

# **Local Church PPR/SPR Committee Training 2016**

Appointive Cabinet  
West Michigan Conference - UMC



# A Prayer for DS, Pastor and People

Gracious and Ever-loving God, help us to remember always that ours is a sacred trust from You as we seek to enhance relations between pastor and people. May we know we are in this relationship together with You.

Guide us in our quest for honesty and fairness. Help us to be quick to listen and slow to speak – even slower to judge. Strengthen us in our ability to sift through the petty as we seek to expose that which is worthy of our thought and attention.

When things are going well, we will rejoice and be grateful. When things are not going so well, we will reaffirm our faith in Christ and patiently and lovingly work toward a solution.

Teach us humility in all our working relationships, especially as we serve You on this committee; and help us to live fully in the presence of the Christ as we live by his example in our conversations and in our actions.

Give us strength, courage and understanding as we strive to be accountable as DS, pastor and people. For we truly are grateful that we are part of the United Methodist Church.

We offer our prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

(based on a prayer by Lonnie

Johnston)

# Why do we need training?

- To understand the role of the committee.
- To help the committee address concerns in a healthy way.
- To help the pastor to be as effective as possible.
- To help the congregation minister and serve more effectively with pastors.
- To help us all become better church leaders.



**TRUE *OR* FALSE?**

# True or False?

When a church wants a new pastor, the SPRC chairperson holds a meeting with the congregation to take a vote.

**False**

- SPRC confers with the DS to determine how the best interests of the congregation & pastor can be served. This is called “consultation.”
- Committee relationship with DS & Bishop is advisory only – but your advice is critical!
- The Bishop, after consulting with all six DSs (the Cabinet), appoints your pastor for a year.
- SPRC cooperates with the pastor, DS, and

# True or False?

The SPRC does not have to meet unless there is a crisis in pastoral leadership.

(bonus: how often do you have to meet?)



**False**

- According to the structures and procedures set out in our Book of Discipline 2012, the committee shall meet “at least quarterly”.

# True or False?

At least one youth or young adult between the ages of 18-35 should serve on the SPRC.

**True!**

Our Book of Discipline 2012 states that one of the members SHALL be a young adult and one member MAY be a youth.

So what does a church do when they aren't able to find a youth or young adult to serve on the committee?  
Thoughts? Ideas?

# True or False?

If the pastor's spouse is the duly elected Lay Member to the Annual Conference (and therefore a member of this committee), then she or he can serve on this committee.

**False!**

Officially, “no staff member or immediate family member of a pastor or staff member may serve on the committee.” If such a person is the Lay Leader or the Lay Member to Annual Conference, they simply do not get involved with this committee.



# True or False?

Since the Lay Member to Annual Conference and the Lay Leader serve as committee members by virtue of their offices, they do not have a **vote.** (BONUS: Does the pastor have a vote?)

False

All members of the committee, including the Lay Leader and Lay Member to Annual Conference, have a vote. They are full members of the committee, too! But the pastor doesn't – not on the PPRC/SPRC or Trustees.

# True or False?

The SPRC may meet only with the knowledge and permission of the Pastor and/or the District Superintendent.

True

If the committee desires to meet without the Pastor present, they may only do so IF the Pastor knows AND gives their permission, or the DS knows and gives their permission.

This is a very rare thing. Healthy communication and wise discernment is a difficult thing if all parties are not present.

# True or False?

The PPRC/SPRC is responsible for recruiting and recommending persons from their congregation for ordained ministry.

**True!**



If the PPRC/SPRC senses that God is calling someone to a licensed or ordained ministry in the UMC, it is their job to invite, recruit, interview, evaluate, and review those persons as they journey through the “candidacy process.” The committee is responsible for making an annual recommendation concerning all such persons to the Church Conference.

# True or False?

The SPRC is the committee in the church that is responsible for helping the congregation understand the purpose of the Ministerial Education Fund.

**True!**

At your next committee meeting,  
please add to your agenda:  
*“how will we help our congregation  
understand the process of preparation  
for ordained ministry and the  
role of the Ministerial Education  
Fund?”* You can’t explain what you  
don’t yet know yourselves!

# True or False?

The PPRC/SPRC has the responsibility to develop and regularly update a personnel policy manual for all church employees other than the pastor.

True

Your personnel policy manual should help your employees be able to answer questions like:

“How much vacation do I get?”

“What should I do if I get sick?”

“What benefits does my job have?”

“Can I get unemployment income?” “Can I be fired?”

# True or False?

When a vacancy or change occurs in pastoral leadership, the committee interviews the new pastor and decides whether or not to accept the new pastor.



False

We have an “appointive” system, not a “call” system. When the Bishop appoints a new pastor, the PPRC/SPRC has already consulted with the DS in the previous fall. When they first meet the new pastor, it is for an introduction, not an interview.

# True or False?

The SPRC should poll the congregation every year to determine whether or not to keep their pastor.

**False! False!**

**False!**

The SPRC should cultivate an art of listening to the congregation to assess the effectiveness of the pastor. You should NOT:

- Poll the church.
- Ask congregants leading questions.
- Hold a “town hall” styled meeting to assess the pastor’s popularity.
- Invite and share anonymous complaints about the pastor.

**THIS IS NOT A PASTOR POPULARITY CONTEST!**  
And doing these things can HARM your church.

So... what should we  
do when people  
complain to us about  
the pastor?

The SPRC can choose to:

- Listen, listen, listen. Sometimes that is enough.
- Weigh complaints and determine whether a concern is shared by many or only a few.
- Be a “non-anxious presence” in conflict.
- Share compliments as well as complaints.
- Invite conversation around the strengths and gifts of the pastor, not just weaknesses.
- Be specific in addressing problems; avoid generalities and sharing anonymous comments

MATTHEW 18 invites us to...

- 1) Go directly to the person we are upset with for personal conversation.
- 2) Take another person – perhaps a member of the SPRC -- with you if needed.
- 3) Involve the wider resources of the church.
- 4) Agree to disagree...



# True or False?

Conflict should be avoided, if possible, to maintain harmony in the church.

# False

(really, you think it can be  
avoided?!)

Where two or more are gathered together, there will be conflict! But don't panic – keep in mind that conflict is simply “two or more different ideas trying to live in the same space”! When addressed with genuine care, consideration, good communication skills, and in the presence of Jesus Christ, conflict can be beneficial to the spiritual health of the congregation, the pastor, and the staff.

# True or False?

An ordained deacon is a layperson who plans activities at the church.

False

## Deacons are persons:

- Called by God.
- Approved and authorized by the Church (including the PPRC/SPRC's recommendation to the Church Conference.)
- Ordained by the Bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word & Service to both community & congregation in ministry that connects the congregation with "the world."

# True or False?

An ordained Elder is at least 40 years old, serves as pastor of a local church, and must go wherever the Bishop appoints him or her.

Mostly true 😊



# Elders are persons:

- Called by God.
- Approved and authorized by the Church (including recommendation by the PPRC/SPRC to the Church Conference).
- Ordained by the Bishop to Word, Sacrament, Order and Service.
- They can be much younger than 40, as long as they have met all requirements and been approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry.
- Elders must go wherever the Bishop appoints them.
- Some are appointed to “extension ministries” that are not in a local church.

# True or False?

A licensed Local Pastor can perform fully as a pastor of the church where he/she is appointed.

True

# Licensed Local Pastor

May perform all duties of a pastor,  
including:

- Sacraments of baptism, Holy Communion
- Service of marriage, burial, confirmation, membership reception
- License may be renewed annually
- Upon completion of the Course of Study, a Local Pastor may apply for Associate Membership.

**BUT ONLY WHERE THEY ARE APPOINTED**

# True or False?

A Certified Lay  
Minister (CLM) is  
appointed by the  
Bishop.

**False**

A Certified Lay Minister (CLM) is a layperson who is assigned by the District Superintendent – with the Bishop’s approval - to a variety of ministries within a local church. Although the “CLM” only came into existence about ten years ago, more and more people are seeking to become CLMs.

# Certified Lay Minister

May preach, provide a care ministry, assist in program leadership, serve as a part of the ministry team, etc. The CLM must:

- Be recommended by local church pastor.
- Complete Certified Lay Ministry Training (not to be confused with Certified Lay Servant/Speaker.)
- Demonstrate appreciation of history, polity, doctrine, worship & liturgy of UMC through service in local church.
- Comply with application & certification process.



# True or False?

PPR/SPR committee meetings are closed meetings. Only committee members may attend.

True

Meetings of the PPRC/SPRC deal with many sensitive issues, such as staff performance, relationship problems and other human resources topics. Members need to maintain confidentiality about the content and conversations that happen during meetings.

Occasionally a non-member may be invited to speak to the committee, but may not remain for the rest of the meeting.

Although it is important that official meeting minutes be kept, these should not be distributed to anyone who is not a committee member.

# True or False?

The Chairperson of the PPRC/SPRC and the Chairperson of the Trustees must walk through the parsonage, inspect it carefully, and submit an official report every year.

True

Church-owned parsonages must be kept up to minimal conference standards (these are listed in the Conference Journal – ask your pastor if you need to see it.) An annual “walk through” must be done to assess the condition and maintenance needs of the parsonage and to work with the Board of Trustees to ensure that repairs are completed in a timely manner.

Pastors and their families, too, have responsibility to be “good tenants” when living in a parsonage.

*(By the way, are you aware that your pastor must pay annual income taxes based on the “fair rental value” of the parsonage? That can easily add up to a couple thousand dollars in taxes. And though your pastor doesn’t have a mortgage, they also won’t have a paid-for home when they retire. Just something to think about.)*

A question for all of you:  
What do you consider to be  
the most important  
roles and duties  
of the PPRC/SPRC?



Let's see how many of  
the following you  
named...

1. LEADERSHIP. *Focusing on the mission statement of their congregation(s)*, the PPRC/SPRC is the leader in helping the pastor and staff support the congregation as they all work together towards the fulfillment of their mission.

(How can the PPRC/SPRC, the pastor, the staff, or the congregation know if they are heading the right direction if they have no idea where they're actually going?)

2. COMMUNICATION. Clearly communicates the pastoral and staff needs of the church – in light of the church’s mission statement – with the Pastor(s), any staff, church leadership, the congregation, and the District Superintendent (who communicates with the Bishop.)

### 3. CONSULTATION.

The PPRC/SPRC is responsible for evaluating and sharing with the DS whether or not they believe their current pastor is meeting the needs of the congregation in fulfilling their mission statement.

If the PPRC/SPRC believes a change of pastors would be in the best interest of the church, they may submit an “advisory” to the Bishop, preferably by early December.

## 4. SUPPORT, ENCOURAGE, AND HELP THE PASTOR AND STAFF SUCCEED IN THEIR MINISTRIES:

- \* pray daily for them
- \* regular conversation & feedback
  - \* annual evaluation
- \* input about continuing education for personal & professional growth

## 5. HIRING, FIRING, AND OVERSIGHT OF ALL STAFF POSITIONS:

- \* recommend necessary staff positions to meet the church's mission
  - \* hire (do background checks!!!)
  - \* oversee and evaluate (do this in tandem with the pastor)
    - \* feedback and evaluation
    - \* fire (“at will employee”)

**6. DISCERNMENT AND  
RECOMMENDATION OF PEOPLE IN  
THE CHURCH WHO ARE BEING  
CALLED BY GOD TO PARTICULAR  
MINISTRIES.**

- \* Elders, Deacons, Local Pastors**
- \* Certified Lay Ministers**

# **YEARLY MEETING SCHEDULE EXAMPLE**



# Sample SPRC Rhythm of the Year

ITEM	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
SPRC Budget Items								X	X	X	X	
Parsonage Review				X	X	X						
Advisory to Bishop											X	X
Pastor's Evaluation						X	X	X				
Continuing Education & Spiritual Renewal Planning	X											X
Staff Evaluations					X	X					X	X
Mission Statement Focus	X	X										
SPRC Training	X								X	X	X	
Candidacy Conversations							X	X				
Develop Church Profile	X	X	X									

# First Quarter (January – March)

- Provide training for new SPRC members.
- Focus on what will be needed from the pastor and staff in the upcoming year in light of the congregation's mission statement.
- Negotiate and develop continuing education plans for the pastor and staff in light of the congregation's mission statement.
- Update "Congregational Profile."
- Review pastoral and staff duties which are being performed, negotiate priorities, changes.
- Consult with District Superintendent with any information you wish to share regarding pastoral appointments

# Second Quarter (April – June)

- Review church's mission statement and plan of ministry.
- Complete mid-year “keep on track” staff evaluations.
- Share formal and informal evaluation of church's ministry as ascertained from various segments and individuals in congregation.
- Arrange for parsonage tour with parsonage family and chairperson of Board of Trustees. Complete parsonage inspection form. Hold Trustees accountable for needed maintenance. Hold pastor and family accountable for their part of the parsonage policy covenant as needed.
- If there is a change in pastoral appointments, make plans for
  - Expressions of appreciation to outgoing pastor and family,
  - Welcoming incoming pastor and family, and
  - Thorough cleaning of the parsonage!

# Third Quarter: July-September

- Review present compensation and benefits for pastor and staff. Discern compensation and benefits for next year (in time for church budget deadlines).
- Complete pastor evaluation by mid-August (due to DS).
- Meet and consult with DS prior to fall Church Conference.
- Interview local church candidates for ministry (in time for recommendation to fall Church Conference.)
- Attend PPRC/SPRC training provided through Conference or District.
- Continue to coordinate with Church Council regarding church's mission statement, goals and resulting staff needs.

# Fourth Quarter (October – December)

- Meet and consult with DS prior to fall Church Conference.
- Complete “Appointment Advisory Form” if wanting to advise Bishop that a pastoral change may be beneficial. Send it to District Superintendent by mid-December.
- Complete decisions regarding PPRC/SPRC budget items, especially staff salaries and benefits. Share with Finance Committee and Church Council.
- Complete all annual staff evaluations – in light of the church’s mission statement, and the mid-year evaluations.
- Work with pastor and staff to begin developing plans for their continuing education in the upcoming year.

## Fourth Quarter (continued)

- Evaluate your own work as a committee during year. Allow your pastor and staff members to give their evaluation of your SPRC's work, too.
- Agree on year-end report to the Church Council.
- Find special ways to express appreciation to any members rotating off the PPRC/SPRC.
- Consider appropriate Christmas celebrations and gifts for pastors, their families and staff members.

One last important role of the  
PPRC/SPRC that we need to  
consider:

*“Oh no! We never thought that could  
happen here! What do we do now?”*

Responding to CRISIS: accusations that a  
pastor, staff person, or member of the  
pastor’s family has violated sacred trust.

*That's all I have for now.  
What else might be helpful?  
What other questions  
do you have?*



***THANK YOU***  
***for serving Christ***  
***as a member***  
***of your***  
***PPRC/SPRC.***