

**New Sharon United Methodist Church**  
***Love God. Love People. Make Disciples.***  
**MINISTRY COUNCIL GUIDELINES**  
***As of January 2017***

**Overview**

Beginning in the year 2014, New Sharon United Methodist Church (NSUMC) is led by a Ministry Council, hereafter referred to as the MC. The MC prayerfully discerns, carefully designs and intentionally prioritizes the ministry plan for the local church to align with and fulfill God's will for mission and ministry.

**Authority**

(Paragraphs cited are from the United Methodist Church Book of Discipline.)

¶ 120. *The Mission* – **The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.** Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs.

¶ 243. *Primary Tasks* – The local church shall be organized so that it can pursue its primary task and mission in the context of its own community...In doing so it shall be organized so that adequate provision is made for these basic responsibilities:

1. planning and implementing a program of nurture, outreach, and witness for persons and families within and without the congregation;
2. providing for effective pastoral and lay leadership;
3. providing for financial support, physical facilities, and the legal obligations of the church;
4. utilizing the appropriate relationships and resources of the district and annual conference;
5. providing for the proper creation, maintenance, and disposition of documentary record material of the local church;
6. seeking inclusiveness in all aspects of its life.

¶ 244. *Organization* – The basic organizational plan for the local church shall include provision for the following units: a charge conference, a church council, a committee on pastor-parish relations, a board of trustees, a committee on finance, a committee on lay leadership.

¶ 244.2. Alternative plans may be developed in accordance with the provisions of ¶ 247.2

¶ 247.2. The charge conference, the district superintendent, and the pastor shall organize and administer the pastoral charge and churches according to the policies and plans herein set forth. When the membership size, program scope, mission resources, or other circumstances so require, the charge conference may, in consultation with and upon the approval of the district superintendent, modify the organizational plans; *provided* that the provisions of ¶ 243 are observed.

**Function**

The MC functions as the executive agency of the charge conference, to which it is amenable. The MC governs and the staff leads people and ministries. The pastor is the leader responsible for the overall ministry and effectiveness of the congregation. The staff members, who are hired by, work with and are accountable to the pastor, lead their particular areas of ministry. The people of God (laity) are equipped by the staff members to do the work of ministry. The SPRC is responsible for accountability and review with the pastor and staff members

## **Ministry Plan**

Each January, the MC will seek to present to the church family an Annual Year-End Ministry Report along with a Ministry Plan for the next year. In addition, the MC may conduct three (3) quarterly Town Hall Meetings to provide progress updates, exchange questions and ideas, and provide recognition and appreciation.

## **Balanced Approach**

The Ministry Council seeks a balanced ministry approach to include:

1. Nurture, outreach and witness
2. Effective pastoral and lay leadership
3. Financial, physical and legal stewardship
4. Service as the liaison body between the local church, district and the Annual Conference
5. Inclusiveness through congregational care and hospitality

## **Ministry Council Membership**

The MC is comprised of 12 voting members and the Senior Pastor as follows:

- Pastor
- 4 SPRC Persons
- 4 Finance Persons
- 4 Trustees

Ministry Council shall be composed of 12 members with the council members able to reserve the right to fill any unexpired terms.

From among the 12 persons, a chair, vice-chair, and secretary will be elected. Because the MC will provide all of the oversight required by the United Methodist *Book of Discipline*, four members will be designated to have specific responsibility for SPRC, four for Finance, four for Trustees. All MC members, however, will work together on these and other responsibilities as outlined elsewhere in this document.

## **Paid employees**

Paid NSUMC employees execute the ministry plan so they do not serve as voting MC members.

## **Family members**

Reference ¶ 258.2.a of *The Book of Discipline*: Only one member of a family may serve on the SPRC and since the MC will also act as SPRC when needed, only one person from a family may serve on the MC. Also, no immediate family member of a paid staff person may serve on the SPRC; hence, no immediate family member will be eligible to serve on the MC.

## **Terms of Service**

MC members serve three year terms coinciding with calendar years. In other words, terms begin on January 1 and end on December 31. Members may serve no more than two consecutive full terms. Members joining the MC mid-term may complete their partial term plus two full terms. Members should enjoy a full year of respite between periods of service. MC members will serve as part of a “class”. Each class has 4 members whose service terms expire together.

## Member Selection

The Committee on Nomination and Leadership Development (the Nomination Committee) prepares a nominee slate by August 15 each year. This slate includes four nominees who would fill the MC vacancies anticipated at year end (the expiring terms of service). The Nomination Committee presents the slate to the Ministry Council for approval, needing a simple MC majority vote or consensus. The nominations committee MUST also present the slate of nominations to the Charge Conference for approval to serve (§258.1.b).

Nominees are to be selected from people who are professing members of the NSUMC and who are in covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by their prayers, presence, gifts and service.

## Officers and Special Roles

The MC will select individual members from among the council for specific roles. Role selection may be by consensus or by majority vote. Selections should be made by December 1 to accommodate role transition before the new year begins. Another option is for the Nominating Committee to identify these roles as part of the nomination slate.

The following roles are necessary:

- Chairperson
- Staff Lead – this is the person to be named as the SPRC chairperson and also a secondary person as the SPRC contact
- Secretary (serving as an NSUMC legal representative)

The following roles are recommended:

- Vice Chairperson
- Treasurer - If the treasurer is paid then he/she cannot be a voting SMC member. *(Note that a Financial Secretary is also needed. The Financial Secretary is not a voting member. The treasurer and the financial secretary may not be from the same household.)* (§ 249.4)
- Annual Conference Lay Leader/Lay Delegate
- 4 Property Specialists/Trustees (One is designated as the Trustee Chairperson, and another is named as vice chair.)
- 4 Finance Specialists - (One is designated as Chairperson and another as Vice Chair.)
- 4 Staff/Pastor/Parish Relations (One is designated as SPRC Chairperson and another as Vice Chair.)

### Optional Roles

- Missions Specialist
- Congregational Outreach, Hospitality and Care Liaison
- Youth Specialist
- Adult Discipleship Specialist
- UMW and/or UMM chairperson is a part of this council and they may hold multiple roles (§ Para. 252.h and i.)

## Ministry Council Chairperson

The Chairperson:

- serves as the church's legal representative and is an authorized signatory for financial accounts and legal documents *(Note: The Trustee Chairperson on the MC must be the one who signs for all real and personal property of the church (§ 252.1))*
- schedules and ensures communication of MC meetings
- serves as meeting facilitator

## **Staff Lead (also the chairperson of the SPRC)**

The Staff Lead is involved in hiring, termination and related employment issues. The staff lead or SPRC chairperson, the pastor and the MC chair unite as a team for formal staff decisions – hiring, terminations, disciplinary plans, etc.

### **Paid Staff Changes**

A  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority is needed to establish a new paid staff position or to eliminate an existing staff position. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority is needed to hire someone into a paid staff position.

The SPRC will seek prayerful discernment with the pastor and other designated persons from within the MC, as needed, when considering employment dismissals or position eliminations.

## **Secretary**

The Secretary records, communicates and maintains meeting minutes and is an authorized signatory for legal documents.

## **Vice Chairperson**

The Vice Chairperson fills the Chairperson's role when that role is delegated by the Chair or when the Chair is not able to fulfill the role.

**Treasurer** *(There shall also be a financial secretary - not of the same family. A person holding a paid position may not be a voting MC member.)*

The Treasurer:

- ensures money and other financial instruments and accounts are handled securely and effectively
- is an authorized signatory for financial accounts
- presents the annual budget recommendation to the SMC
- provides a financial report at each regular meeting
- provides an annual financial report

## **Annual Conference Liaison/Lay Delegate/Lay Leader**

The Liaison serves as the communication link for the local congregation in matters relating to the district, Annual Conference and the District Superintendent. This could include but is not limited to dealing with personnel employment matters.

**Property Specialists** *(need one person to be named as chairperson of trustees with authority to sign legal papers)*

Property Specialists will handle responsibilities and will act as Trustees, including construction, renovation, stewardship and demolition or property.

## **Finance Specialists**

The Finance Specialists work with and support the Treasurer and his/her duties as described above.

**Staff/Pastor/Parish Relations Specialists** *(need a chair and a vice chair)*

The SPRC Specialists work with and support the chairperson and his/her duties as described above. The chairperson also serves as the responsible contact person with the District Superintendent in matters relating to pastoral issues and/or pastoral transitions.

### **Missions Specialists** *(these people can be serving in any other capacity named above)*

The Missions Specialists discover and remain aware of mission work and potential mission opportunities. He/she communicates about mission work and opportunities with the SMC and the church family.

### **Congregational Outreach, Hospitality and Care Liaison** *(this person(s) can be serving in any other capacity named above)*

The person(s) in this role focuses on:

- reaching out to the community to invite people as guests and to become baptized members
- helping guests feel welcome
- ensuring special attention and care is shown in times of special need (i.e. health, loss)
- being available to hear members' ideas and concerns

### **Youth Specialist** *(this person(s) can be serving in any other capacity named above)*

The Youth Specialist is an advocate for preschool through college students and the staff members who serve them.

### **Adult Discipleship Specialist** *(this person(s) can be serving in any other capacity named above)*

The Adult Discipleship Specialist promotes helping members to grow, develop, and become Christ-like. He/she advocates for staff members who lead these processes and programs.

### **Special Committees**

The Ministry Council may establish special purpose committees (i.e. ad hoc or advisory committees) by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote of all members.

### **Meeting Times**

Before December 1 each year, the Chairperson communicates a regular monthly meeting schedule for the following year. The intent is to let members plan their schedules around MC meetings. Meetings may later be cancelled if there is no compelling reason to meet that month, and meetings may be rescheduled as needed (*inclement weather for example, or if a church or community event would make a different meeting date more desirable*).

Any time the Ministry Council meets as the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the meeting shall be a closed meeting, according to ¶258.2.e of *The Book of Discipline*. When meeting as the SPRC, the ministry council may not meet without the pastor unless permission is given by the pastor or the District Superintendent. (¶258.2.e)

Additional special meetings and Charge Conferences and Church conferences may be scheduled throughout the year as needed.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Ministry Council members should make service to Christ and His church a priority. The standard for attendance is at least 75% of the meetings. Meeting attendance will be recorded in meeting minutes. Members should contribute beyond meeting attendance through prayer, presence, gifts, service and witness. Members are responsible to be champions for Ministry Council decisions and to faithfully complete Ministry Council actions.