



Council on Ministry Policy

Approved by the Board of Trustees

Name of President: Nancy E. Hatley

Approval Date: 12/17/20

Revision History: None

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to inform members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist church of Catawba Valley (UUCCV) of the duties, and responsibilities of the Council of Ministry (COM).

Policy: The Council on Ministry (COM), according to our bylaws, exists to strengthen the quality of the UUCCV ministry to the congregation and in the community.

Procedures:

1. The COM shall consist of three to five members and the minister. Members shall serve two-year terms as follows: two members may be selected by the minister and approved by the board in even numbered years, and two members may be selected by the board and approved by the minister in odd numbered years. Members will be appointed in May of each year and will take office in June. These members may not serve more than two consecutive two-year terms. The President-Elect of the Board of Trustees shall serve a one-year term. The minister shall serve as an ex-officio non-voting member.

2. Members of the COM should be selected with the following criteria in mind:

- Commitment to the congregation's vision, mission, and ministry above all other agendas
- Personal integrity
- Ability to keep confidences
- People skills, including intercultural and intergenerational skills
- Ability to work collaboratively
- A healthy ego
- Creativity
- Institutional savvy

- Membership status (ideally at least three years as an involved participant at UUCCV)
- Unitarian Universalism experience

3. Members of the COM are expected to be actively involved in the functions and activities of the church, to regularly attend the COM meetings, and to participate fully in the assessment of church ministries and other activities. Because the Council on Ministry's work is sensitive in nature, members are expected to maintain high standards of confidentiality and impartiality, while upholding the mission and vision of the church. COM meetings must be a fully safe place to share perspectives and experiences.

4. Leadership – Members of the Council on Ministry will determine how responsibilities are delineated within the committee, including selecting its own chair, meeting times and frequency, as well as internal governance procedures.

5. The COM works in focusing its attention on the vitality and health of the congregation as a whole, as well as distinct Council program areas. It attends to

- How all aspects of our shared ministry are being met
- How relationships between different ministerial committees within the congregation are developing or deteriorating
- How the church relates to its neighboring community
- How the congregation welcomes visitors and integrates them into the congregation
- How the congregation facilitates anti-racism efforts

6. Special attention is paid to any systemic obstacles hindering the congregation's ability to fulfill its mission. Best practices, connectivity, and successes should be reported and recommended.

7. The COM is responsible for evaluation of the following program areas of the congregation:

- Program and Publicity
- Membership
- Caring
- Religious Education
- Adult Spiritual Development
- Music
- Social Justice and Concerns

8. Assessment - The COM will report on each of its program areas, making non-binding recommendations to the program area leaders, the Board of Trustees, and the congregation.

Through discussions and surveys, the COM will consider for each program area:

- Is the program area functioning well in general?
- Does the program area have sufficient volunteers/staff support to function effectively?
- Does the program have the right policies and internal procedures in place to guide its activities?
- Do current volunteers need more support, expertise or training to fulfill their roles effectively?
- Are there any issues that the COM or Board of Trustees should be aware of that are prohibiting the program area to thrive?
- Are the program area's activities and plans in keeping with the mission of the congregation?

The COM may also be involved with strategic short and long-term planning for the program areas it evaluates.

9. Non-Binding Recommendations – As part of its evaluative activities, the Council on Ministry may suggest program area improvements. If agreed upon by program area leaders, the COM may in some cases, help to shore up struggling areas by assisting with recruiting additional volunteers or helping with special short-term projects (e.g., a teacher recruitment event, helping to plan a choir open house or social justice fair). The COM may recommend adding paid staff as well as increased staff time in order to enhance operations.

10. Staff Evaluations - The COM will contribute to periodic staff evaluations of any staff members who work in shared ministry program areas. The Council on Ministry will assess how successful the minister and staff are in manifesting the mission of the congregation. The COM works cooperatively with the Board of Trustees, which acts as the formal employer and supervisor, retaining all hiring, firing, and authority to set compensation.

11. Communication – The Chair of the COM reports monthly to the Board of Trustees about its activities and priorities. The minister and president-elect will help to align the goals of both bodies. Topics may be taken to the Board in the form of discussions, letters or reports. The COM should also communicate frequently with the congregation through the newsletter, educational sessions, and other means.

12. Education – The COM may create or coordinate educational sessions for the congregation that enhance its understanding and skill in shared ministry.

13. Relationship to the Minister – The Council on Ministry may make recommendations for additional training and support for the minister with the goal of

strengthening the capacity of the minister to fulfill the mission of the congregation. This may include support for the minister's planning for continuing education, sabbaticals, and other professional development. However, the COM should not be regarded as a personal support group for the minister.

14. Policies – The COM, in its evaluative capacity, will likely note areas where clear policies are needed or are in need of revision. When recommending or assisting with policies, the COM will follow procedures as delineated by the current Policy Manual policy.

15. Finance – The Council on Ministry is typically not concerned with matters related to building or finance, except when building/finance matters impact mission implementation. The COM will submit an annual budget to the Board of Trustees for the Council's needs, and may recommend to other committees other changes to their budgets.