

Ministry Mechanics: The Nuts and Bolts of Human Resources

Presented by Michigan Conference of The UMC & United Methodist Foundation of Michigan

Session 1 Scenarios

Scenario 1

A church has two paid staff members who work in the church office. One employee frequently complains about the other employee's attendance and use of personal time. The pastor has generally handled these issues informally, telling the employee, "That's just how she is." There is no written attendance policy, no formal process for raising workplace concerns, and no clear understanding of when the SPRC should become involved.

The situation escalates when the complaining employee says, "I don't think this is fair and I'm going to the SPRC."

Scenario 2

A church has a volunteer who coordinates the Sunday hospitality team. She has served faithfully for more than 15 years and is highly respected by many members. However, she has very specific expectations about how volunteers should do their jobs. New volunteers are frequently corrected in front of others and are told, "We've always done it this way."

Over the past year, several people have stopped volunteering. When the pastor asks why, one person says, "I love the church, but I don't want to work with her." The volunteer coordinator is surprised and responds, "After everything I've done for this church, you're going to take their side?"

The church has no written volunteer expectations, code of conduct, reporting process, or clear description of who supervises volunteers.

Scenario 3

A church's youth ministry has several employees and volunteers who regularly take pictures at youth events. Everyone is excited about sharing what happens at the church, and volunteers frequently post pictures on their personal Facebook and Instagram accounts.

One Sunday, a volunteer posts several pictures from a youth event. One of the pictures includes a teenager whose parents had previously asked that their child's photo not be posted online. Another volunteer comments on the post, sharing the student's name and mentioning a personal situation the family had recently experienced.

The pastor discovers the post on Monday morning. The church has a child protection policy, but it does not have a specific social media or photography policy. The volunteers say, "We didn't know we weren't allowed to post it."

Session 2 Scenarios

Scenario 1: A long-time paid church secretary has declining performance. She is also a church member and heavily involved in UWF. The pastor and SPRC want to transition her to retirement, but she is resistant.

Scenario 2: The choir director in the traditional service and the worship leader in the contemporary service are in conflict. Both have cliques that support them, and both are members and significant givers. Neither has had a performance review since beginning employment.

Scenario 3: A long-time volunteer runs VBS every year. They are getting older and have a hard time finding volunteers. Many other members have mentioned they would love to volunteer but don't like the way the leader micromanages them.