

WHEN AND WHAT IS “CONSULTATION” IN APPOINTMENT-MAKING?

In our United Methodist connectional system, the resident Bishop makes appointments annually after a consultation process (§425, 2016 Book of Discipline). Regarding the consultation process, the Book of Discipline states in §426:

“...Consultation is not merely notification. Consultation is not committee selection or call of a pastor. The roll of the committee on pastor-parish relations is advisory. Consultation is both a continuing process and a more intense involvement during the period of change in appointment.”

In the consultation process, the S/PPR Committees and pastors act in an **advisory role** to the Bishop and Cabinet through conversation, meetings, reports, evaluation, needs and mission – all under certain criteria (§427.1, 2016 Book of Discipline).

In addition to the main participants in the process (Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, Pastor, District Superintendent) there is always concern for others related to the appointment (pastor’s family members, other clergy in the covenant, and the congregation).

Consultation takes place in a wide variety of locations and situations. Each personal contact by the District Superintendent within a local congregation or with its pastor(s) becomes a part of the consultation process; Sunday worship, Charge Conference, and educational or social events are included. In addition, the following specific contacts are consultation:

Pastor

Annual Consultation with DS
Any meeting regarding appointment
profile update
Specific telephone calls
Marks of Fruitfulness Evaluation

Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

Meeting with DS
Any meeting regarding appointment
Regular Development and update of church profile
Conversations with the chairperson

When, in the appointment process, counsel is given that a change in appointments would be desired, the Bishop and the Cabinet may yet discern that it would not be in the best interest of everyone for a change in the appointment to be made at this time. When this occurs, the District Superintendent will announce the decision to both the S/PRC and the pastor.