

Effective and Ineffective Pastoral Relations Committees

Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective PRCs

Effective

Meet regularly and often

Prepare for meetings

- Have an agenda
- Stay focused on agenda and identify topics for future meetings
- Allow adequate time

Establish partnership with pastor

- Keep pastor informed
- Take pastor into confidence
- Maintain “We are in this together” attitude
- Provide support and understanding

Ineffective

Conduct annual evaluations only

- Withhold regular feedback
- Allow issues to build too long
- Related to salary and appointment decisions more than to growth

Allow too little time and care

- Insufficient time to do task well
- Insufficient care in getting input and preparing for evaluation

Behave unfairly

- Bringing unevaluated complaints
- Bringing anonymous complaints
- Giving all sources equal credibility
- Not putting issues in perspective

What PRCs and Clergy Most Need from Each Other

PRCs Most Need from Clergy

Cooperation and receptivity

- Willing to listen with open mind
- Attempt to understand members’ needs and concerns
- Attempt to make some changes
- Openness to improvement ideas

Clear and open communication

- Pastor’s vision for ministry
- Candid assessment of what is going on in the church
- Information about issues and needs

Clergy Most Need from PRCs

Honest feedback

- Balanced, objective, thoughtful, and candid feedback
- Treated as adults who can take criticism

Personal concern and support

- Advocate for pastor

Communication with the congregation

- Education of congregation
- Feedback from and to congregation

Based on a comparison of staff-parish relations committees deemed effective by both the SPRC chair and the pastor and those deemed ineffective by the chair and pastor

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