

## **Guidelines for Pastor and Congregation Reviews Western District Conference**

Western District Conference encourages congregations and pastors to engage in pastor and congregation reviews in order to nurture the pastor's ministry, strengthen the vitality of the congregation, and foster a healthy relationship between the pastor and the congregation.

Western District Conference offers these resources in the review process:

- Conference Minister guidance and counsel.
- Pastor Review Advisors to assist in the review process and provide sample review formats and resources.
- The Congregational Development fund administered by the Ministerial Leadership Commission, to assist WDC congregations with Advisor expenses.

The cost of engaging a WDC Pastor Review Advisor is as follows:

- \$20 per hour. The Pastor Review Advisor's time will often include travel, meetings, preparation, writing and correspondence.
- Reimbursement of travel at current IRS rate.
- Reimbursement of other expenses – meals, paper, supplies, etc.
- The total cost of a consultant for a pastor/congregation review depends upon various factors such as size of congregation, review format, whether both pastor and congregation are being reviewed, and the scope of engagement by the Pastor Review Advisor.

Pastor Review Advisors keep track of their time and expenses and submit a written report to the WDC Conference Minister for payment. WDC in turn requests congregations to reimburse WDC for half the cost if possible, but all congregations are served regardless of ability to pay.

The following checklist may be helpful for the pastor/congregation review process.

- Contact the Conference Minister for helpful perspective, support and resources.
- Is there a conflict situation that will influence this review? If the answer is "yes, then the review should be postponed and the conflict should be addressed.
- Identify the governance body responsible for the review. Will they do the review or appoint a special Review Committee? A committee of three to five persons is appropriate.
- Work with the Conference Minister to identify the Pastor Review Advisor who will work with the Review Committee. The Pastor Review Advisor initiates contact with the Review Committee chairperson.
- The first meeting of the Review Committee includes the Pastor Review Advisor and the pastor. The Pastor Review Advisor meets with Review Committee and Pastor for orientation on the process.

- Identify the goals of the review. Is this a term review of the pastor or a major review of pastor *and* congregation? Is it to simply gather information from the congregation or is it important that the congregation learns and practices a community-building process such as appreciative inquiry? Will the review include everyone in the congregation or only a sampling of the congregation?
- Develop a timeline for the review process.
- Develop review tools (questionnaire, survey, etc.). The Pastor Review Advisor, pastor and the Review Committee mutually agree to the review tools and the review process.
- Initiate the interview process with clear instructions to the congregation about why the review is being done, what tools and process are being used, confidentiality, timeline, who is invited to participate, and who to contact if there are questions.
- The pastor completes a written self-review utilizing the pattern of the survey or process.
- The Pastor Review Advisor compiles the survey or interview information, and reports these results to the pastor and to the Review Committee. Any follow-up actions and recommendations are clarified.
- The Pastor Review Advisor reports the results to the congregation, as determined in consultation with Review Committee and pastor.
- The Pastor Review Advisor sends the Conference Minister a copy of the review report, which is placed in the pastor's ministerial file and the congregational file at the WDC office.
- The Pastor Review Advisor sends the Conference Minister an expense report, and WDC reimburses the consultant based on submitted expenses.
- WDC requests the congregation's reimbursement of half of the expenses if possible.

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