

## Article

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### **Nurture, Outreach, And Witness Ministries Coordinator(s)**

*Some congregations organize ministry planning and implementation into the areas of nurture (education, worship, Christian formation, membership care, small groups and stewardship), outreach (ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy), and witness (evangelism, communications, lay speaking, and lay service)*

#### **Result Expected**

Effective ministry teams will address the concerns and conditions of people in their congregations and communities so that they may grow in their spiritual lives and become better equipped for life as Christian disciples. Leaders of nurture, outreach, and witness will work together to plan and implement ministries that help the church fulfill its mission.

#### **Spiritual Gifts and Qualifications Helpful for the Job**

- Leaders of discipleship ministries benefit from having one or more of these spiritual gifts: servanthood, faith, teaching, exhortation (encouragement), leadership, compassion, knowledge, helping, and administration. These leaders must have a genuine interest in helping others deepen their relationships with God and with people, and then lead from the strengths of their spiritual gifts. They should have an interest in researching, planning, and implementing ministry. They need to listen well and communicate with people of all ages in the congregation and community. They need to be able to build ministry teams and work well with others—individually and in groups.
- These leaders must have a passionate interest for the ministry area they coordinate as well as the ability to collaborate for holistic discipleship ministry.

#### **Responsibilities of the Chairperson**

Throughout the year, all ministry leaders need to maintain healthy and growing personal spiritual lives and lead ministry teams to do the same. The ministry teams should engage in biblical and theological reflection about the mission of the church. These leaders guide the work of ministry groups during the year, including planning the agendas and presiding at meetings. These leaders are accountable directly to the charge conference or through the church leadership team, if one exists.

#### **Common Responsibilities of These Ministry Teams**

- Each team is familiar with the overall goals of the congregation and understands how its ministry contributes to those goals. Short-term teams may form and disband throughout the year to implement specific ministries. Ministry projects shape the congregation and beyond into the community, building networks with existing organizations, other congregations, people, and resources to fulfill the mission of the church.
- The nurture team coordinates, plans, carries out, and evaluates the congregation's ministry in the areas of member care, worship, and educational experiences, including the church school, small groups, regular and special worship services, stewardship formation, and member visitation.
- The outreach team coordinates, plans, carries out, and evaluates the congregation's outreach ministries, including missions, health and welfare, Christian unity and interreligious concerns, church and society issues, religion and race, and status and role of women.
- The witness team coordinates, plans, carries out, and evaluates the congregation's witness ministries, helping all know and respond to the love of God in Christ. This includes planning evangelistic outreach and setting goals for congregational growth, visitation, and membership care.
- If the local congregation is located in a transitional community as described in Paragraph 212 of *The Book of*

*Discipline*, the chair – in conjunction with the council chairperson – shall connect with the pastor to develop a community study as detailed in Paragraph 213.

## Getting Started

1. Talk with your pastor and others to understand their hopes and dreams for the congregation and how your leadership role will advance toward the vision for ministry.
2. Gather information about the needs of the people by being attentive to the congregation and the neighborhood. Ask questions and listen deeply to people's hopes, dreams, and needs. Evaluate the present ministries in your area. Notice opportunities for coordinating with other ministries in your congregation, other congregations, and the community.
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 ministry team to get acquainted, share hopes and concerns, and begin to plan your work for the year. If there is no team, ask a group of interested people to help you plan.
5. Read the full explanation of the Nurture, Outreach, Witness model for ministry in *Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation, 2017-2020: Small Membership Church* and in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016*.
6. Watch for opportunities to learn new skills for effective ministry. As a leader, you might organize training events in your congregation for specific ministry, such as teacher training, worship leadership, and faith sharing.

## People and Agencies That Can Help

- Your pastor and laypeople in your congregation who are interested in specific ministries; people who live in your community.
- Discipleship Ministries, [www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/church-leaders](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/church-leaders); toll free 1-877-899-2780 or email, [info@gbod.org](mailto:info@gbod.org).
- InfoServ, the information service for the church, provides current information about United Methodist resources, programs, and staff services. Email: [infoserv@umcom.org](mailto:infoserv@umcom.org); Website: [infoserv.umc.org](http://infoserv.umc.org).

## Web and Print Resources

- *Afire with God* by Betsy Schwartzentraub (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2007)
- *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 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 (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2012)
- *Deepening Your Effectiveness* by Dan Glover and Claudia Lavy
- *Does Your Church Have a Prayer?* by Marc Brown, Kathy Merry, and John Briggs Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2009)
- *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* by Robert Schnase (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007)
- *Growing Compassionate Kids: Helping Kids See Beyond Their Backyard* by Jan Johnson (Upper Room Books, 2000)
- *Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation, 2017-2020: Small Membership Church* (Cokesbury, 2016)
- *Interpreter*, [www.interpretermagazine.org](http://www.interpretermagazine.org)
- *Opening Ourselves to Grace: Basic Christian Practices* (DVD & CD-ROM) by Mark V. Purushotham (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2007)
- Safe Sanctuaries®, [www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/safe-sanctuaries](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/safe-sanctuaries)
- *Transforming Community: The Wesleyan Way to Missional Congregations* by Henry Knight III and F. Douglas Powe, Jr. (Discipleship Resources, 2016)
- *What Every Leader Needs to Know*, [www.upperroom.org/bookstore](http://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)
- [www.umvitalcongregations.org](http://www.umvitalcongregations.org)