



FAQ's for Maintenance to Mission

Why are do we want to focus superintending ministry on coaching, developing leaders, growing vital congregations and starting new faith communities?

We want to focus superintendence on the ministries that will make new disciples and grow vital congregations so that we increase our transformation of lives and communities. Most of superintendents' time, as much as 70%, is focused on administration and maintaining the conference and congregations as they are. This limits our potential for fulfilling our mission and growth. It continues patterns of decline which ultimately limits our mission. The new plan for staffing seeks to grow our mission and our congregations.

Will these changes raise apportionments?

No. Apportionments will not increase and as we move into the new organization. It has the potential to save costs.

Will the superintendents and conference staff be less engaged with congregations?

No, they will be more engaged with congregations unless the congregation or pastor chooses to not participate in the new and developing resources of Team Vital, Communities of Hope, coaching and PaCE groups. Freeing staff up from administration and maintaining our present state will allow superintendents and conference staff to provide leadership through these new resources.

What does shared services mean and how will it be carried out?

Presently we have nine districts, nine district offices, nine superintendents and nine administrative assistants. The administrative assistants all do the same jobs. Through the shared services approach, the administrative assistants will work in the conference office and each will have an area of focus. This means we will not need to have nine people to fill these positions which will allow us to use consultants and other staff to do the administrative work for congregations that presently takes so much of the superintendents' time.

Won't shared services mean that people will not be as close to the mission and ministry of the congregations?

No. Through a survey, we found that very few people visit the district office. Sometimes less than two people a week. Most ministry by the administrative assistants is done through email and phone. They can work at the conference office and maintain the relationships through phone and emails. Also the



superintendents will continue to serve in the districts, meeting pastors and laity throughout the district and not depend on a district office.

Who will pick up the work that the superintendents will no longer do?

Shared services allow us to use fewer district assistants to maintain district administration which then allows us to hire staff and consultants to do the other work.

What ministry will superintendents no longer do?

Superintendents will no longer engage in conflict resolution, contact congregations and pastors about apportionment and billable payments, follow up on statistical reports, manage supervisory concerns with clergy under complaint or who have receive poor evaluations, answer Disciplinary questions, answer church administration questions, handle property issues, etc. This will now be done through conference office staff.

Will this plan ensure growth of our congregations?

We believe we have a better opportunity to grow congregations by focusing superintendents' time on working with clergy, training congregations and starting new faith communities. What we are doing now is not working.

If district administrative assistants decide not to relocate to the conference office or are not a fit for one of the new positions, will they be cared for?

Yes. Our district administrative staff have been faithful and loyal for many years. They have been a gift to us. District administrative staff were alerted in July of 2015 of change in direction. It is proposed that positions will not be eliminated until June of 2016 after which staff who do not relocate or have a position will receive a fair severance package that includes salary and health benefits. We will also provide career counseling for those who request it. This means that staff who cannot relocate or decide not to continue, or do not have a position have more than a year to find other employment. We regret losing any of our staff but when this occurs, we will be generous and graceful in helping people to transition.

Do we have space in the new conference center to house the staff?

Yes. The new conference center was designed to expand or contract with the needs of the conference.

Will congregations no longer have individual charge conferences?



Congregations will continue to have individual charge conferences. Charge conferences will be held at several sites in a district and while there will be a time of joint worship and learning, each congregation will have an individual charge conference led by superintendents, circuit elders, former superintendents and district elders.

What is the role of a circuit elder?

A circuit elder will work with the superintendent to lead charge conferences, coach clergy, lead PaCE groups, and provide training.

Will smaller churches receive less service than they are presently receiving?

No. In fact if they chose, they will receive more services by participating in the new conference resourcing of coaching, PaCE groups, Team Vital and Communities of Hope training.

How will the new resourcing help congregations?

- Coaching is designed for pastors to assist them in identifying challenges and formulating solutions and action plans. Every clergy who requests coaching may receive one to two coaching sessions a month.
- Team Vital is designed to work with a congregation to help them assess their present state, formulate God's vision for their future, develop an action plan and receive technical assistance for 18 months to implement their plan. Training is also provided through these sessions to grow worship, small groups, mission engagement in the community, giving to the church and making new disciples.
- Communities of Hope is designed to work with congregations that want to learn how to engage with their community and develop a plan with residents for community development.
- PaCE are peer cohort groups for clergy to help them deepen faith and learn and grow ministry ideas and skills together.
- Laity training which includes an academy, Lay Servant Ministry and Certified Lay Ministry to develop leadership skills to serve in the local church.
- District and regional training for elected local church leaders to equip them to lead through their elected office.

Who do we contact for different resources and needs?

For the time being, you will continue to work through the district office for your resourcing needs. The goal will be to make the transition to shared services seamless to clergy and congregations looking for resources from the district, region or conference. No changes will occur until 2016.