



2019 DS/DCM Orientation

Technical Leadership Best Practices - Personnel

Case Study 1 – Ineffectiveness

In the last week, you've received a significant number of emails from many different members of St. Mark UMC expressing unhappiness with their current pastor. You reach out to the chair of SPRC and find that the SPRC is also unhappy with this pastor's performance. Worship attendance has declined, giving is down so some central ministries are facing unanticipated funding cuts, and the second administrative assistant to work with this pastor has just resigned. This pastor is a fulltime elder and has served this church for about a year and a half.

When you raise the church's concerns with the Cabinet, you learn that this pastor has been asked to move from the last three churches served. You prepare to meet with the SPRC at St. Mark. In reading through the supervisory file, you find that for reasons of "confidentiality" the previous DS has removed notes made during her tenure.

1. How do you proceed with the pastor, SPRC, Bishop and Cabinet?
2. What additional information needs to inform your decision?
3. What would be a positive outcome in this situation – for the pastor, for the church, for the conference?
4. What steps need to be taken if a status change is requested?
5. What if Administrative Location is considered? What do you need to do?
6. What are the relevant *Discipline* paragraphs or other resources that can inform your decision?



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Technical Leadership Best Practices - Personnel

Case Study 2 – Involuntary Appointment Change

When appointments were being made for the upcoming conference year, both the pastor (a full connection elder) and SPRC at County Seat UMC indicated that they would be happy for their pastor to continue in his appointment there for the following year. Given this mutual request, the pastor's appointment at County Seat was continued and he planned to keep serving there.

A week after the new appointment year begins, the church's SPRC chair calls you to request immediate removal of their pastor. A formal complaint has not been filed, but the church insists that the pastor's pending divorce and anger management issues have made it impossible for him to continue serving. The SPRC chair insists they will stop paying the pastor and they are taking away his keys to the church building.

Given the fact that the conference is at the beginning of a new appointment year, the Bishop has limited options, but works with the Cabinet to find another appointment for this pastor at New City UMC. However, New City is about 6 hours away from his current residence. The pastor says that he doesn't want to be removed from his current appointment and his family situation won't allow him to move that far. He refuses the appointment to New City.

No other appointments are available; the Bishop appoints the pastor to Transitional Leave until something opens up a few months later.

At the clergy session, this pastor requests a Judicial Council ruling on the legality of his Transitional Leave status from Aug.1 – Jan. 1 when he was waiting on a new appointment. The Judicial Council rules that the pastor is due back pay from the beginning of Transitional Leave and must receive an appointment.

1. What questions does this situation raise for you?
2. What other resolutions might have been proposed?
3. What other action steps could've have been considered?
4. What could have protected the conference from being required to pay the pastor for the time he wasn't appointed?



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Technical Leadership Best Practices - Personnel

Case Study 3 – Renewal of License

You are preparing to meet with the dCOM to review continuing the licenses for the local pastors in your district. One of the licensed local pastors to be reviewed is appointed to Midtown UMC and seems to be serving effectively. This pastor has been a local pastor for the last 5 years, and is in the second year of this current appointment. This was a hard appointment to fill because of limited available salary and the need for fulltime ministry. This pastor is bilingual which enhances the church's ministry in its neighborhood.

While the church struggles a bit financially, the small congregation seems to be steady and has shown some renewed interest in social justice ministries. The pastor has been working with the city council to provide support services for immigrants moving into the community and a small group of new worshippers are attending. The church is becoming more diverse in its worship attendance.

Of course, there are a variety of opinions about immigration within the congregation. And while not everyone in the church is active in social justice ministries, the mission committee fully supports the pastor's work with new immigrants. This growing ministry is challenging the mission committee to start thinking of ways the church can expand its service and outreach.

Shortly before the dCOM meets with the pastor you find out two things:

- Three lay persons have contacted you to let you know the pastor is “harboring illegal immigrants”. They want you to “do something about this”.
- The pastor has not completed required annual course work in the Course of Study this year and the dCOM is questioning if the license should be continued.

1. How do you proceed with the dCOM meeting given this new information?
2. What questions does this situation raise for you?
3. What additional information would be helpful in coming to a resolution?
4. What are the relevant *Discipline* paragraphs or other resources to inform your decision?



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Case Study 4 – Beginning Candidacy

Ben contacted you about beginning the candidacy process in your district. Since he's new to the state and hasn't yet connected with a church, you decide to meet him for coffee to get to know him better. He's a second career candidate (mid-30's) with experience in accounting. He moved to this area because his wife was promoted by her company and transferred. Since Ben had to leave his former employer, Ben is taking the opportunity for this transition time to nudge him to follow God's call into ordained ministry.

As the conversation unfolds you begin to sense something might be a bit off. Although Ben had been a CPA, you learn that he lost his license. Charges were never brought by his previous employer, but there was a lot of suspicion about how he handled the books and the financial state of his employer when he was asked to resign. Ben acknowledges this wasn't a good situation, but believes that devoting his life to work for God will help absolve him of his past "bad decisions." He's been through some counseling and is doing his best to learn from this situation and change his behavior for future employers.

To complicate matters, you find out that Ben had, indeed, been a certified candidate for ministry in his early 20's. According to Ben, he surrendered his certification because of a questionable reference letter and Ben's disappointment in the dCOM about not supporting his continuing candidacy when the reference person's statements could not be substantiated. While it was disappointing, it was a long time ago and Ben's done a lot of "growing up" in the meantime. Ben is wondering if he could be given a second chance, start candidacy over, and have the chance to show that he's a new person now with a renewed call to ministry.

As the conversation wraps up, you tell Ben that you'll be in touch in a few days to talk with him about next steps.

1. What options are available to you?
2. What additional questions would you have for Ben?
3. What is the dCOM's role in this situation? The superintendent's role?
4. What decision would you make? What would you tell Ben?
5. What are the relevant *Discipline* paragraphs or other resources to inform your decision?