

Chair of Church Leadership Team/Church Council/Administrative Board

The leadership team may be called the administrative board, church council, or council on ministry. If your church uses the Nurture, Outreach, Witness, Resources Model, this is the job description for the administrative council chairperson.

Result Expected

An effective chairperson provides initiative, coordination, and collaborative leadership for the congregational group that does planning, goal setting, implementation, and evaluation of ministry to fulfill the mission and vision of the congregation.

Spiritual Gifts and Qualifications for the Leader

- This leader benefits from having one or more of these spiritual gifts: leadership, administration, faith, shepherding, servanthood, discernment, and teaching. This leader should show evidence of prior effective ministry leadership and evidence of active and growing discipleship.
- Useful skills for this position are the ability to listen to and communicate with people of all ages, work with other ministry leaders, preside over meetings, delegate responsibility, and follow up to complete tasks.
- This leader should show genuine interest in responding to the hopes and concerns of people in the community.
- The congregation's committee on nominations and leader development can establish specific standards for this position.

Structure

The church council is the administrative agency of the charge conference to envision, plan, implement, and annually evaluate the ministry of the congregation. (*The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, 2016, ¶252) The chair of this group is elected annually by the charge conference (¶251.3).

Responsibilities of the Chairperson

- This leader meets and works with the pastor, lay leader, and others to fulfill the mission of the church.
- The leadership team chair, along with the pastor and lay leader, are the primary spokespersons for the vision and mission of the church and encourage all other ministry leaders.
- This person should organize an annual planning meeting for church vision and ministry goals.
- This person should become familiar with United Methodist resources and organization.
- During the year, this leader prepares and communicates the agenda for meetings, leads the meetings, follows up actions by assigning responsibility for implementation, coordinates the activities of the leadership team, and maintains a healthy and growing spiritual life.

Responsibilities of the Committee

- The leadership team is accountable to the charge conference and serves as the executive agency of the charge conference between meetings to oversee the administration and ministry of the congregation.
- The team determines God’s call to the congregation for ministry that is transformative.
- The team initiates planning, establishes goals, implements action plans, and evaluates effectiveness for congregational ministries of nurture, outreach, witness, and administration.
- The team strategizes so that the congregation makes disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
- The team works with the committee on staff/pastor-parish relations and the committee on nominations and leader development for effective pastoral, staff, and lay leadership.
- The team recommends to the charge conference the compensation, housing needs, and benefits for the pastor(s) and other staff after receiving recommendations from the committee on staff/pastor-parish relations.
- The team fills leadership vacancies between meetings of the charge conference upon the recommendation of the committee on nominations and leader development.
- The team coordinates with the pastor, finance committee, and trustees to provide for financial support, physical facilities, and the legal obligations of its local congregation.
- The team maintains the congregation’s connection with appropriate district and annual conference programs and structures.

Getting Started

1. Talk with your pastor and others to understand their hopes and dreams for the congregation and the way your leadership will advance the congregation’s vision for ministry.
2. Learn what life is like for people in your community. Gather information by being attentive to the neighborhood, asking questions, and listening deeply.
3. Set aside time for prayer. Express your concerns, joys, and observations to God; and listen for God’s direction for your leadership and your congregation.
4. Soon after you are elected, convene a meeting of the church council to get acquainted, share hopes and concerns, and begin to plan your work for the year. Engage the leadership team to join you in the actions described above.
5. Evaluate the present ministry of the congregation. What is working well? Where are there weaknesses? What are the gaps?
6. Study *Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation, 2017-2020: Church Council* and participate in training and spiritual growth opportunities.

People and Agencies That Can Help

- Your pastor and people in your community and congregation, church council chairpersons in other congregations, your district superintendent, and conference staff.
- Discipleship Ministries, toll free 1-877-899-2780 or email info@gbod.org;
Website: www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/church-leaders.
- Ask the UMC, the information service for the church, provides current information about United Methodist resources, programs, and staff services. Website: <https://www.umc.org/en/what-we-believe/ask-the-umc-faqs>

Web and Print Resources

- *The Book of Discipline, 2016* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016)

- *Charting a Course of Discipleship: A Workbook in Christian Discipleship* by Teresa Gilbert, Patty Johansen, Jay Regennitter; revised by Delia Halverson (Discipleship Resources, 2012)
- *Deepening Your Effectiveness* by Dan Glover and Claudia Lavy (Discipleship Resources, 2006). Available in Spanish, *Boga Mar Adentro*.
- *Does Your Church Have a Prayer?* by Marc Brown, Kathy Merry, and John Briggs (Discipleship Resources, 2009)
- *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* by Robert Schnase (Abingdon Press, 2007)
- *Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation, 2017-2020: Church Council* (Cokesbury, 2016)
- *Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations* by Gil Rendle and Alice Mann (Herndon: Alban Institute, 2003)
- *Interpreter*, www.interpretermagazine.org
- *Leadership Essentials: Practical Tools for Leading in the Church* by Carol Cartmill and Yvonne Gentile (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006)
- *Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leaders* by Gilbert R. Rendle (Bethesda: Alban Institute, 1998)
- *Opening Ourselves to Grace: Basic Christian Practices* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2007), DVD with leader guide.
- *What Every Leader Needs to Know*, www.upperroom.org/bookstore (small booklets are useful for study or as a one-hour workshop: *Spiritual Leadership* by Michael Bealla, *Leading Meetings* by Betsey Heavner, *Mission and Vision* by Carol F. Krau and *Leading in Prayer* by Betsey Heavner)