

## PASTOR CONGREGATION RELATIONS COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTION

### OVERVIEW:

There is a sacred trust among the congregation, the pastor(s) and the Pastor Congregation Relations Committee (PCRC). The primary task of the PCRC is to care for the relationship between the pastor(s) and the congregation. As such, it acts as elder and coach, and when necessary, as mediator in conversations between pastors and members of the congregation, pastors and the church board and between pastors and other members of the pastoral team. The “pastor(s)” include all congregational leaders who hold ministerial credentials, i.e. who are licensed, ordained or commissioned by the area church/conference. In some congregations, this means one or more senior/leading pastor(s), associate or assistant or co-pastors, youth ministers, ministers of music, retired pastors (if still active in ministry), lay ministers and others.

In addition to its relational and mediating role, PCRC assists the church board with employment-related administration.

Pastors are accountable to the congregation through the Board, but there are also other avenues of accountability, primarily through the special ministries of the congregation – the Caring Team, the Preaching Team and the Youth Ministry Team. The PCRC does not replace or duplicate these teams.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:** The PCRC attends to both sides of the pastor congregation relationship. In order to be effective, it must maintain a balanced, third-party stance and listen to all voices. PCRC members must be alert to the potential for inappropriate triangling among other congregational committees, the pastors and the PCRC. The PCRC will do the following:

1. Support and empower both congregation and pastor to voice concerns, test perceptions and resolve conflicts through active listening and mutual feedback. Be available to the pastor(s) to hear concerns, test perceptions and deal with conflicts in regularly scheduled meetings and upon request. Be available to the congregation to hear concerns, test perceptions and deal with conflicts upon request. Remind the congregation occasionally of availability and listen for undercurrents not clearly named.
2. Support and empower pastoral team members to meet regularly to develop mutual support, unity of purpose and mutual accountability. At times, they may encourage the use of an outside resource person to assist the pastoral team when encountering challenges or difficulties.
3. Assist the pastor(s) in understanding and developing their vision for ministry within the context of the job description and the congregation’s overall mission, and setting goals to work toward that vision. Walk with the pastor(s) to help draw and maintain healthy boundaries between personal life and work life as a pastor.
4. Assist the pastor(s) to assess ministry load, responsibilities, priorities, limits and boundaries.
5. Assist the pastor(s) to identify personal growth and professional development goals and determine a strategy for meeting those goals. Review progress toward these goals.

6. Meet annually and be available on request more often to meet the pastor's spouse and family to listen to concerns (e.g. inappropriate expectations, work-load). Initiate appropriate congregational responses to any identified.
7. Communicate regularly and sensitively the responsibilities and needs of the pastor(s) to the congregation. Provide feedback regularly and sensitively to the pastor(s) of the needs, concerns and expectations of the congregation.
8. Ensure that regular performance reviews and covenant updates take place. Give input to reviews if requested. Review recommendations from reviews with the pastor(s) annually.
9. Review the pastor's memorandum of understanding and job description annually, including a review of the salary and benefits, and may include recommendations to the Board for changes to these items. Prepare documents for signatures.
10. Work with the Board and/or lead pastor to facilitate the hiring of any other administrative or non-pastoral staff and to recommend salary/benefits and hours of work for same.
11. May initiate and oversee mediation between the congregation and pastor(s) in times of conflict.
12. May participate in the pastoral search processes with representation on the search committee. Draft job descriptions for vacancies (based on previous job descriptions and in consideration of congregational vision and direction) for board approval. Work with new pastors to recommend changes to the job description appropriate to the pastor's gifts and the needs of the congregation.
13. Consult with the oversight person (area church/conference or regional minister) as needed or when a pastor congregation conflict has gone beyond the resources of PCRC and the church board.
14. Any other church staff can access PCRC with concerns and be included in regular all-staff meetings.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** In a position of sacred trust between the pastor(s) and the congregation, members of the PCRC will hold all matters of concern or discussion with unwavering confidentiality.

**MEMBERSHIP:** The committee shall normally be composed of three members. These will usually be persons who do not hold other major leadership positions in the congregation and have skills in administration, listening, counselling or mediation. As persons who will be in the role of elder, coach and mediator, PCRC members need to be able to strike a balance between pragmatism and sensitivity. They must be able to maintain strict confidence and exercise spiritually mature discretion with sensitive information. Two members of the PCRC will be discerned by the congregation (as with other members of Special Ministries). One member will be chosen by the pastor(s). Each member will serve a three year term and may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Maintaining a balance of skills among team members is very important.

**MEETINGS:** The committee will meet separately with each pastoral staff member at least two-three times per year and with the entire staff at least two times a year. Individual members of PCRC may also meet with pastors individually. Annually a pastor's spouse and/or family shall be invited to meet with

the PCRC to review their experience in the congregation. The committee will also meet as needed without the staff.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** PCRC is accountable to the church board of the congregation. As required or requested, a PCRC member will report to the board at a scheduled meeting. Due to the sensitive nature of the work of the PCRC, the annual written report to the congregation will include few details, but will serve primarily to remind the congregation of the existence of the committee and of its mandate.