemning or rejecting those who have not realized it in their marriage. The Christian faith has *other* ideals which many have failed to achieve, and they are still a part of the Church.

Recommendations Concerning Clergy-Spouse Marriage and Divorce

After looking at ministry, the Church, marriage and divorce in general terms, we now turn specifically to the concern of this Task Force as far as divorce among clergy is concerned.

While the United Methodist Church sets no standard for clergy in the matter of divorce which is different from that set for all its members, it is to be hoped that covenant ministers do set high standards for themselves. Divorce among clergy and/or laity causes hurt, suffering, loneliness whenever it occurs. When clergy are divorced, the hurt is compounded because of their position of leadership in the community of faith. As leaders of the people of God, the clergy are rightfully expected to be in the vanguard in expressing a responsible Christian life style and in restoring broken relationships. Those who have the greater influence quite naturally bear the greater responsibility. Therefore, clergy need to be very careful that every possibility of reconciliation is tried before dissolution of the relationship is accepted.

Any recommendation concerning divorce needs to reflect two essential ingredients of our Christian faith. First, faithfulness to the Biblical concept of marriage, which emphasizes a lifelong commitment of fidelity, love, and mutual support between husband and wife is important. Divorce, when granted at all, is viewed as a failure to fulfill that promised trust. We should carefully guard against diminishing the "sanctity of the marriage covenant." (§161.C. *The 2008 Book of Discipline*. The United Methodist Church.)

Second, there are marriages where “even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the midst of brokenness.” (§ 161.C. *The 2008 Book of Discipline*. The United Methodist Church.) There are instances in which dissolution of marriage is more Christian than the continued crushing tyranny of a dead relationship. Certainly God’s grace and forgiveness offer such persons a new life.

These two foci will always be in tension within the Christian community, and they make it imperative that any conference recommendations be responsible, compassionate, and negotiable in the particular circumstances of each divorce situation.

It is expected that whenever symptoms of marital difficulties in the life of a clergy and his/her spouse are volunteered, or observed by other clergy, the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, or the District Superintendent, the clergyperson will be expected (and spouses encouraged) to seek professional help before the marriage relationship is broken. How the clergy family might be contacted and by whom will depend on circumstances revolving around each situation.

We expect counseling with a reputable marriage counselor who understands and appreciates the Christian faith and professional ministry. The counselor would meet with both partners in the marriage, but where that is impossible, with at least the clergyperson. One means of such counseling is the Iowa Annual Conference Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling. Counseling needs to be in sufficient depth that the responsible clergy member and spouse will try to resolve marriage problems in every way possible.

Clergypersons and spouses are also reminded that ministry is a covenant ministry. Other sources of concern, care, and support are clergy colleagues and ‘spouse colleagues.’ Each is encouraged to offer their friendship and skills to hurting clergy families.

The Process When Separation/Divorce is Chosen

The dynamics surrounding each divorce and the impact on professional status will be evaluated case-by-case by the Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry. To provide constancy and fairness, each person entering a period of separation/divorce will be expected to proceed according to the following steps:

1. The clergyperson will inform her/his own District Superintendent and, together they will determine the best way to share this information with the Bishop.
2. The District Superintendent will initiate contact with the non-clergy spouse, emphasizing pastoral care and indicating ongoing support and counsel.
3. Together, the clergyperson and the District Superintendent will contact the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee chairperson to discuss the clergyperson’s and spouse’s impending separation/divorce and the strategy or announcing this to the local congregation.
4. The clergyperson, District Superintendent, and chairperson of the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee will inform the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, and establish ongoing support and counsel with the couple involved.
5. The clergyperson, with the support of the District Superintendent and the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, will inform the local congregation with intent toward enabling all parties to begin to deal with grief, anger, hurt, and other feelings.
6. In a continuing consultation, the District Superintendent and clergyperson will discuss the clergyperson’s plan of action and consider options for the clergyperson’s appointive relationship to the Annual Conference. These options include: 1) Retaining the current appointment; 2) Appointment to another parish; 3) Appointment Beyond the Local Church; 4)

Leave of Absence; 5) Sabbatical Leave; 6) Honorable Location; 7) Retirement; 8) Withdrawal; 9) Termination; 10) Transfer to another conference.

A report of these discussions shall be made a matter of consultation with the Appointive Cabinet and, when appropriate, with the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, who by the *Discipline* have authority in matters of appointability (Cabinet) and conference relationship (Board of Ordained Ministry).

7. The District Superintendent shall continue to inquire into the needs of the clergy family, after determination and implementation of decisions on appointment and conference relationship have taken place. When it is necessary to relocate, provisions should be made for loans or grants from available resources as needed. When the clergyperson moves to another charge and the spouse relocates in a separate community, the Cabinet should remain in contact with the family until they are settled and their basic needs are met, assisting with whatever resources are available.

In order to facilitate the process outlined above, a Consultation Team *may* be convened, at the request of the clergyperson or spouse, the Bishop and Cabinet, the Board of Ordained Ministry, or the local church. The team is in no way intended to function as a committee of investigation, but rather to express mutual care and concern for each other as members of the community of faith.

The team may serve any or all of the following purposes:

1. Provide understanding and support to the marriage partners in their crisis.
2. Seek to identify and clarify the basic issues that must be resolved.
3. Discover and explore the options available to the clergyperson, spouse, local church, Cabinet, and Board of Ordained Ministry.
4. Assure that all available channels of help are being used.
5. Ensure that all parties involved in the situation are acting on adequate and accurate information, and are in communication with one another.

The Consultation Team shall be composed as follows:

One person chosen by the clergyperson.

One person chosen by the spouse.

One person representing the Cabinet.

One person representing the Board of Ordained Ministry.

The Bishop, or someone chosen by the Bishop, who will convene the team.

As an option, one person may be chosen to represent the local church.

One divorced clergy member and one divorced spouse chosen by the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling.

A further consideration has to do with the issue of remarriage. Any dating during a time of separation; during the formal filing of an intent to divorce and before the finalization of a divorce may place the clergyperson involved under the sanctions of ¶ 2702.1 (a) or (j) of *The 2008 Book of Discipline* of The

United Methodist Church. It is recommended that a divorced clergyperson should not remarry without adequate counsel of self and his/her prospective spouse either through the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling or another counselor recommended by that office. In such counseling, it is hoped that the clergyperson may become aware of the factors leading to the failure of the previous marriage, and also allow sufficient time to elapse between the divorce and contemplated marriage for adequate preparation. We recommend a minimum time of two years be considered before a clergyperson would remarry. It is expected that early in the process of the consideration of remarriage the clergyperson's own District Superintendent be informed.

Further Recommendations to the Annual Conference

The Task Force further recommends to the Annual Conference the following:

1. The scheduling of workshops for clergy couples in which models of clergy marital and family growth shall be studied.
2. That the local Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee be diligent in urging the clergyperson to observe a "free day - day off" each week for his/her own personal pursuit of activities and family life.
3. That Saturday meetings, which both clergy and lay persons find necessary to attend, be kept to a minimum so that time might be spent with one's family.
4. That the establishment of support groups for divorced persons be encouraged.
5. The continued support of legislation in the Church and in the civil government which will grant a clergyperson's divorced spouse a portion of that clergyperson's retirement benefits in proportion to the number of years spent as his/her spouse.
6. That its churches set higher standards of time and work in preparation for marriage. This could mean an intensive course of study before marriage, teaching a concept of Christian marriage, how to communicate, how to fight fair, how to share the body sexually, etc. We would urge that such an intensive course be led only by those who have been *adequately* trained.
7. That opportunities be provided for clergy to have training and retraining in how to help people prepare in their youth and in the pre-wedding period for marriage.
8. That additional funds to the budget of the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling for mileage expenses be provided when needed for clergy and their spouses and families who come to the Office for counseling.
9. That Marriage Enrichment-Growth-Communication or some other programs for marriage and personal growth be offered each year for clergy persons and spouses and that attendance be encouraged.

We hope it is obvious that members of the Cabinet, Board of Ordained Ministry, other clergy, and all lay persons need to become sensitized to all that is involved in the process of divorce. The Church needs to help leaders realize that divorce is a devastatingly painful experience. When people are aware of this, they will seek ways to deal with each situation on an individual basis. Persons need to be helped to cope with a new way of life that has already begun with much pain and uneasiness. They need to hear a word of affirmation that they can love again.

PARSONAGE DAMAGE POLICY (as adopted by the 2006 Iowa Annual Conference)

1. ¶ 2532 of *The 2008 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* details the responsibility of the local church Board of Trustees to care for all church property. The clergy family also has a responsibility within the connectional covenant to treat the parsonage with respect. **To this end the Board of Trustees shall ensure that there is an annual inspection of the parsonage for proper maintenance.** In the event an inspection reveals damage in excess of normal wear and tear, which is attributable to clergy's willful or intentional disregard of the church's interest, the following policies shall govern future clergy use of parsonages.

2. Clergy who have damaged a parsonage in excess of normal wear and tear shall thereafter pay a \$500 damage deposit per year until such deposit totals \$2,000. This will be deducted by the local church treasurer from the clergy's salary* on a monthly basis and sent to the Iowa Conference Treasurer to be accounted for and deposited in a Parsonage Damage Fund consisting of all the parsonage damage deposit money paid by clergy in the IAC. Upon proper application to the Conference Treasurer, the deposited funds will be paid out to a local church from a pastor's damage account where the pastor has caused damage to the local church parsonage in excess of normal wear and tear. The pastor shall then replenish his/her \$2000 damage account by contributing \$500 a year until the \$2000 is fully replenished.

3. If the parsonage damage exceeds \$2000 the local church will withhold the pastor's final pay check to cover the balance of the repair costs. If the repair costs exceed the \$2000 damage deposit plus the pastor's final pay check, the balance will be paid from the Parsonage Damage Fund. Such amount paid from the Parsonage Damage Fund will be considered a loan to the pastor who will sign a note with the IAC. The treasurer of the church or charge where the pastor is next appointed will deduct monthly from the pastor's salary* an amount agreed upon by the Conference Treasurer, the District Superintendent and the pastor until the loan is repaid and the pastor's \$2000 damage deposit is replenished.

4. At such time as the pastor leaves ministry, retires or leaves the Iowa Conference the balance of the \$2000 damage deposit held on account for the pastor shall be returned to him/her if there is no damage to the parsonage most recently vacated, there is no balance for damage to any other parsonage, or the damage to such parsonage(s) is less than \$2000. In the event such damage exceeds \$2000 when the pastor leaves or retires, the same policy repayment as stated above in paragraph 3 shall apply.

5. Procedures for determining damage in parsonage

- A. SPRC/Trustees shall tour the parsonage sometime within the first three weeks after the announcement of the pastor's new appointment for the following purposes:
 1. To determine what needs to be done in preparation for new clergy family and if there is any damage.
 2. If it appears there is damage that exceeds normal wear and tear, the district superintendent shall be notified immediately in order that he or she and the District Church Building and Location Committee can make a further inspection before any repairs are begun. The SPRC, local church trustees, the District Church Building and Location Committee and the DS will determine whether or not excessive damage has occurred. The pastor shall be entitled to be present during all inspections. Pictures shall be taken of the damaged areas.
- B. Assuming there is damage for which the pastor is liable under this policy, the local church trustees will obtain two bids to repair the damage.

- C. The SPRC/Trustees will make a final inspection of the parsonage on the day of the move as soon as the parsonage is empty and before the pastor has left town. The pastor's final pay check will be withheld* until this final inspection is conducted to determine if there is any further damage and to confirm the parsonage has been appropriately cleaned by the departing pastor.

6. When a pastor has damaged a parsonage the documentation of such damage (including written description of damage and photographs) will be placed in the pastor's permanent file. Damage to a parsonage is a chargeable offense in accord with ¶ 2702 of **The 2008 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church**. A pastor's appointability may be affected if he or she has two documented incidents of parsonage damage. If this occurs the pastor may be required to provide his or her own housing if he or she wants another appointment or to continue in his or her current appointment.

*Each clergy person in the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church shall sign an authorization with each local church to which he/she is appointed authorizing the local church under the Iowa Wage Payment Collection Law, Iowa Code Chapter 91A, to deduct any amounts owing under this Parsonage Damage Policy from clergy salary and further authorizing the Conference Treasurer to disburse such amounts.



Part 3 - The Church Expectations

- The Mission of the United Methodist Church from 2008 The Book of Discipline
- The Ministry Flow of a Vital Congregation
- Bill Easum's Comparison of Declining and Thriving Members
- Vital and Healthy Church
- Telling Our Stories Worksheet
- Ministry Expectations Worksheet
- Ministry Expectations Consensus Record

The Mission of the United Methodist Church

From pages ¶ 120-124 of 2008 The Book of Discipline

¶ 120. The Mission

The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ **the transformation of the world**. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs.

¶ 121. Rationale for Our Mission

The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ **the transformation of the world** by proclaiming the good news of God's grace and by exemplifying Jesus' command to love God and neighbor, thus seeking the fulfillment of God's reign and realm in the world. The fulfillment of God's reign and realm in the world is the vision Scripture holds before us. The United Methodist Church affirms that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior of the world, and the Lord of all. As we make disciples, we respect persons of all religious faiths and we defend religious freedom for all persons. Jesus' words in Matthew provide the Church with our mission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (28:19-20), and "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. . . . And you shall love your neighbor as yourself." (22:37, 39).

This mission is our grace-filled response to the Reign of God in the world announced by Jesus. God's grace is active everywhere, at all times, carrying out this purpose as revealed in the Bible. It is expressed in God's covenant with Abraham and Sarah, in the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, and in the ministry of the prophets. It is fully embodied in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is experienced in the ongoing creation of a new people by the Holy Spirit.

John Wesley, Phillip Otterbein, Jacob Albright, and our other spiritual forebears understood this mission in this way. Whenever United Methodism has had a clear sense of mission, God has used our Church to save persons, heal relationships, transform social structures, and spread scriptural holiness, thereby changing the world. In order to be truly alive, we embrace Jesus' mandate to love God and to love our neighbor and to make disciples of all peoples.

¶ 122. The Process for Carrying Out Our Mission

We make disciples as we:

- proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome and gather persons into the body of Christ;
- lead persons to commit their lives to God through baptism by water and the spirit and profession of faith in Jesus Christ;
- nurture persons in Christian living through worship, the sacraments, spiritual disciplines, and other means of grace, such as Wesley's Christian conferencing;
- send persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed, being and becoming a compassionate, caring presence, and working to develop social structures that are consistent with the gospel; and
- continue the mission of seeking, welcoming and gathering persons into the community of the body of Christ.

¶ 123. The Global Nature of Our Mission

The Church seeks to fulfill its global mission through the Spirit-given servant ministries of all Christians, both lay and clergy. Faithfulness and effectiveness demand that all ministries in the Church be shaped by the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

¶ 124. Our Mission in the World

God's self-revelation in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ summons the church to ministry in the world through witness by word and deed in light of the church's mission. The visible church of Christ as a faithful

community of persons affirms the worth of all humanity and the value of interrelationship in all of God's creation.

In the midst of a sinful world, through the grace of God, we are brought to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. We become aware of the presence and life-giving power of God's Holy Spirit. We live in confident expectation of the ultimate fulfillment of God's purpose.

We are called together for worship and fellowship and for the upbuilding of the Christian community. We advocate and work for the unity of the Christian church. We call all persons into discipleship under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

As servants of Christ we are sent into the world to engage in the struggle for justice and reconciliation. We seek to reveal the love of God for men, women, and children of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds and to demonstrate the healing power of the gospel with those who suffer.

According to Bill Easum in his article “Denominational Funding”:

Declining Congregational Members Are:

Committed to the church
Managing committees
Holding offices
Making decisions
Trained for membership
Serving at the church
Preoccupied with raising money
Doing church work
Retiring from church work
Surveying internal needs
Eager to know everyone
Loyal to each other
Building faith on information
Perpetuating a heritage

Thriving Congregational Participants are:

Committed to Christ
Deploying missions
Doing hands-on ministries
Making disciples
On a life long quest for quality
Serving in the world
Preoccupied with rescuing people
Finding personal fulfillment
Pursuing constant personal growth
Sensitized to community
Eager for everyone to know God
Drawn to the unchurched
Building faith on exp. with Christ
Visioning a future

“Vital and Healthy Church” (Developed by Paul M. Shultz)

The Alban Institute has spent years researching why some churches grow and attract new members and why some churches do not. In the book, *The Inviting Church*, The Alban Institute presents the results of its research. They found 5 factors at the heart of most growing churches:

□ A Positive Identity

These churches know who they are and where they are going. They are churches filled with energy, with vision and a sense of purpose. These churches do not try to be everything for everybody; but they do try to be faithful to what God has called them to be.

□ Congregational Harmony

Churches that attract new members live out the gospel in caring and loving ways. They have a low amount of conflict and disunity. These churches tend to be intentional in how they care for each other and regularly critique how they are doing. Remember what the Romans used to say about the early church, “Look at those Christians, how they love one another.”

□ The Pastor’s Ability to Generate Enthusiasm

Over and over again, the pastor was mentioned as a significant fact in what attracted persons to their congregation. When asked what they were looking for in a pastor, people responded in this order: 1) good sermons, 2) warmth, and 3) spiritual depth. According to The Alban Institute: “Somehow the person of the pastor embodies (in the imagination of the newcomer) the truth or the reality of religious experience.” (*The Inviting Church*, p. 26) But not only do the newcomers look to the pastor for clues to the religious health and caring of a congregation, they watch how the pastor and people relate. The pastor might be a significant reason people stay in a church; the pastor is not the reason folks come to the church in the first place. Most persons (79% research shows) come to a church because of a friend or relative attends that church and invited them.

□ The Congregation’s Involvement in Social Action or Social Service

Quite simply, a church in mission and outreach is a healthy and attractive church. Churches that allow other community groups to use their facilities and/or had members active in other community groups grew. Churches that try to make significant and substantive difference in their community and world grew. Churches that cared only about themselves do not grow and most likely are declining.

□ Small Group Programming

The Alban Institute states it clearly, “friendship ties seem to be the strongest bonding agent for helping members stick to a congregation.” (p. 29) Elsewhere, research suggest a person with two friendships or less they are less likely to stay in a congregation; 7 friendships or more they will definitely be an active part of the congregation. Intentional small group programming allows these friendships to develop, giving people a place to land.

Telling Our Stories

Think about a time during the last two years when you witnessed or participated in.....

- A moment/event/relationship of meaningful ministry

What?

Why?

How did you come to the experience?

- A disappointment

What?

Why?

How did you come to that experience?

Think about a dream you have for ministry

What?

Why?

What is it about you that makes this important to you?

MINISTRY EXPECTATIONS WORKSHEET

PASTOR'S COPY

Church: _____ Date: _____

OUR MISSION: *"To make disciples of Jesus Christ and develop leaders for the transformation of the world."*

Keeping in mind OUR MISSION, list (in order of priority) what you believe to be primary expectations of YOURSELF during this first year with your parish. [*What can leaders and members expect of you, the pastor?*]

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Keeping in mind OUR MISSION, list (in order of priority) what you believe to be primary expectations of LEADERS AND MEMBERS of the congregation in this first year. [*What do you expect of leaders and members?*]

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Keeping in mind OUR MISSION, list (in order of priority) what you believe to be primary expectations of the SPRC during this first year of ministry. [*What do you expect of the SPRC?*]

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

MINISTRY EXPECTATIONS WORKSHEET

COPY FOR SPRC: _____ CONGREGATION: _____

Church: _____ Date: _____

OUR MISSION: *"To make disciples of Jesus Christ and develop leaders for the transformation of the world."*

Keeping in mind OUR MISSION, list (in order of priority) what you believe to be primary expectations of your PASTOR during this first year with you. [*What do you expect of your pastor?*]

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Keeping in mind OUR MISSION, list (in order of priority) what you believe to be primary expectations of LEADERS AND MEMBERS of the congregation in this first year. [*What can your pastor and SPRC expect of leaders and members?*]

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Keeping in mind OUR MISSION, list (in order of priority) what you believe to be primary expectations of the SPRC during this year. [*What can your pastor and congregation expect of the SPRC?*]

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

MINISTRY EXPECTATIONS CONSENSUS RECORD
PASTOR and STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Church: _____ Date: _____

OUR MISSION: *"To make disciples of Jesus Christ and develop leaders for the transformation of the world."*

Expectations and priorities for our PASTOR'S ministry in the first year, based on OUR MISSION:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Expectations and priorities for LEADERS AND MEMBERS of the congregation in the first year of our pastor's ministry, based on OUR MISSION:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Expectations and priorities of the SPRC during the first year of our pastor's ministry, based on OUR MISSION:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5