



Church Council

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1. THE BIG PICTURE

PURPOSE

“The Book of Discipline says that the church council is the executive agency of the charge conference (§244.1). This means that between meetings of the charge conference, the church council is the group of leaders that guides and furthers the ministry of the congregation. The church council exists to create and supervise the strategic plan for an effective congregation. The church council as a group should reflect the character and population of the congregation. Decisions made by the council will shape the future and demonstrate for everyone how God’s kingdom comes in the immediate community.

The work of the church council is to envision, plan, implement, and annually evaluate a congregation’s ministry and mission.” (From *Guidelines Church Council: Connect Vision and Ministry in Your Church*)

Some Notes About the Church Council:

- The church council is accountable to the charge conference and serves as the executive agency of the charge conference between meetings to oversee the administration and ministry of the congregation.
 - The church council determines God’s call to the congregation for ministry that is transformative.
 - The church council initiates planning, establishes goals, implements action plans, and evaluates effectiveness for congregational ministries of nurture, outreach, witness, and administration.
 - The church council strategizes so that the congregation makes disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
 - The church council works with the committee on staff/pastor-parish relations and the committee on nominations and leader development for effective pastoral, staff, and lay leadership.
 - The church council recommends to the charge conference the compensation, housing needs, and benefits for the pastor(s) and other staff after receiving recommendations from the committee on staff/pastor-parish relations.
 - The church council fills leadership vacancies between meetings of the charge conference upon the recommendation of the committee on nominations and leader development.
 - The church council coordinates with the pastor, finance committee, and trustees to provide for financial support, physical facilities, and the legal obligations of its local congregation.
 - The church council maintains the congregation’s connection with appropriate district and annual conference programs and structures.
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2. MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS

MEMBERSHIP

The charge conference will determine the size of the church council. Members of the church council shall be involved in the mission and ministry of the congregation as defined in ¶ 252.2. The membership of the council may consist of as few as eleven persons or as many as the charge conference deems appropriate. The council shall include persons who represent the program ministries of the church as outlined in ¶ 243. The membership shall include but not be limited to the following:

- a) the chairperson of the church council;
- b) the lay leader;
- c) the chairperson and/or a representative of the pastor-parish relations committee;
- d) the chairperson and/or a representative of the committee on finance;
- e) the chairperson and/or a representative of the board of trustees;
- f) the church treasurer;
- g) a lay member to annual conference;
- h) the president and/or a representative of the United Methodist Men;
- i) the president and/or a representative of the United Methodist Women;
- j) a young adult representative
- k) a representative of the United Methodist Youth;
- l) the pastor(s).

MEETINGS

- The council shall meet at least quarterly. The chairperson or the pastor may call special meetings.
 - In order for the council to give adequate consideration to the missional purpose of the local church, it is recommended that the first agenda item at each meeting be related to its ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness. The administrative and supportive responsibilities of the church will then be given attention.
 - It is recommended that the council use a consensus/discernment model of decision-making.
 - Quorum - The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.
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3. MISSION AND MINISTRY

The Church Council is to plan and implement programs for nurture, outreach, witness, and resources in the local church. Nurture, outreach, and witness ministries and their accompanying responsibilities include:

- a) The nurturing ministries of the congregation shall give attention to but not be limited to education, worship, Christian formation, membership care, small groups, and stewardship. Attention must be given to the needs of individuals and families of all ages.
- b) The outreach ministries of the church shall give attention to local and larger community ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy. These ministries include church and society, global ministries, higher education and campus ministry, health and welfare, Christian unity and inter-religious concerns, religion and race, and the status and role of women.
- c) The witness ministries of the church shall give attention to developing and strengthening evangelistic efforts of sharing of personal and congregational stories of Christian experience, faith, and service; communications; Lay Servant Ministries; and other means that give expressions of witness for Jesus Christ.
- d) The leadership development and resourcing ministries shall give attention to the ongoing preparation and development of lay and clergy leaders for the ministry of the church (§ 258.1).
- e) The nurture, outreach, and witness ministries and their accompanying responsibilities shall include consideration of (i) the election of a prayer coordinator to promote prayer and mobilize the local church to pray, (ii) establishing a prayer room or designated place for prayer and prayer resources, and (iii) encouraging intentional prayer for the pastoral leadership of the local church.

CHARGE TEAMS

- a) Each member of the Church Council will be the leader of a Charge Team
 - b) Charge Teams are made up of 18-24 families that are members of Dauphin Way United Methodist Church.
 - c) Church Council members are responsible for checking on each family in their charge team once every two months.
 - d) Check-ins can be phone calls, emails, texts, or visits.
 - e) Pastors should be made aware of the needs or concerns of families in their Charge Team.
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ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) review the membership of the local church;
- b) fill interim vacancies occurring among the lay officers of the church between sessions of the annual charge conference;
- c) establish the budget on recommendation of the committee on finance and ensure adequate provision for the financial needs of the church;
- d) recommend to the charge conference the salary and other remuneration of the pastor(s) and staff members after receiving recommendations from the committee on pastor-parish relations (staff-parish relations);
- e) review the recommendation of the committee on pastor-parish relations regarding provision of adequate housing for the pastor(s), and report the same to the charge conference for approval. Housing provisions shall comply with the annual conference housing policy and parsonage standards. Housing shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration except to the extent provided for in denominational pension and benefit plans.

WHAT DOES THE CHAIRPERSON DO?

- This leader meets and works with the pastor, lay leader, and others to fulfill the church's mission.
- The leadership team chair, along with the pastor and lay leader, is the primary spokesperson for the vision and mission of the church and encourages all other ministry leaders.
- This person should organize an annual planning meeting for the church's vision and ministry goals.
- This person should become familiar with United Methodist resources and organizations.
- During the year, this leader prepares and communicates the agenda for meetings, leads the meetings, follows up actions by assigning responsibility for implementation, coordinates the activities of the leadership team, and maintains a healthy and growing spiritual life.

5. RESOURCES

Guidelines Church Council: Connect Vision and Ministry in Your Church

https://ntcumc.org/Church_Council.pdf

AWF Website (Conference Resources)

<https://vimeo.com/662728121>

United Methodist Church Website (General Church Resources)

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/chair-of-church-leadership-team-administrative-council>
