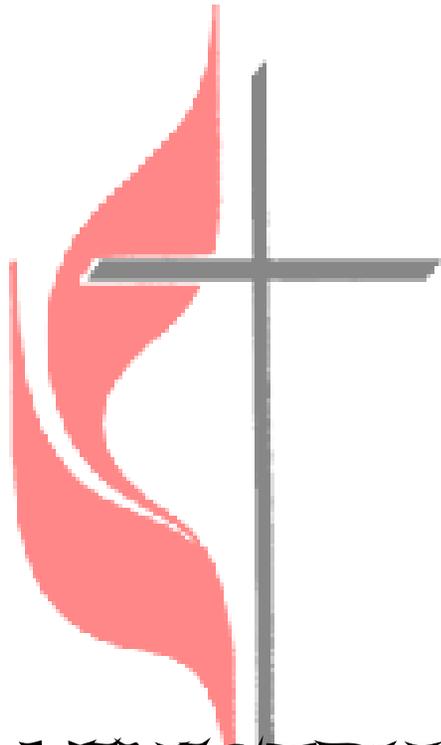


Local United Methodist Church



MINISTRY
Handbook

Kentucky Annual Conference Theme
2009-2010



Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

1. Radical Hospitality
2. Passionate Worship
3. Intentional Faith Development
4. Risk-taking Mission and Service
5. Extravagant Generosity

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Dear Leader,

These job descriptions are based on the United Methodist **Book of Discipline**. The suggestions for Administrative positions follow the Discipline closely. Of course, you are encouraged to develop leadership for different areas of ministry as needed.

This booklet makes suggestions based on five areas of ministry: Worship, Evangelism, Discipleship, Fellowship, and Servanthood. This is just one way to think about different areas of ministry. Some churches use the more basic structure of Nurture, Outreach, and Witness. The point is, look at the needs for ministry in your church and community, then work out groups, teams, or committees to take care of them. Hopefully, the outline based on the five purposes listed above will help you design a plan to organize yourselves for ministry.

There are many **possibilities** for ministry as there are churches in our district. Pray, think, and dream ... and let the Lord inspire and lead you in what HE wants you to do.

One goal I encourage is committing yourselves AS A CHURCH to an EVERY MEMBER WITH A MINISTRY mindset.

That may be a big dream, but surely it is a dream God would honor as we prayerfully seek Him. Only **our** prayerful obedience to Christ will help this to happen. Let’s pray to that end!

WG



Connectional Leaders & Administrative Coaches and Teams



Pastor

Our *Discipline* is clear on the duties of a pastor::

1. *Preaching and general church ministry:*
 - a. To preach the Word of God, lead in worship, read and teach the Scriptures, and engage the people in study and witness.
 - b. To counsel persons with personal, ethical or spiritual struggles.
 - c. To perform marriages and funerals.
 - d. To visit in the homes of the church and the community, especially among the sick, aged, imprisoned, and others in need.
 - e. To maintain all confidences inviolate, including confessional confidences except in the cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, or in cases where mandatory reporting is required by civil law.
2. *Sacrament:*
 - a. To administer the sacraments of baptism and the Supper of the Lord according to Christ's ordinance.
 - b. To encourage the private and congregational use of the other means of grace.
3. *Order:*
 - a. To be the administrative officer of the local church and to assure that the organizational concerns of the congregation are adequately provided for.
 - b. To administer the temporal affairs of the church in their appointment, the annual conference, and the general church.
 - c. To participate in denominational and conference programs and training opportunities.
 - d. To lead the congregation in racial and ethnic inclusiveness.
4. *Service:*
 - a. To embody the teachings of Jesus in servant ministries and servant leadership.
 - b. To give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for discipleship in the world.
 - c. To build the body of Christ as a caring and giving community, extending the ministry of Christ to the world.
 - d. To participate in community, ecumenical and inter-religious concerns and to encourage the people to become so involved and to pray and labor for the unity of the Christian community.

Pray for your pastor to have God's wisdom in fulfilling these responsibilities!

Lay Member/Alternate Lay Member of Annual Conference

The *Lay Member of the Annual Conference (LMAC)*, along with the pastor, will interpret the actions of each annual conference session. The *LMAC* will report to the local church council on actions of the annual conference as soon as possible, but not later than three months after the close of the conference.

The *LMAC* shall be the voting lay representative from the local church at the annual conference session, unless prevented from attending, in which case the alternate *LMAC* shall attend and vote on behalf of the local church.

The *LMAC* is seated on the following teams by virtue of their office:

Staff-Parish Relations Committee
 Finance Committee
 Lay Leadership Selection Committee

Duties of the *LMAC*:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ Attend and report on actions of the Annual Conference.
- ◆ **Attend the regular Council meetings.**
- ◆ **PRAY!**

Chairperson of the Administrative Council

Duties:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend the regular monthly meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ Lead the Council in fulfilling its responsibilities.
- ◆ Prepare and communicate the agenda of the Council in consultation with the pastor, lay leader, and others.
- ◆ Review and assign responsibility for the implementing of actions taken by the Council.
- ◆ Communicate with members of the Council, and others as appropriate, to permit informed action at the Team meetings.
- ◆ Coordinate the various activities of the Council.
- ◆ Provide the initiative and leadership for the Council as it does the planning, establishing goals and objectives, and evaluation of ministry.
- ◆ Participate in leadership training programs as offered by the annual conference and/or district.
- ◆ **PRAY!**

The Council Chairperson is entitled to attend meetings of all boards and committees of the church unless specifically limited by the *Book of Discipline*. This position is specifically included on the *Finance Committee*.

The Council Chairperson is welcome to attend annual conference, and may also serve as the LMAC.

Administrative Council Vice-Chairperson

The Council Vice-Chairperson is expected to:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend all regular meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ Preside over Council meetings from which the Chairperson must be absent, following the duties listed in the *Book of Discipline* for the Chairperson.
- ◆ **PRAY!**

Recording Secretary

The *Recording Secretary* is expected to:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend all regular meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ Take minutes of all Council meetings.
- ◆ Write up the minutes in a timely manner, give to the appropriate person for printing and distribution to Council members.
- ◆ Keep all minutes in appropriate files for reference.
- ◆ Assist in maintaining reports presented to the annual Charge Conference.
- ◆ **PRAY!**

Administrative Council Members-at-Large

The *Lay Leadership Selection Committee* may place additional *members-at-large* on the Council. Their election is meant to provide a broader representation of the congregation. They have full voice and vote, and they are expected to perform these duties:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend all regular meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ **PRAY!**

These members are usually set-up in three-year classes, with one-third being replaced annually.

Committee on Finance: Chairperson and Committee

The *Finance Committee* is made up of the *Finance Chairperson, Pastor, LMAC, Council Chairperson, Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson, Board of Trustee Representative, Stewardship Chairperson, Lay Leader, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and At-large members* as determined by the charge conference.

Duties:

- § **PRAY!**
- § **Chair attends all regular meetings of the Council.**
- § Each year, ask for budget requests from all areas, ministries, and chairpersons.
- § Each year, compile a complete budget for the church, and submit it to the Council for review and adoption.
- § Develop and implement plans to raise sufficient income to meet the budget adopted by the Council.
- § Administer all funds received according to instructions from the Council.
- § Designate a counting committee for weekly offerings.
- § Make provision for an annual audit of the records of the financial officers of the local church, and **all** its organizations, with report to the Charge Conference.
- § Recommend to the Council proper depositories for the church's funds.
- § Contributions designated for specific causes shall be promptly forwarded according to the intent of the donor, and shall not be used for any other purpose.
- § After the Council approves the budget, all other changes must be approved by the Council.
- § Annually prepare a report to the Council of all *designated* funds separate from the current expense budget.

Financial Secretary

The *Financial Secretary* is seated on the *Finance Committee*.

General duties include:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend all regular meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ Supervise the counting of all offerings.
- ◆ Post all contributions in appropriate accounts.
- ◆ Maintain proper giving records for each person or family in the congregation who gives.
- ◆ Prepare/Distribute quarterly giving statements to the congregation.

Church Treasurer

If the *Church Treasurer* is a paid position, their work comes under the direction and supervision of the *Staff-Parish Relations Committee*.

In any case, general duties include:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend all regular meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ Disburse contributions to items represented in the church budget.
- ◆ Send conference benevolence based on income.
- ◆ Make regular, detailed reports on funds received and disbursed to the *Finance Committee* and the Council.
- ◆ The *Church Treasurer* shall be adequately bonded.

Pastor-Parish Relations: Chairperson and Committee

The *Pastor-Parish Relations Chairperson* is responsible to meet with the PPR Squad *at least quarterly*. The *Chairperson* is also seated on the *Finance Team*.

Duties include:

- ◆ **Chair attends all regular meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ Encourage, strengthen, nurture, support, and respect the pastor, staff, and their families.
- ◆ Promote unity in the church.
- ◆ Confer with and counsel Pastor and Staff on matters pertaining to the effectiveness of ministry; relationships in the congregation; conditions that may impede the effectiveness of ministry; interpret the nature and function of the ministry. Include counsel in setting priorities in the use of gifts, skills, and time to meet the demands of ministry.
- ◆ Provide at least annual evaluation for pastor/staff for use in designing ongoing effective ministry, and for identifying continuing educational needs and plans.
- ◆ Interpret to the congregation how ministry works in the United Methodist Church (open itinerancy, preparation for ordained ministry, etc.)
- ◆ Develop job descriptions for all hired personnel.
- ◆ Consult with and support pastor/staff concerning continuing education and spiritual renewal.
- ◆ To enlist, interview, evaluate, review, and recommend annually to the charge conference lay preachers and persons for candidacy for ordained ministry.
- ◆ Confer with pastor when need for change is evident.

To do now: PRAY!

Board of Trustees: Chairperson and Board

The **Board of Trustees**, while nominated by the *Lay Selection Committee*, shall organize themselves from within with their membership with these officers:

- 1) **Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson**
- 2) **Secretary**
- 3) **Representative to the *Finance Committee***

The board of trustees may also want to have one or more members give special attention to the **Nursery** (to give the best impression to parents and children). Others may serve as a **Parsonage Committee**, while others could see to other needs (church van, other buildings, etc.)

Overall duties mandated by the *Discipline* include:

- ◆ **Chair attends all regular meetings of the Council.**
- ◆ The supervision, oversight, and care of all real property owned by the local church.
- ◆ Each year review to see that all insurance coverage is adequate, including property, liability, crime, and personnel insurance. Results of this review are to be presented at the annual Charge Conference.
- ◆ Grant permission to outside organizations who want to use the building only when that use is consistent with the Social Principles.
- ◆ Make annual review of parsonage to ensure proper maintenance.
- ◆ Receive and administer all bequests, trusts, etc.
- ◆ Perform annual accessibility audit of the buildings.

To do now: PRAY!

Ministry Groups



Evangelism Chairperson

The ***Evangelism Chair*** ***MUST*** be a person who genuinely cares about the lost ... one who knows Jesus is coming soon, and that it is our job to bring people to Him. This chairperson needs to look at the total scope of what the church is doing to win the lost, listening to God's leading on what we **can** do that we're **not** doing.

Duties:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend all regular *Council* meetings with a report from your area.**
- ◆ Begin to gather a group or team of people who will work with you, in consultation with the pastor, to develop a church ***Plan for Evangelism***. Be as broad in your understanding of evangelism as possible.

The Evangelism Chairperson will try to help the church to keep the **main** thing the **main** thing ... which is, ***to bring people to Christ***.

- ◆ Take any training you can find to help you understand, and **do**, evangelism better.
- ◆ **PRAY!**

Communications Chairperson

A Communications Chairperson could be enlisted to:

- √ make decisions about placing ads the church is invited to purchase in various publications,
- √ make sure church events are properly announced in the newspaper and/or on the radio.
- √ report on newsworthy happenings *after the fact*, so that people may sense God at work in the local church (especially to the Conference newspaper.)

To do now: PRAY for wisdom in how we can communicate better what we have — the Love of Christ in our hearts for the people OUT THERE.

Missions/VIM Chairperson

The Missions Chairperson is asked to explore the ways the local church and its members can become involved in reaching out to others, whether in Guatemala, Louisiana/Mississippi, Louisville or Nashville inner city, or ... someplace else God is calling us to go.

Your work could include:

- ☞ being a mission team **leader**.
 - ☞ helping in the fund-raising for a team or special need.
 - ☞ leading the prayer support for a team.
- keeping ways to be in mission before the congregation.

To do now: PRAY, asking God where He is leading US in mission.

Fellowship Chairperson

“Radical Hospitality”

If the *Evangelism group* is all about connecting people with God, the **Fellowship group** is all about connecting people to each other in Christ. This chairperson needs to look at what the church is doing to connect people with each other in supportive discipleship.

Duties:

- ✘ **PRAY!**
- ✘ **Attend the regular Council meetings with a report from your area.**
- ✘ Begin to gather a group around you who will work with you to grow in an understanding of biblical fellowship. This might include all the things you would do as a church with Small Groups, Welcoming Ministry, Visitation Ministry, Fellowship Meals, etc. (While meals together are fun and important, **fellowship** is much larger in scope.
Your job is to explore what will help us discover our basic *oneness* in Christ, living and loving together in His grace.
- ✘ Take any training you can find to help you understand small groups and visitation ministry better.
- ✘ **PRAY for a deepening sense of FAMILY throughout the congregation!**

Membership Secretary

The **Membership Secretary** shall keep accurate records of the church membership by the approved methods and formats outlined in the *Book of Discipline*.

Membership changes include recording:

- ◆ *Baptisms*
- ◆ *Confirmation*
- ◆ *Church Membership Changes by Profession of Faith, Restorations, Transfers to or from other UMC's, Transfers to or from other Denominations, Withdrawals, and Deaths.*
- ◆ *Marriages (name changes)*

Plan to attend all regular meetings of the Council.

To do now: PRAY for a growing, increasing membership.

Church Historian

The ***Church Historian*** has the responsibility of recording, archiving, and displaying all articles pertinent to the history of their local church, and how it connects with the larger church, from the district to the conference.

These records are important in providing details when there are special events and times of celebration.

To do now: PRAY that we will have a clear sense of connection to our ROOTS in Methodism in our community and county, and across time and distance with saints of the past.

Worship Coach

“Passionate Worship”

The ***Worship Coach*** is a person who cares about our worship and how well we do it ... that is, how much of a connection does the congregation make with God week-in, week-out? This coach needs to look at what the whole worship experience is like, and then work with the pastor, musicians, and others, to plan activities and changes that will help the congregation to encounter God.

Duties:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend all regular monthly Council meetings with a report from your area.**
- ◆ Begin to gather a group of people around you with responsibilities or interest in such things as *music, choir, arts, drama, children’s sermon, altar furnishings, acolytes, ushers, communion, lay readers, etc.* to help the pastor plan the times of worship. The seasons of Advent and Lent can be especially meaningful observances that lead into Christmas and Easter. Work together to discern what activities and programs would give a new avenue for an encounter with God.
- ◆ **PRAY!**

Communion Stewards

Communion Stewards do work that is more closely related to that of the **Levites** of old than anything else we do in modern church! Handling the bread and cup that will symbolize to us the Body and Blood of Christ is a holy task, and merits a prayerful, reverent approach.

Duties include:

- ◆ Preparing communion elements (bread, grape juice) for the Lord's Supper. This **may** involve baking the bread, or preparing a common cup or individual cups.
- ◆ Caring of the linens used on the communion table (if available).
- ◆ Cleaning up **after** the holy meal.

To do now: PRAY that everyone who receives the bread and the cup will also receive into their hearts the blessed Lord Jesus in His Grace.

Discipleship Chairperson “Intentional Faith Development”

In a sense, everything we do in the church is about being a disciple of Jesus, but the **Discipleship Chairperson** has specific interest in **how** we help each other GROW in the Lord.

Duties:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend the regular Council meetings with a report from your area.**
- ◆ Begin to gather a group of people around you who will share concern for the Sunday School, prayer ministry, stewardship, Bible Study, etc.
- ◆ Your job is to explore how we can help each other GROW in Christ. The area is wide open as to what might be done to help each other grown.
- ◆ Take any training you can find to help you understand Christian education, prayer, stewardship, and the spiritual disciplines better.
- ◆ **PRAY for a deepening growth in Christ for each of our members!!**

Sunday School Superintendent “Intentional Faith Development”

The **Sunday School Superintendent** is charged with many responsibilities in building the education program.

These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ **PRAY!**
- ◆ **Attend the regular Council meetings with a report from your area.**
- ◆ Arrange for teachers for each class in consultation with Council on Ministries or appropriate planning group.
- ◆ Monitor weekly sessions to make sure a teacher is on site.
- ◆ Arrange for attendance awards.
- ◆ Track changing needs for curriculum, providing ordering information to the appropriate person.
- ◆ Plan Sunday School Promotion Sunday, recognizing advancing students, and emphasizing the importance of Sunday School to the congregation.
- ◆ Form new classes as need and potential dictate.
- ◆ **PRAY!**

Children’s Ministry Chairperson

Design and put into practice a ministry to children within an atmosphere of Christian growth through Bible Study and training through the use of age-appropriate materials and activities. *(Below is an example only.)*

- ✧ **PRAY for the children.**
- ✧ Conduct **weekly** children’s meetings.
- ✧ Promote awareness of missions and outreach through the church and community.
- ✧ Incorporate drama, puppetry, and other activities in the program according to the interest and abilities of the children.
- ✧ Involve the children in worship within the church.
- ✧ Plan and implement a VBS or alternative.
- ✧ Prepare an annual children’s budget for submission to **Finance Committee**.
- ✧ Enlist and schedule Children’s Ministry volunteers to ensure a cohesive ministry.
- ✧ Submit weekly and monthly newsletter articles as necessary.
- ✧ **Represent Children’s ministry at all regular meetings of the Council with a written report on the area.**
- ✧ Be an encourager to children, parents, and volunteers through visitation, counseling, etc.
- ✧ Attend one children’s ministry conference/spiritual growth retreat each year.

Student Ministry Chairperson

Design and put into practice a ministry to students (youth) within an atmosphere of Christian growth through Bible Study and training through age-appropriate materials and activities. *(Emphasis on a personal relationship with Christ should be a strong component of the program.)*
(This is an example only.)

◆ PRAY for our Youth.

- ◆ Plan growth experiences through Bible study, recreational activities, retreats, and mission activities.
- ◆ Conduct weekly youth meetings.
- ◆ Incorporate drama and other creative ministry opportunities in accordance with interest expressed.
- ◆ Involve youth in congregational worship.
- ◆ Prepare an annual youth ministry budget for presentation to the Finance Committee. Design fund-raising opportunities for the group, following guidelines in the detailed job description.
- ◆ Enlist and train volunteers to ensure a cohesive ministry.
- ◆ Submit newsletter articles for the weekly/monthly newsletter.
- ◆ Represent **Student ministry** at all regular meetings of the Council with a written report on the area.
- ◆ Be an encourager to parents and youth through counseling, visitation, etc.
- ◆ Attend a youth ministry conference/spiritual life retreat once a year.

Family Ministries Chairperson

The **Family Ministries Chairperson** has the responsibility of caring for the needs of *families* in the church. You are asked to compile those needs and present them to the **Council** for consideration on how to put them into effect.

Your duties right up front are:

☞ PRAY for our families.

- ☞ Explore possible ministry events for families:
 - ♥ Family Retreat
 - ♥ Outings appropriate for all ages
 - ♥ Picnics
 - ♥ Movies
 - ♥ Seasonal programs for the whole family
 - ♥ Seasonal devotional experiences
 - ♥ The sky's the limit!
- ☞ Keep on the lookout for Annual Conference offerings that pertain to the whole family.
- ☞ Help the Sunday School Superintendent stress the importance of Sunday School for EVERYONE in the family.
- ☞ **Be an advocate for family concerns at the monthly meetings of the Council.**
- ☞ Keep the **Council** on task in terms of providing needed services for young families so that church events are *family friendly*. (nursery offered, high chairs, etc.)

Prayer Life Chairperson

The **Prayer Life Chairperson** focuses on this single spiritual discipline, giving consideration to a number of options:

- Keep the ministry of prayer before the congregation.
- Develop a prayer workshop, inviting a speaker in for inspiration.

Other Examples:

- Seek to implement *The Pastor's Prayer Partner* program. (John Maxwell resource.)
- Explore Terry Teykl's Prayer Resources for other ideas.
- Work on finishing/enhancing a Prayer Room, and encouraging it's use.
- Serve as *District Prayer Coordinator* contact person.

There are so many ideas a person could use. Seek the Lord's help in seeing ways to help the church learn to pray, to pray more, to pray more intentionally, to pray more effectively.

Servanthood Chairperson “Risk-taking Mission and Service”

The **Servanthood Chairperson's** responsibility is a little different from the other groups. Other groups will design programs **for** ministry, while this team could seek to bring program/ministry, and the **people to do** the ministry, **TOGETHER**. Programming done by this chairperson would likely focus on *training* for some of the other ministries.

Duties:

- ⊠ **PRAY!**
- ⊠ **Attend the regular *Council* meetings with a report from your area.**
- ⊠ Begin to gather a team about you who will help to enlist volunteers, keep records of what they are available and willing to do, and work with other chairpersons to match volunteer with job.
- ⊠ Take any training you can find to help you understand, train, enlist and deploy volunteers.
- ⊠ **PRAY for our people to grow into a passion for identifying their own ministries, and living those out in obedience to Christ.**

Lay Leader

Duties:

- ✘ **PRAY!**
- ✘ **Attend all regular Council meetings.**
- ✘ Help lay people realize their role in the congregation and community to live out their faith in ministry.
- ✘ Consult with pastor regularly on the state of the church and the needs for ministry.
- ✘ Sit on these committees:
 - The Charge Conference*
 - Committee on Finance*
 - Lay Leadership Selection Committee*
 - Staff-Parish Relations Committee*
- ✘ Interpret the actions and programs of the Annual Conference and the general Church.
- ✘ Study and attend training to deepen your understanding of the Church's reason for existence and the kinds of ministry that will help fulfill the Church's mission.
- ✘ Aid the Council in being aware of opportunities for ministry to needs expressed in the congregation and community.
- ✘ Inform congregation of training opportunities provided by the annual conference.

Lay Leadership Selection Committee

Tasks include:

- ◆ Identify, develop, deploy, evaluate, and monitor Christian spiritual leadership for the church. This process is to include their **own** lives.
- ◆ Guide the Council on matters regarding the leadership (other than employed staff) of the congregation, and in assessing changing leadership needs.
- ◆ Recommend to the annual Charge Conference the names of people to serve as leaders and officers of designated ministries within the church for the ensuing year.

To do now: PRAY that God will raise up leaders for the ministry HE wants.

The Meaning of Membership

or

“Job Description” for Church Members

Do you know what the United Methodist *Book of Discipline* says about your *job description* as a full member of a United Methodist Church? The following is distilled from ¶¶216-221. How are **you** doing?

¶ 216. 1. Christ constitutes the church as his body by the **power of the Holy Spirit** (1 Corinthians 12:13, 27) The church draws new people into itself as it seeks to **remain faithful** to its commission to proclaim and live out the gospel. *Baptism* is the sacrament of initiation and incorporation into the body of Christ. After baptism, the church provides the nurture that its members need to take part in a lifelong *growth in grace*. Becoming a professing member requires that the answer of faith of the baptized person be made visible in a service of profession of Christian faith and confirmation using the vows of the *Baptismal Covenant*.

2. a) Formation in the *Baptismal covenant* and in the call to ministry in daily life is a lifelong process and is carried on through all the activities that have educational value. The pastor gives specific leadership that prepares youth for their profession of faith and commitment to discipleship and for the Holy Spirit's action confirming them in their faith and empowering their discipleship and the need for members to be in mission in all of life's relationships.

b) There are many occasions as people mature in the faith when the Holy Spirit's confirming action may be celebrated, such as in the reaffirmation of the *Baptismal Covenant* or other services related to life passages. Unlike

baptism, which is a **once-made covenant** and can only be *reaffirmed* and **not** repeated, **confirmation** is a dynamic action of the Holy Spirit that **can be repeated**.

¶ 217. When persons unite as professing members with a local United Methodist church, they profess their faith in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ his only son, and in the Holy Spirit. Thus, they make known their desire to live their daily lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. They **covenant** together with God and with the members of the local church to keep the vows which are a part of the order of confirmation and reception into the Church:

1. To **renounce** the spiritual forces of **wickedness**, reject the evil powers of the world, and **repent** of their **sin**;

2. To accept the freedom and power God gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression;

3. To **confess Jesus Christ as Savior**, put their whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as their Lord;

4. to remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and to serve as Christ's representatives in the world;

5. To be loyal to the United Methodist church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries;

6. To faithfully participate in its ministries by their **prayers**, their **presence**, their **gifts**, and their **service**;

7. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

¶ 218. *Growth in Faithful Discipleship* — Faithful membership in the Local church is essential for personal growth and for developing a deeper commitment to the will and grace of God. As members involve themselves in private and public prayer, worship, the sacraments, study, Christian action, systematic giving, and holy discipline, they

grow in their appreciation of Christ, understanding of God at work in history and the natural order, and an understanding of themselves.

¶ 219. *Mutual Responsibility* — Faithful discipleship includes the obligation to participate in the corporate life of the congregation with fellow members of the body of Christ. A **member** is **bound in sacred covenant** to shoulder the burdens, share the risks, and celebrate the joys of fellow members. A Christian is called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

¶ 220. *The Call to Ministry of All the Baptized* — All members of Christ's universal church are called to share in the ministry which is committed to the whole church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, each member of The United Methodist Church is to be a servant of Christ on mission in the local and worldwide community. This servanthood is performed in family life, daily work, recreation and social activities, responsible citizenship, the stewardship of property and accumulated resources, the issues of corporate life, and all attitudes toward other persons. Participation in disciplined groups is an expected part of personal mission involvement. **Each member is called upon to be a witness for Christ in the world**, a light and leaven in society, and a reconciler in a culture of conflict. Each member is to identify with the agony and suffering of the world and to radiate and exemplify the Christ of hope.

¶ 221. *Accountability* — 1. All **members** are to be held **accountable for faithfulness to their covenant of baptism**.

2. If a baptized member neglects faithfulness and discipline in terms of the *Baptismal Covenant*, every means

of encouraging that member to return and of nurturing him or her to assume the vows of professing membership should be made.

3. If a professing member should be accused of violating the covenant and failing to keep the vows as stated in ¶ 217, then it shall be the responsibility of the local church, working through its pastor and its agencies, to minister to that member in compliance with the provisions of ¶ 228 in an effort to enable the member to faithfully perform the vows and covenant of membership.

4. Should those efforts fail, provision is made by the *Book of Discipline* for third-party mediation, and failing that, pursuit of ¶¶ 2702.3, 2706.5, and 2714 may be made.

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¶ 228. 1. **The local church shall endeavor to enlist each member in activities for spiritual growth and in participation in the services and ministries of the Church and its organizations** ... to aid the members to keep their vows to uphold the Church by attendance, prayers, gifts, and service.

2. b) While primary responsibility and initiative rests with each professing member to faithfully perform the vows of the *Baptismal Covenant* that have been solemnly assumed, if the member should be neglectful of that responsibility, these procedures shall be followed:

(1) If a professing member residing in the community is negligent of the vows or is regularly absent from the worship of the church without valid reason, the pastor and the membership secretary shall report that member's name to the church council, which shall do all in its power to reenlist the member in the active fellowship of the church.

(Additional provisions follow in the **Book of Discipline**)

Notes



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