

Effective Clergy Leadership **(Elders/Deacons/Local Pastors/Associate Members)**

The following standards provide a vision of what is needed in terms of clergy leadership in the biblical and Wesleyan tradition in the Detroit Conference. Effectiveness in ministry includes “being,” “knowing,” and “doing” characteristics. While not exhaustive, this document is meant to provide the basis for conversation and feedback in assessment and evaluation of clergy. The list will be reviewed each quadrennium by the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry.

A clergy leader in the United Methodist Church is a servant leader who:

- Shows evidence of a deep faith in Christ, is earnestly seeking to have his/her call perfected in Christ, and is aware of the responsibilities incurred in this call.
- Reads, understands, and applies the biblical word in his/her ministry context and life.
- Is loyal to the Body of Christ that has affirmed and confirmed the call to ministry and lives faithfully as a person who has taken sacred vows of covenantal relationship.
- Understands and is able to articulate the foundation and development of major theological thought of the Christian faith and the significance of this development for current situations.
- Is always in the process of developing a deeper biblically-based spirituality and practices spiritual disciplines.
- Practices self-care (defined in the Behavioral Guidelines).
- Accepts, respects, and supports the doctrines, mission, polity, and liturgy of the United Methodist Church.
- Demonstrates a passion for mission and ministry whose ministry is epitomized by a servant’s commitment to his/her current appointment.
- Is a prophetic leader and witness in both the church and community to which appointed.
- Lives out the highest ethical ideals of the Christian life (see Paragraph 304.2, *Book of Discipline*), being a person of integrity, compassion, and courage.
- Demonstrates an awareness of call, spiritual gifts, talents, abilities, and areas for growth.
- Is committed to lifelong learning and the continual development of skills for ministry.
- Seeks to be a faithful steward of prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.
- Believes all people are created by God as finite human beings, and thus expects that self and others will make mistakes, is flexible and forgiving, and displays a healthy breadth of relational skills, including a genuine sense of humor.
- Is trustworthy and practices confidentiality.
- Participates in evaluation processes and welcomes feedback and accepts responsibility for improving.
- Partners with laity to make disciples of Jesus Christ; will train and empower laity to produce tangible fruits of love of God and love of neighbor.
- Has the ability to focus ministry in terms of vision and implementation.
- Is aware of changing needs and can lead others through group decision-making to meet these needs.
- And in all things, models and embraces inclusiveness (defined in *Book of Discipline, Paragraph 140*).
- Is encouraging and supportive of other clergy and participates in their order or fellowship.

*We envision our churches as places where all God’s people are welcomed at table,
nurtured in faith and transformed to be like Christ to others in the world.*

Warning Signs of Ineffective Ministry for Clergy (Elders/Deacons/Local Pastors/Associate Members)

The following indicators are designed to help the District Superintendent evaluate the effectiveness of a clergy person. These guides are intended to help discern a pattern. When one or more of these indicators apply to a particular clergy person, the reason, explanations, concerns and context of his/her ministry should be taken into consideration.* If it is determined that ineffectiveness is probable, explanations and concerns should be addressed, and advanced, if necessary, to the process established by the Conference for addressing pastoral ineffectiveness.

- Clergy whose tenure has been three years or less for three consecutive appointments/ministry settings.
- Clergy who have received poor evaluations in two consecutive appointments/ministry settings.
- Clergy whose historical record of service indicates continuous decline in the vital signs of the churches or ministry settings where they serve (worship attendance, membership, financial strength, apportionments, mission program, etc.).
- Clergy who show incompetence in areas of: pastoral skills; biblical and theological knowledge; inappropriate leadership style; insensitivity to situation; divisive action as related to racism and sexism; evidence of poor time management; spiritual indifference; lack of initiative.
- Clergy whose theological practice of ministry does not reflect United Methodist doctrine and polity.
- Clergy who separate themselves from the life of the district and the conference or pastors who are over-involved at the district and conference to the exclusion of the local church.
- Clergy who show serious reservations about their ministry and/or calling through the evaluation process.
- Clergy who engage in a pattern of poor communication with district superintendents or their congregations, through missed deadlines for reports, unreturned phone calls, and tardiness for meetings.
- Clergy who show poor personal financial management and/or poor management of church or ministry setting funds.
- Clergy with emotional/relational problems reflected, for example, by one of the following behaviors: spiritual indifference, spiritual bankruptcy, irresponsibility, excessive reactivity, hostility, negativity, blaming, lack of authenticity, self-preoccupation, inappropriate interpersonal interactions, and resistance to critical examination by self or others, authoritative or inflexible leadership style.
- Clergy whose behaviors may include inappropriate personal appearance in ministry context, unhealthy lifestyle, evidence of low self-esteem, or lack of personal spiritual disciplines.
- Clergy facing long-term personal problems: substance abuse; health; divorce; family; grieving; burnout; financial stresses.
- Clergy who exhibit inappropriate boundary setting with others and/or breaches in sexual ethics.

**Please note: The context of ministry should always be a part of the consideration. The hope is that "dysfunctional" local churches having a long history of distrusting and rejecting their pastors would be identified and examined. The local church could be referred by the District Superintendent to a process established to work with and strengthen these local churches.*

This document was drafted and considered at a joint meeting of the Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry on September 26, 2006, and approved by the Executive Committee of the Board on November 16, 2006. It was edited by the Board of Ordained Ministry in the 2012, finalized and approved in September 2016.