Resources for Pastoral Relations Committees

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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