

SPRC Training Case Studies

Case Study #1

In year one the staff parish relations committee, in their written evaluation, indicates a positive relationship with the pastor with the pastor meeting expectations in every area.

The following year, the SPRC asks the Bishop to prayerfully consider a change in appointment after discerning that the pastor is not the right leader for their church. Separately the SPRC has told the DS that all was not well the year before but it was not reflected on the evaluation form. The SPRC and pastor have not met regularly throughout the year and so at evaluation time, the pastor is surprised and shocked to receive word that the congregation wants a change in pastoral leadership. The SPRC then calls a leadership team meeting without the pastor being present and shares their decision with the team. The invitation states that it would be “an important discussion” with no other details.

Other leaders in the church are upset, believing that a congregational meeting should have been called by the SPRC (based on their previous experience in other United Methodist Churches) to allow for discussion and questions before the SPRC came to a decision.

Case Study #2

Several members of the church have expressed concerns to the SPRC regarding the performance of their pastor. The pastor is often late to meetings, sporadic with hospital visitations, and preaches without reference to Scripture or Wesleyan theology. It is time for the annual performance evaluation, and the SPRC is struggling to decide how to handle the evaluation. The pastor has always gotten a good evaluation, and most members are hesitant to engage on the concerns raised. Some SPRC members feel like the concerns are unwarranted. To the SPRC’s knowledge, the pastor is aware of some but not all of the concerns.

Case Study #3

The SPRC is considering whether or not to recommend the lay leader of their church as a candidate for the ordained ministry. The lay leader has served on many church committees (Trustees, Finance, and SPRC), has taught the high school Sunday School class for ten years, sings in the Chancel Choir and is an excellent guitarist. During the discussion regarding the fitness of the lay leader to pursue candidacy, the pastor of the church expressed some concerns regarding the emotional well-being of the lay leader and if the lay leader demonstrated a sense of call to the ministry. After a relatively short discussion, the SPRC voted unanimously to recommend the lay leader for candidacy.

Case Study #4

The son of a prominent church family has recently returned to church after a lengthy absence. Soon after returning, the son volunteers to work with the youth group as a middle school counselor. During the required safe sanctuaries background check, the pastor and the SPRC discover that he is a registered sex offender. They have no idea regarding next steps, so they call their DS.

Cultivating Healthy Relationships: A Holistic Approach to the Work of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee



The Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (S/PPRC) is the administrative unit in the local church where staff and congregational interests are integrated to focus on the mission of the church.

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Mission of the Church



Making disciples of
Jesus Christ
for the transformation
of the world



Local church
provides the most
significant place
for discipleship

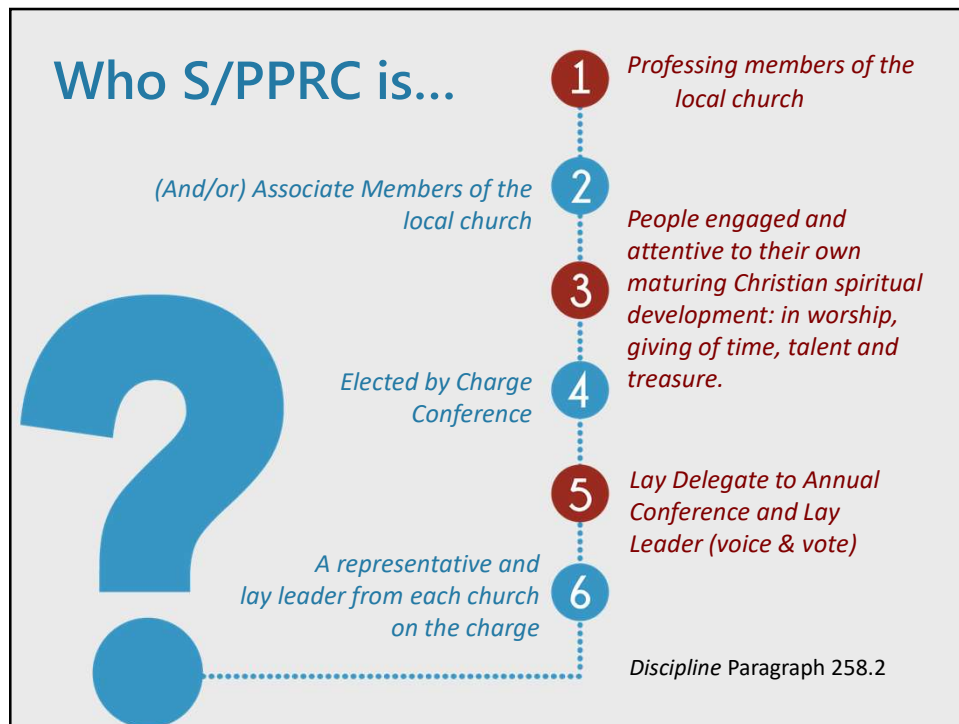


Love of God and
Love of neighbor
are the foundation

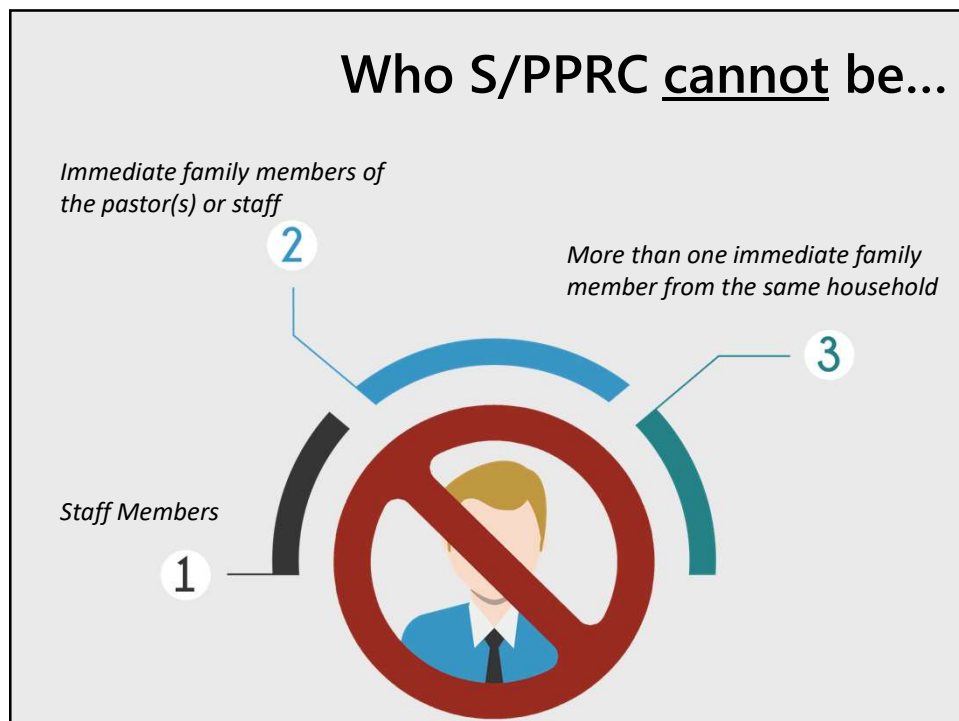


Ministry is:
welcoming, leading,
nurturing & sending

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Committee Basics (¶258.2):

Membership



Between 5 and 9 persons (one shall be a young adult and one may be a youth)



Divided into three year classes



Members shall be able to succeed themselves for one three-year term



Oversees the work of all staff



Pastor should be present, unless s/he excuses self or if D.S. is in attendance

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Meetings



At least quarterly

Written, confidential "minutes"



Only with knowledge of Pastor and/or DS

Pastor present, unless she/he voluntarily excuses self

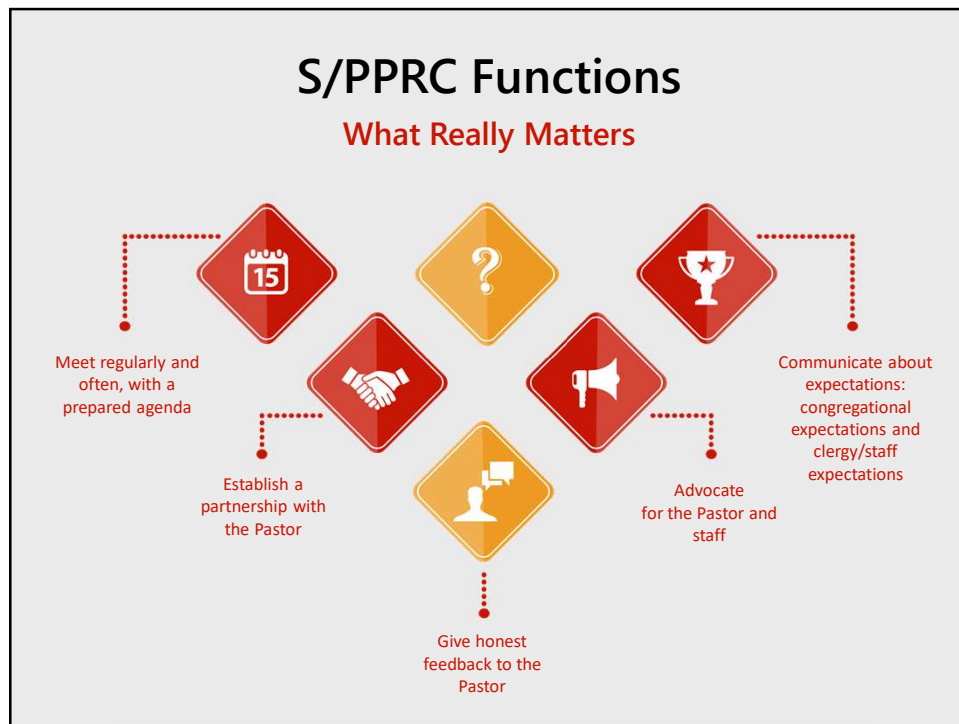


May meet with the DS without the Pastor or appointed staff (notification prior to meeting and consultation immediately after)

Shall meet in closed session – confidentiality is key



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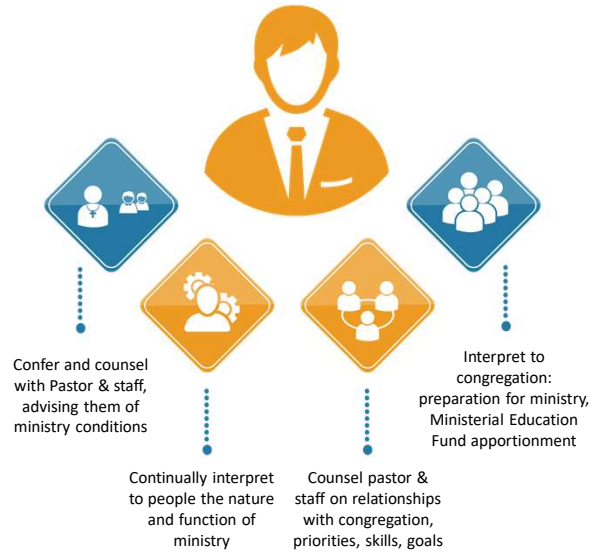
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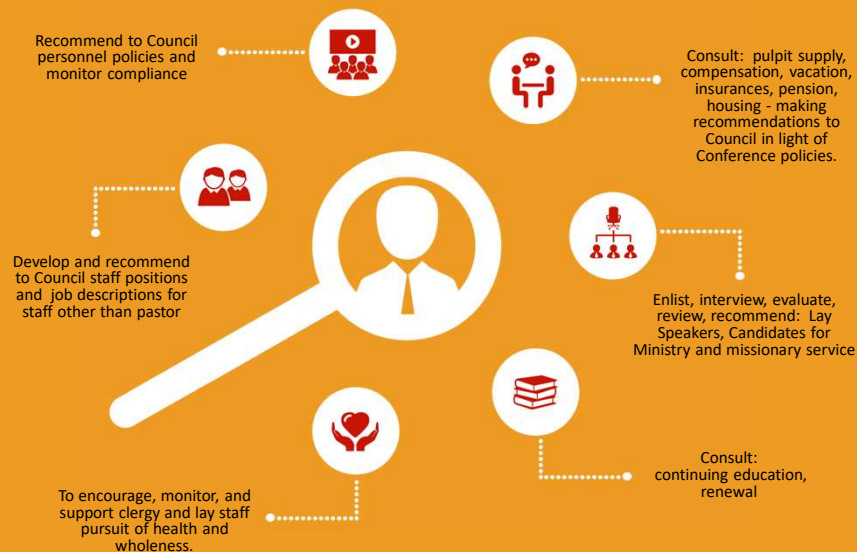
Duties of Committee (¶258.2g)

Communication

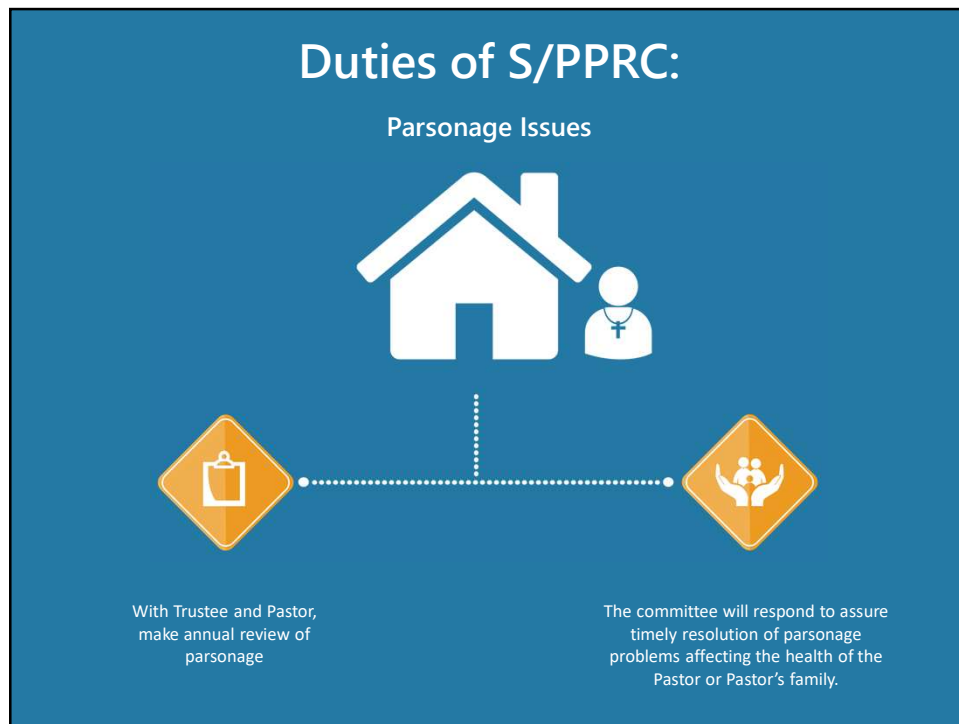


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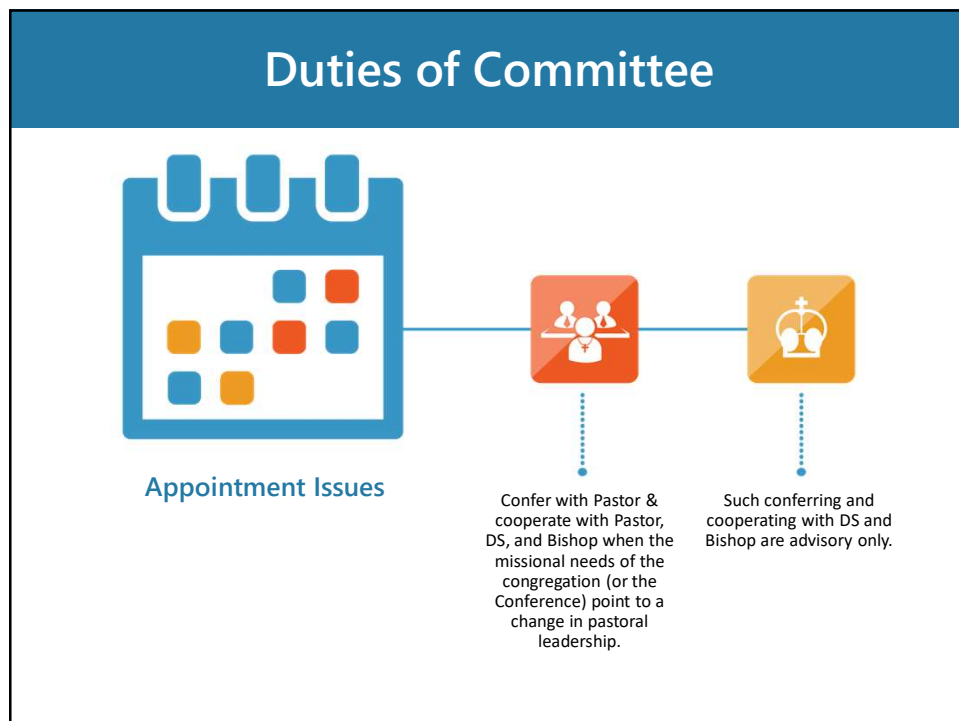
Duties of Committee : Personnel



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The Pastor's Job Description

(1340 – Duties of Elders & Local Pastors)



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Calendar Flow



FIRST QUARTER

- Organize Committee (vice-chair, secretary)
- Discuss the staff needs
Check off tasks
- Review job descriptions for lay staff
- Look at S/PPRC Goals for year

SECOND QUARTER

- Talk about goals prepare for Annual clergy evaluation – Due November 1
- Parsonage Tour -- with Trustees a few weeks before charge conference

THIRD QUARTER

- Budget work: salary, accountable reimbursement, continuing education, parsonage/HA other budget items that relate to "staff"
- Interview and recommend Lay Speakers, candidates for ministry, missionaries (or as needed)
- Review action items coming out of Spring assessment

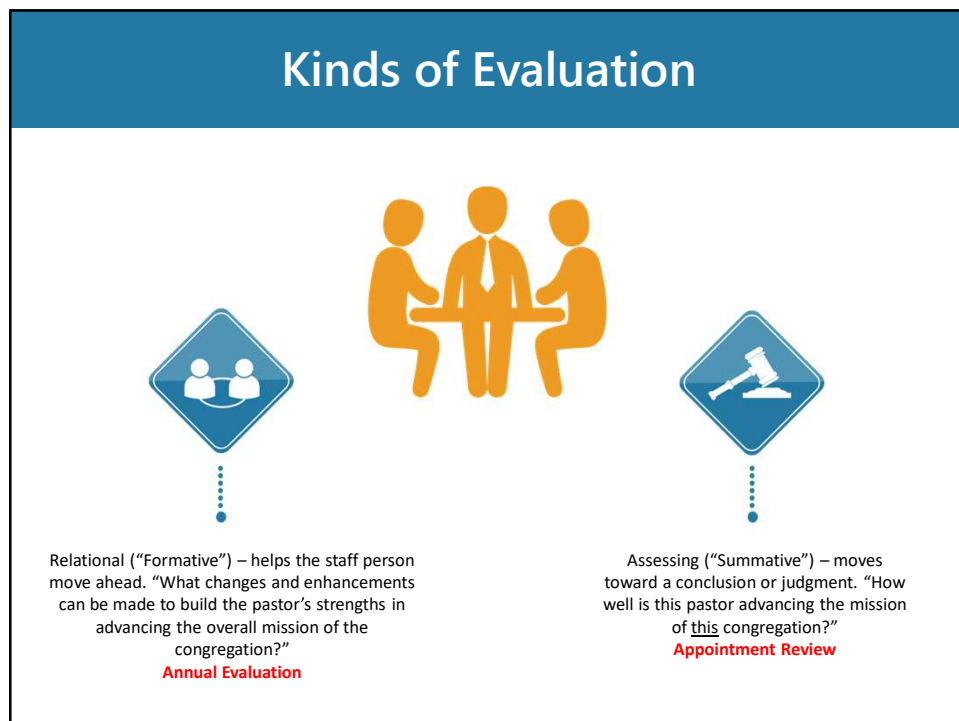
FORTH QUARTER

- Look at goals being set for new year – how do they impact staff (priorities, training, division of tasks)
- Look at long range plan for Pastor's continuing education
- Begin Appointment Review
- Evaluate year's work of S/PPRC

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Evaluation and Annual Advisory



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The United Methodist Way



The Bishop appoints
(sent vs. call system)



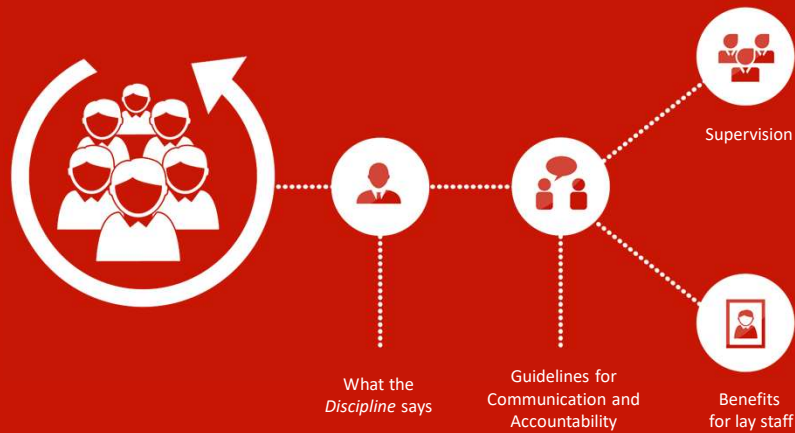
Itinerancy



"Open Itinerancy": Clergy are appointed and received without bias about race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age. The Cross-Racial, Cross-Cultural Resource Team is available to consult with S/PPRC and Clergy to start off on the right foot.

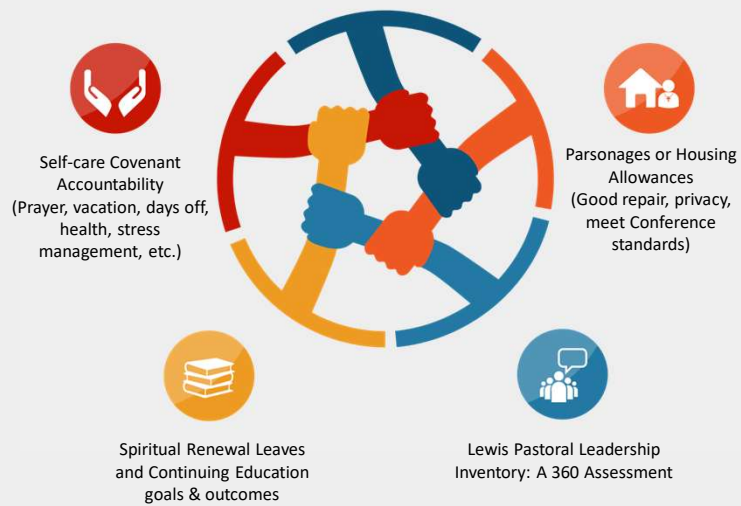
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Personnel Policies for Lay Staff



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Support Systems



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