

A COVENANT OF SHARED MINISTRY AND ASSESSMENT BY PASTOR AND THE PASTOR/STAFF/PARISH-RELATIONS COMMITTEE

(BACKGROUND STATEMENTS)

Statement from The Discipline of the United Methodist Church regarding Christian ministry:

Par.301. Ministry in the Christian church is derived from the ministry of Christ, who calls all persons to receive God's gift of salvation and follow in the way of love and service. The whole church receives and accepts this call, and all Christians participate in this continuing ministry (see Par. 120-138)

Statement from The Discipline of the United Methodist Church on the Pastor/Staff Relations Committee:

Par. 259.2 ...In conducting its work, the committee shall identify and clarify its values for ministry. It shall engage in biblical and theological reflection on the mission of the church, the primary task, and the ministries of the 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....

Statement from The Organization of the United Methodist Church by Bishop Jack M. Tuell, a retired bishop of the United Methodist Church:

The committee on pastor-parish relations is an extremely important group, since it deals with the delicate matters of the relations between the pastor (and other employed staff) and the people of the church. The whole concept of this committee in the Discipline is of a continuing, positive, creative group whose primary function is to aid the pastor (staff) in making his or her ministry effective by being available for counsel, keeping the pastor advised concerning conditions within the congregation as they affect relations between pastor and people, and continually interpreting to the people the nature and function of the pastoral office. The role of this committee is not to lie dormant until some kind of crisis develops, and then to meet "to get a new pastor."

If the committee is to perform its true function, then, its first requirement is to meet regularly (at least quarterly). Only by doing this can it develop the rapport with the pastor and the knowledge of the pastoral task that is so important. The committee also needs to remember that it functions as a two-way street - not only to inform the pastor of conditions within the congregation, but to inform the congregation of the nature and function of the pastoral office.

A Covenant – Affirming the Sacred:

The biblical experiences of God were always in covenant relationships, beginning with the covenant with Abraham. God sought to bless all peoples of the earth through covenants with Abraham, then with Israel and finally through the covenant with Jesus Christ. A covenant honors and binds people, and requires mutual accountability and responsibility. A relational covenant is an explicit way to translate the most holy of goals into concrete guidelines and activities of the life of the church. It consists of shared expectations and aspirations for how members of the PPRC and minister/staff wish to treat one another.

A Relational Covenant

Clarifying mutual expectations in public and practical terms is a great way to prevent misunderstanding and conflict. A relational covenant also serves as a loving set of ground rules for addressing issues of concern. A relational covenant results in learning and loving as human weaknesses are turned toward the strength and unity of faith, love, humility and reinvigorating the enduring bonds among Christians with Christ.

THE COVENANT OF SHARED MINISTRY

Believing and trusting in ministry as a shared responsibility of all Christians, the Pastor/Staff/Parish Relations Committee of this church recognizes and affirms its unique opportunity to assist and enhance the ministry of the pastor (and staff) of our church through serving and counseling with them on a regular basis, assessing their gifts and setting priorities for leadership and service. Seeking to be a faithful and effective pastor (staff member), the minister recognizes his or her responsibility to be in dialogue with the life, cultural setting, and vision of the people of the church through interaction with the people of the church and the members of the PPRC.

The goal of this Covenant of Shared Ministry is to empower and facilitate the work of the PPRC and the pastor by providing a framework of covenanted relationship to strengthen and enhance the present and future ministry of the church.

AREAS OF COVENANT BETWEEN PPRC AND PASTOR:

Prayer and Bible Study: How will the PPRC and pastor utilize prayer and Bible Study in their meetings and relationships?

Communications: How often shall the PPRC and pastor meet? What is the agreement about openness and honesty with one another in communication?

Assessment of Current State of the Church and Needs: What is your current assessment of the church and what are the current pressing needs of the church?

Assessment: _____

Rating Scale: 5 – Outstanding 4 – More than Acceptable 3 – Acceptable
 2 – Less than Acceptable 1 - Unacceptable

Current Needs	Review 1		Review 2		Review 3	
	Date	Rating	Date	Rating	Date	Rating
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

Comments: _____

Shared Vision for the Future: What is the shared vision of the PPRC and the pastor in regard to the future of the church?

Training and Leadership Development (for pastor, PPRC, and congregation)
 What are the plans of the PPRC and pastor for continuing education in regard to your needs?

PPRC _____

Pastor _____

Will the church support continuing education for the pastor in terms of making time available and supporting the cost of such study?

No _____ Yes _____ Monetary commitment \$ _____

<u>Assessment of previous goals and their attainment or progress:</u>	Review 1		Review 2		Review 3	
	Date	Rating	Date	Rating	Date	Rating
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

<u>Specific Goals for the Coming Year.</u>	Review 1		Review 2		Review 3	
	Date	Rating	Date	Rating	Date	Rating
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

<u>Specific Plans to attain Goals set for Coming Year.</u>	Review 1		Review 2		Review 3	
	Date	Rating	Date	Rating	Date	Rating
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

Assessment of pastoral leadership (noting strengths and areas for continuing education):

What are the strengths of your pastor (to be answered by both PPRC and pastor)?

Date	Rating	Date	Rating

In what areas would continuing education be helpful to your pastor?
