

The Staff-Parish/ Pastor- Parish Relations Committee (SPRC/PPRC) Orientation 2017

**Presented by the district superintendents of the
Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United
Methodist Church, Bishop Hee-Soo Jung, PhD.**

Topics of Discussion

An underlying guiding principle is that the SPRC leads toward congregational health and vitality. We will discuss:

- The mission and vision that focuses the work
- SPRC/PPRC organization and the spiritual leadership expectations of the committee members
- Skills for an effective SPRC/PPRC including skills for addressing conflict
- Supervision and the SPRC/PPRC
- Itinerancy – our system for moving pastors
- Overview a “normal” year at a glance
- Now, If I could address a specific question you have that is not listed here, what would that be?

The BIG picture

- The mission of the UMC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world
- The primary purpose of the SPRC/PPRC is to manage the mission and vision of the local congregation.
- This vision should be informed by the mission and vision of our connection—the Wisconsin Annual Conference (Imagine Wisconsin Anew!)

The Four Foci

The four areas of focus express the vision and yearnings of the people of The United Methodist Church. Narrowing our focus to these four areas allows churches to use their resources effectively as they live out God's vision for the church.

- Engaging in Ministry with the Poor
- Improving Global Health
- Developing Principled Christian Leaders
- Creating New and Renewed Congregations

Engaging in Ministry with the Poor

- Christ calls us to be in ministry with the poor and marginalized. Our emphasis is on “with” – standing with those who are regarded as the least of these.
- It means listening to them, understanding their needs and aspirations, and working with them to achieve their goals.
- It also means addressing the causes of poverty and responding in ways that lift up individuals and communities.
- We believe working side by side with those striving to improve their situations is more effective long-term, than top-down charity.

Improving Global Health

- Knowing that poverty and health are intertwined, The United Methodist Church has become a key player in fighting diseases such as malaria and AIDS and promoting initiatives that improve well-being.
- The church is nearing its goal of raising \$75 million to provide education, infrastructure, communication, and prevention measures to defeat malaria.
- In the period of about five years, the death rate from malaria in Africa has been cut in half, thanks to international efforts such as our UM “Imagine No Malaria” campaign. This and other health issues can be addressed and overcome.

Developing Principled Christian Leaders

- The church needs leaders rooted in Christ, who have a vision for changing the world.
- We must strengthen our church leaders, who are helping to lead and minister at every level of the church.
- We must recruit young people for ministry and equip them to be effective leaders and to be open to how God is calling our church to the future.

Creating New and Renewed Congregations

- Our world has changed drastically and our churches need to engage that world and re-engage with our faith to be effective in helping people connect with God and grow in faith.
- This means that we need to keep looking to God to help revitalize our current congregations.
- This also means that we need to be finding ways to plant new congregations in those places and for those people that God has placed in our midst.
- We seek to re-evangelize the world so we can reach more people in relevant and vital ways for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

What is YOUR Mission?

- Does your congregation have a ministry plan or a strategic plan for your congregation?
- If not, the SPRC/PPRC must determine that mission focus because...
- If we don't lead with purpose (specific goals in mind) the default is to respond by preferences and "the squeaky wheel" syndrome wins.

How to accomplish the Mission:

Our primary task is to make (new) disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

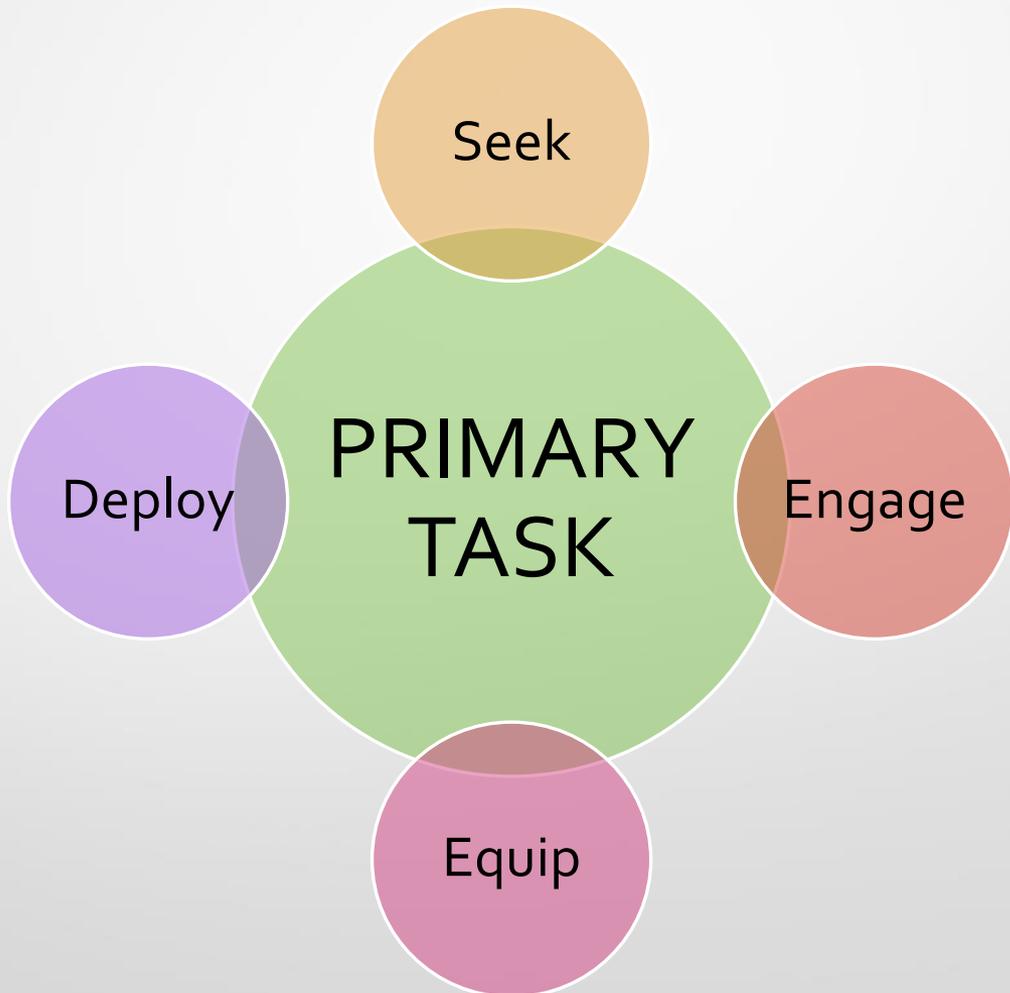
- Thus, we need to:
 1. To reach out
 2. Relate people to God
 3. Nurture in discipleship
 4. Send out as disciples
- Which is your strength? Your struggle? Or put another way...

UMC Primary Task

SPRC/PPRC

FOCUS

What are the key expectations for staff and congregational leadership to help fulfill the mission and live the primary task effectively?



Imagining Wisconsin Anew

Priorities Include:

1. Developing new congregations
2. Transforming existing congregations
3. Teaching the Wesleyan model of making disciples of Jesus Christ
4. Strengthening clergy and lay leadership
5. Reaching and transforming the lives of new generations
6. Engaging our multi-ethnic communities
7. Addressing poverty and hunger that surround us

Are you unclear about your congregations mission? Do you need assistance in developing a strategic plan?

- If the answers are yes, please contact your District Superintendent for a consultation!
- Or Rev. Sam Royappa, director of congregational ministries at 888-240-7328.
- WE ARE WALKING THIS JOURNEY TOGETHER—DO NOT WALK IN CONFUSION ALONE!

SPRC/PPRC Details Please!

- In the 2016 Book of Discipline pp. 196ff which is para 258.2 . . . The SPRC:
- Shall be elected annually
- Professing members only
- SPRC/PPRC members are: “attentive to their Christian spiritual development so as to give proper leadership...”
- Attend to the means of grace: worship, communion, prayer, service, study, giving, etc.

The SPRC/PPRC reflects Biblically

- And theologically to identify and clarify values for ministry
- Assists the clergy in assessing gifts, maintaining balance, setting priority, and attending to the stewardship of staff
- An image for you: The SPRC/PPRC is an immune system fostering what is good for the body and holding at bay what is not helpful for the body

A Healthy Body of Christ

- Colossians 1:15 sees Christ as head of the body
- SPRC is the immune system—it works with the head
- We open the body to what it needs; we reject those things that are unhealthy
- We care about those who are unhealthy, but we don't let them set the agenda

Who is invited to the SPRC/PPRC party?

- Not fewer than five, not more than nine
- One shall be a young adult, one may be a youth
- The lay leader and lay member of annual conference shall be members
- No family of staff or clergy members may be on the committee
- Only one from an immediate family residing in the same household shall serve, i.e., an adult daughter, a father or grandfather, etc.

How shall we secure experience and stability?

- Divide into three classes
 - Lay member to Annual Conference and lay leader are exempt from the three-year term limitation
 - Members of the SPRC/PPRC shall be able to succeed themselves for a three-year term
 - Fill vacancies during the year at church council

SPRC Meeting Details

- Meet at least quarterly or at the request of the bishop, superintendent, clergy, or any person accountable to the SPRC/PPRC, or the chair.
- SPRC/PPRC shall meet only with knowledge of the clergy or superintendent.
- The pastor shall be present at each meeting...except when she/he voluntarily excuses her or himself.
- Do not ask the clergy to step out of SPRC/PPRC.
- The SPRC/PPRC may meet with the DS w/o the pastor being present. However, the pastor shall be notified prior to such a meeting ***and be brought into consultation immediately after.***

What is the difference

- Between confidentiality and secrecy?
- Confidentiality = a sacred trust that is held for the protection of a process needed for a greater good—think doctors or attorneys.
- We are often in process that is redemptive and confidentiality allows for mistakes to heal or forgiveness to happen.
- Secrets are not part of a redemptive mission and often divide people/groups into who is in and who is out.
- *Secrets are often an excuse to listen to anonymous complaints.*

So what do we do? The SPRC/PPRC

Purpose and Function

258.2.g 1-17

1. To encourage, strengthen, nurture, support, and respect the pastor(s)/deacon and staff and their families.
2. To promote unity in the church(es).
3. Confer and counsel with clergy regarding effectiveness, relationships in the congregation, clergy health/self-care, and conditions that may impede effectiveness and interpret the nature & function of ministry.

There is more!

4. Confer about priorities in accomplishing the ministry.
5. Provide for evaluation for pastor and staff and identifying continuing education needs and plans.
6. Interpret ***to the congregation*** the nature and function of ministry in the UMC, the preparation for ministry in the UMC, and the ministerial education fund.
7. Develop job (ministry) descriptions. Position titles and description are SPRC/PPRC responsibilities!

Oh Lord, there is more?

8. Consult with clergy and staff concerning continuing education. (We are in favor of it.), work-life balance, (again, in favor of it), health & wellness, spiritual renewal, to arrange with the church council the necessary time & financial assistance for the above, to encourage certifications in fields of specialty.
9. Enlist, interview, evaluate, review and recommend annually to the church conference persons for candidacy for ordained ministry or missionary service, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, or disability.
10. Interpret preparation for ordained ministry and the Ministerial Education Fund to the congregation.
11. Confer with those under appointment if changes of appointment are needed....and consult with superintendent and bishop in an advisory relationship.

About staffing

12. SPRC/PPRC recommends staff positions (not persons, but positions) and personnel policy for staff to the church council.
 - Until such a policy has been adopted, the SPRC/PPRC and the pastor shall have the authority to hire, contract, evaluate, promote, retire and dismiss non-appointed personnel.
13. SPRC/PPRC can develop a personnel committee.
14. Communicate the value of diversity for staff and clergy.

Still More....

15. Responsible to keep themselves informed of policy in relation to UMC policy, standards, liability issues, and civil law.
16. Recommend appropriate compensation and to stay apprised of housing and reimbursement standards.
17. Encourage, monitor, and support clergy and lay staff pursuit of health and wholeness.

Skills for an effective SPRC/PPRC

- Create a climate of effectiveness, cultural competency, “unconditional positive regard”
- Lead with support of the mission vs personal preferences
- Work with dysfunctional persons to bring greater health to the congregation’s ministry
- Observe confidentiality, discourage secrecy
- Interpret openly to the congregation priorities for ministry
- Use listening and feedback vs polling for complaints—(please do **not entertain anonymous complaints**)

SPRC Process > Content

- The process of meetings should develop spiritual leadership:
 1. Discern the present reality and our church's calling.
 2. Focus current and desired reality into faithful & shared vision
 3. Plan, lead, and move to the shared vision
 4. Equip, interpret, support, and monitor the move into God's vision
- To liaison or not liaison?? More cons than pros

Real Life

- Rev. Shepherd did not visit your friend, Agnes Sheepish, when she went in for a three-day hospital stay.
- Agnes complained to you, an SPRC/PPRC member, about Rev. Shepherd. You believe this is a pattern. She asked to put it on your next agenda.
- What do you do or say? Why?

Skills for the SPRC

- Engage conflict appropriately:
 1. If A has an issue with B, A must address B.
 2. If A needs someone from the SPRC/PPRC to go along to address B, that is appropriate.
 3. If A and B cannot resolve, then someone from SPRC/PPRC can sit with A and B while they continue to dialogue.
 4. C cannot bring anonymous complaints or be a conduit for A.

Engage Conflict Well

- If A and B and someone from SPRC/PPRC cannot find resolution, then take it to the SPRC/PPRC. (Take the situation before the committee not the individuals involved).
- If the conflict cannot be resolved by the SPRC/PPRC, the SPRC/PPRC Chairperson can call the district superintendent for guidance about how to proceed.
- The SOONER a conflict can be addressed, the more likelihood of a possible resolution.
- Allegations of misconduct—go to the superintendent **immediately**.

Skills for SPRC- Continued

- Make facts known vs rumors.
- Provide professional, constructive feedback in a system of evaluation.
- Be aware of the conference rules on sexual misconduct. Report any allegations directly to the superintendent immediately.
- Practice para.258.2(e)—the process for meeting with and without staff, etc.

Questions to consider for future discussion...

- The witness of our UMC congregations speaks across towns, cities, across race, culture and generations.
- What does an open itinerancy—the making of cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments proclaim?
- What has the relationship with your church and pastor said to your community? Is your church prepared for an effective cross-racial/cultural appointment? What will it take to be prepared?

Let's practice!

- After an ethnic clergy person was introduced to your European-American SPRC/PPRC, two SPRC/PPRC members are raising concerns in the congregation.
- They are suggesting the new pastor will be different from the pulpit, in worship, and although training on cross-racial appointments is planned, they want someone else.
- The new pastor matches over 85% of the profiled need of the church. How does the SPRC/PPRC offer leadership? The transitioning pastor? The circuit?

SPRC and Supervision

- The senior pastor is the administrative officer of the church. The (senior) pastor has primary responsibility to supervise and give feedback to the staff.
- The SPRC/PPRC provides feedback & input to aid the senior pastor with supervisory responsibility.
- The SPRC/PPRC provides feedback to the pastor regarding her/his ministry in the spirit of mutual partnership in ministry.
- The district Superintendent is the direct supervisor of the pastor on behalf of the bishop of the annual conference and has on-going conversation with the pastor.

Annual meeting cycles

- First quarter: training, review goal/plan for ministry, and ministry descriptions
- Second quarter: update church and community profiles, monitor annual review process, vacation, and continuing education plans
- Third quarter: prepare and advocate for salary and non-salary support recommendations
- Fourth quarter: communicate with superintendent, thank staff, evaluate goals

Ministry Plan/Review

- Each congregation is to submit a Ministry Review/Plan or update each year to the charge conference and district office due no later than December 1. This is the responsibility of the lead pastor and church council. The SPRC/PPRC needs to be aware of the ministry plan!
- A ministry plan is a health and growth plan for the congregation.

Pastoral Support Form

- Compensation for the pastor is to be recommended by the SPRC/PPRC to the charge conference. The recommended compensation must be filled out by the pastor/SPRC chairperson and sent to the district office two weeks prior to the charge conference. This is the responsibility of the committee, and should be signed by both the pastor receiving the salary, and the SPRC/PPRC chairperson or designated member of the SPRC/PPRC.
- In places where apportionment receipts are incomplete and when a move occurs, a lower salary is recommended.

What is Itinerancy?

- Mission Sending and Receiving: Luke 10
- Helps us deploy pastors effectively according to gifts/skills of pastors and the mission needs of a congregation
- Three ways a pastor moves: self request, church request, cabinet request
- If the pastor or SPRC/PPRC seek a change in appointment, the request is made in writing to the district superintendent no later than December 1
- This request must be confidential known only to pastor and SPRC/PPRC.
- The bishop and cabinet considers all requests, but there is no guarantee that a move request will be honored. (The covenant of mission sending and receiving)

The SPRC in transition

- The SPRC/PPRC submits yearly a profile that includes goals for the church and clergy needs. Update the profile when an appointment change is expected
- Understand the same salary level is assumed unless there are extenuating circumstances
- The SPRC/PPRC chair can call the district superintendent periodically for any updates on the church, its transitional needs, etc.
- The superintendent will call the chair when an appointment is found and to set up the introductory meeting
- The meeting holds this question in mind: 'do we see God at work in this appointment, or are there missional reasons why it cannot move forward?'
- Once set, an appointment letter that summarizes the agreements/covenants will follow

Appointment Letter/Covenant

- The appointment letter will summarize the covenant between the church and newly appointed clergy
- This includes what the clergy will do and what the church will do—toward the vision
- The covenant is derived from the conversation of the district superintendent with the SPRC/PPRC and clergy
- This includes but is more than compensation, vacation, housing agreements
- Share your covenant with your church council
- Some version of the covenant could appear in worship liturgy when the new clergy arrive.

Covenant Wrap-Up

Covenants work forward and backward:

- The covenant is your end in mind as well as the way—a reminder of being called, in relationships of trust and faith together.
- One can look back five months later or five years later and ask, 'how are we doing against our covenant?'
- Tip: grumbling in the wilderness may be caused by distractions on the way to the promised land. Keep your vision first. Evaluate against it. Add prayer.

Thank You!

A training webinar is available January 31 at 7:00 p.m.—
information and registration may be found at:
[https://umcdiscipleship.org/resources/sprc-whats-my-
role-2017](https://umcdiscipleship.org/resources/sprc-whats-my-role-2017)

The *UM Guidelines* can be found at www.cokesbury.com or
1-800-672-1789

May Christ be made known in the relationships among us,
and our relationships with the community and world.