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# Clergy Compensation Guidelines 2021



## Missouri Mid-South Conference

### Fair & Just Compensation for Church Workers

*A Resource for Local Churches, Authorized Ministers, and Professional Church Staff*

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Serving Missouri, Arkansas, and Memphis, Tennessee

Approved for distribution by

The Conference Committees on the Ministry Covenanted Ministry of the Missouri Mid-South  
Conference

United Church of Christ

Revised Edition 2021

## Table of Contents

### **2 I. Table of Contents**

### **3 II. Introduction**

### **6 II. Components of Compensation**

- A. Base Salary
- B. Housing / Housing Equity Allowance
- C. Vacation & Days Off
- D. Benefits
  - 1. Health Insurance
  - 2. Annuity
  - 3. Disability & Death Benefits
  - 4. Social Security Reimbursement
- E. Sabbatical Leave
- F. Parental Leave
- G. Personal & Sick Leave

### **11 III. Professional Expenses**

- A. Mileage
- B. Continuing Education
- C. Ministry Expenses
- D. Conference, Association, & Wider Church Meetings
- E. Pulpit Coverage
- F. Worker's Compensation Insurance
- G. Malpractice Insurance
- H. Background Check
- I. Boundary Training
- J. Racial Justice & Equity Training

### **13 IV. Part-time & Specialized Ministry**

- A. Part-time Pastors
  - Plan A
  - Plan B
  - Plan C
- B. Settled Pastor (Senior & Associate)
- C. Intentional Interim Pastor
- D. Supply Pastor
- E. Designated-Term Pastor
- F. Commissioned Minister

G. Licensed Minister

## **16 V. Working together for Effective Ministry**

- A. Pastor-Parish Relations Committee
- B. Annual Review of Compensation
- C. Ministry Evaluation
- D. Flexible Spending Account Plan
- E. Being The Church

## **17 Compensation Guidelines Chart**

### **I Introduction:**

Compensation for ALL local church employees should be fair and just, taking into consideration the size of the church and the employee's experience, skills, and education. Other factors that churches typically consider are the church's income, special needs, supply and demand and the geographical setting. This document is created to help congregations plan compensation for its ministers. It can, however, be a very useful guideline for ministers serving in a variety of other ministry settings.

This guideline is put forth in order to honor and value authorized ministers and create an environment of best practices for the ministers and ministry settings of the Missouri Mid-South Conference of The United Church of Christ. Some churches may be unable to provide sufficient compensation for full-time pastoral service. Such churches are encouraged to meet with the Conference Staff to review their situation and to consider creative alternatives, such as the calling of a part-time, bi-vocational and/or sharing a minister with another congregation. A congregation should not expect a minister to work full-time for part-time compensation.

### **The 2021 Compensation Guidelines**

In preparing the Guidelines for 2021, we looked at guidelines of UCC Conferences from different regions, recommendations and/or requirements of other religious and professional organizations, and actual compensation of pastors in the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the UCC. Cash salary recommendations were increased 1.0% from 2020. We also considered the Federal District Court ruling that the clergy housing allowance is unconstitutional, and the subsequent Appeals Court ruling that the housing allowance is constitutional.

#### *How to decide ministerial compensation*

A process should be in place for the regular, annual review of ministerial performance and compensation. We suggest that in each church, a small sub-committee, perhaps a Personnel Committee responsible to the governing board, be given the task of this review. These reviews and proposals should not be made by a budget committee or other budgeting body.

Please be aware that because federal tax structures (IRS and Social Security codes) are unique for ministers, and because each minister's family needs differ, the ministerial compensation package should be allocated in consultation with the minister so as to best meet the minister's needs. Churches are encouraged to first calculate the total compensation to be allocated, and then in consultation with the minister to re-allocate the individual line items.

### Compensation Guidelines for Ordained Ministers

Because the minister of a church is often expected to be a highly educated and trained professional, the salary and housing package for ministers should be congruent with the compensation of other similarly trained professionals in the community. The total compensation package for ordained ministers should be comparable to that of professionals requiring post-graduate training, such as school superintendents, secondary and middle school principals, engineers and other professionals in administrative positions. Other considerations are appropriate for licensed and commissioned ministers. But regardless of whether the authorized minister is ordained, commissioned, or licensed, each minister's total compensation package should take into consideration years of service, education, special training, skills and abilities.

Additionally, the work schedule and the compensation package of all authorized ministers should be healthy for the minister and for the ministry location. This requires a balance of time spent in the church's ministry and time spent with family and friends – a balance of work and recreation, a balance of exercising the body and the mind, a balance of care of others and care for self.

We are a church based in covenant. When a church calls a pastor, it covenants to compensate fairly, and the pastor covenants to serve faithfully.

What are the compensation guidelines of the conference?

We are accountable for the wise use of the church's resources, both human and material, therefore the church should be an intentional steward in the raising and the expenditure of funds, and the pastor should be an intentional steward in the use and renewal of his/her life in ministry.

What are the congregation's habits and its checks-and balances in financial accountability and in its use of a pastor's time?

Because the connection between pastor and people is a sacred trust, open, caring, healthy relationships are essential for the well-being of the local church. Salary and benefits negotiations, new and annual, should be carried out with candor and clarity, and with loving, supportive, mutual respect. As Christians, we are called to compensate all persons fairly, regardless of age, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, disabilities, marital or family status.

Who are our leaders entrusted with negotiating this call agreement? How have we prepared to consider all candidates equally?

The above paragraphs are from the Call Agreement Workbook, which we encourage you to use before creating a call agreement with your new minister. Once the workbook is completed and an incoming minister

is identified, download the call agreement form at [www.ucc.org/ministers\\_pilgrimage](http://www.ucc.org/ministers_pilgrimage) and edit it to reflect the decisions made with the workbook and these conference guidelines.

Missouri Mid-South Conference Guidelines should also be reviewed on an annual basis to help your Governing Board or Council stay up-to-date on best practices and to use in determining annual increases in compensation, and/or benefits for the called pastor, or pastors working in your setting of ministry.

The United Church of Christ has always valued educated ministers, thus it is not uncommon for authorized ministers to invest seven or more years of their lives in obtaining a Master of Divinity Degree from an accredited seminary after first obtaining an undergraduate degree from an accredited university, or four-year college. First-time candidates seeking calls in the UCC, according to Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, carry anywhere up to \$40,000 in debt and beyond from their seminary education, not to mention debt incurred as an undergraduate.

Even with considerable financial support and scholarships from seminaries, first-time candidates for authorized ministry will need compensation packages that enable them to pay down their debt while supporting their cost of living.

The Missouri Mid-South Conference encourages our congregations, members, and friends, to assist in bringing down seminarian debt by increasing support for CUE Seminaries, creating local scholarships for seminarians, and developing new initiatives to assist debt reduction in exchange for years of service to a local church.

Compensation reflects the local church's intention to live in faithful service to God. This makes the congregation's relationship with their pastor different from that of employer to employee, even though a written and signed "call agreement" is considered a legal contract. As noted above, this relationship is a covenantal relationship between professional and lay Christians shaped by their mutual responses to God's call and the needs of the church.

## **II. Components of Compensation**

The following elements comprise an adequate and fair compensation package:

### **A. Base Salary**

Salary is determined by considering the responsibilities of the position, level of education and years of experience of the person. The base salary is to be comparable to that of other professions in the community requiring similar education and experience. (See table for minimum compensation guidelines.)

### **B. Housing**

Housing - For authorized ministers, the cost of housing will be a part of the minister's compensation package. After the total salary and housing compensation are agreed upon, the minister may request a reallocation of certain line items to better meet the minister's needs, in compliance with the codes of the IRS.

a. If a parsonage is provided, full utilities, basic telephone service, and maintenance costs are to be paid by the church. Furthermore, it is recommended that the church consider an equity development plan for ministers living in a church-owned home. Toward this end, it is suggested that a church provide an amount equal to 3%-5% of the minister's salary basis to be invested for the minister's benefit in one of the following ways:

as an additional contribution to the UCC annuity fund.  
in an IRA, or a TSA (through the Pension Boards UCC).  
in another agreed upon investment vehicle.

A minister who is furnished a parsonage may exclude from income the fair rental value of the parsonage, including utilities. However, the amount excluded cannot be more than the reasonable pay for the minister's services. – IRS Publication 517

(In the case of a parsonage, the "salary basis" for Pension Boards UCC purposes = 130% of cash salary + any furnishings allowance received.)

b. If a housing allowance is provided, the amount received should permit the minister to buy, furnish, and maintain a median-priced house in the church community. A housing allowance should be based on the median price of a home in the community. According to the IRS, the value of the annual housing allowance must be formally approved by the appropriate church board each year prior to receipt of the allowance by the minister. The approval must be officially recorded in church minutes and be retained in the church files.

A minister who receives a housing allowance may exclude the allowance from gross income to the extent it is used to pay expenses in providing a home. Generally, those expenses include rent, mortgage interest, utilities, repairs, and other expenses directly relating to providing a home. – IRS Publication 517

In 2017 a Federal District Court ruled the clergy housing allowance to be unconstitutional. In 2019, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that ruling. Heather Kimmel, General Counsel for the UCC, says: "This is likely not the last time that we will see a challenge to the housing allowance – it may come in an appeal to this ruling or in a new action brought in a different Circuit. For now, the clergy housing allowance continues." Ministry settings should continue to designate housing allowances for clergy.

Regardless of the above considerations, according to Publication 517 of the IRS: If you own your home and you receive as part of your salary a housing or rental allowance, you may exclude from gross income the smallest of:

The amount actually used to provide a home;  
The amount officially designated as a rental allowance; or  
The fair rental value of the home, including furnishings, utilities, garage, etc.

c. For churches that cannot provide either a parsonage or a sufficient housing allowance to purchase a home in the community, a home (house or condo) for the minister might be leased or rented. Full utilities, basic telephone service, and maintenance costs are to be paid by the church. An equity development plan, described above under "parsonage," should be included.

When a housing allowance is furnished, it is to be adequate to purchase or rent housing that would compare to the average housing in the membership of the church and in the community. The amount of total salary designated for housing, again, must be established in advance by vote of the church or official board and reported in writing to the pastor before payment at that salary level begins. The IRS stipulates that clergy calculate the amount of housing allowance by taking the lowest of these three figures: (a) the amount of salary allocated at the regular annual meeting of the church as housing allowance, (b) the fair rental value of housing, utilities and furnishings, and (c) actual costs. If the housing allowance is lower than actual expenses, and the fair rental value of the home, the clergy will not be able to get the full benefit of this exclusion. For this reason, the amount of the housing allowance should allow for unexpected expenses that may be incurred. Any unspent housing allowance must be claimed as income at the end of the year.

When housing is provided in the form of a parsonage, all utilities are paid by the church. The parsonage is to be well maintained and compare at least with average housing in the membership and community. Since clergy are in some ways considered “self-employed” by the IRS, they must pay Self Employment taxes on the estimated rental expense of comparable housing in the area as well as on their cash salary.

The value of the parsonage is based on the fair rental value of the home. The IRS allows that a portion of the pastor’s salary may be designated as a parsonage allowance, to be used to purchase cleaning supplies, furnishings, decorative items, and to provide upkeep for the church-owned parsonage. This allowance must be authorized by official vote of the church or official board and must be in writing. This is an important tax break that would benefit many of our clergy. Some congregations offer to contribute to a tax- sheltered housing equity allowance to compensate for a pastor’s loss of equity by living in a parsonage.

Housing Equity Allowance is recommended when a parsonage is provided. A housing equity allowance differs significantly from a housing allowance, and that difference must be understood clearly so the two are not confused.

A housing allowance is intended to provide financial compensation necessary for the pastor to provide for his/her own home during the present performance of duties. A housing equity allowance is intended to provide for housing at a later date by creating a fund to offset home equity lost when a pastor lives in a church-owned parsonage.

Many local churches are unable or unwilling to sell their parsonages. Their pastors are, in effect, “paying rent” to live in the church owned parsonage at the church’s pleasure. Churches providing a housing equity allowance have recognized that when they require their pastor to live in a parsonage, the pastor and any family are disadvantaged at retirement, if the pastor dies, or if the pastor becomes disabled. After a number of years of “renting” a parsonage, that person and any family have accumulated no equity with which to provide for housing needs unless a housing equity allowance has been created by the local church that has required the pastor to live in a parsonage. Increasingly, local churches have been trying to fairly compensate for that economic disadvantage to the pastor by developing a planned housing equity allowance.

Establishing a housing equity allowance should be done carefully yet simply. The plan should be prepared in writing to be effective while avoiding possible misunderstanding.

Some local churches consult with a reliable local resource person (a realtor or other housing professional) to discover how much a typical home in the community appreciated during the current or immediately previous year. If a typical house in the community were valued at \$125,000 and appreciated by 3%, the housing equity allowance for the year would be \$3,750. Some other local churches pay a fair percentage of the base salary, like 5-10% per year as a housing equity allowance.

**A housing equity allowance** is considered additional compensation by the IRS and the Missouri Department of Revenue, and eventually will be taxable. If the allowance is paid directly to the pastor each year, the tax obligation will be immediate. If, however, the housing equity allowance is paid by the church into a tax-sheltered fund for future use by the pastor (or pastor's family) and is not immediately available, it is not taxable income until it is withdrawn for use at a later date.

It is recommended that the local church pay the housing equity allowance into a fund for the pastor (or pastor's family) and that the fund be in a depository agreed upon by the local church and the pastor. It should be further understood that the deposited funds are only available to the pastor (or pastor's family) at: (1) retirement, (2) disability of the pastor, (3) death of the pastor, (4) after an agreed upon term of employment, such as 5 or more years, or (5) church sale of the parsonage with the intent that the pastor purchases or rents a home of his/her choice. It should also be agreed that the depository can be changed if the pastor resigns, but that the fund and restrictions on its use can be continued.

### **C. Vacation and Days Off**

A standard work week for pastors is estimated to be approximately 50 hours. Responsibilities often require work on evenings and Saturdays as well as Sundays. (If you need to create a job description, or revise a job description, consult Call Agreement Workbook.) An annual vacation of four weeks, including four Sundays, is considered standard. Two days off per week is strongly encouraged to assure a pastor's continued health and endurance. Given the 24/7 on-call nature of being a pastor the congregation is asked to understand the pastor's need for flexibility in determining when Sabbath will occur.

You are encouraged to provide one week of the summer as a "camp week," allowing the pastor to serve as a counselor or director in the Conference Outdoor Ministries program. This would not be considered vacation time since your pastor would be working all week with children and youth.

### **D. Benefits**

Benefits are those items other than base salary and housing that are considered part of the compensation package. They are the congregation's responsibility in providing adequate and just support of their pastor. These include health and dental benefits, annuity, long-term disability, and group life insurance up to the cost of the UCC Benefits Package.

#### **1. Health Insurance**

The UCC offers a Health Benefits Plan, Dental Benefits Plan, and Vision Plan. These are self-insurance programs providing comprehensive health, dental and vision benefits that clergy and their families retain if they move from one state to another. There is only one open enrollment period to enter the Plan: within 90

days of one's first call to work 20 hours or more per week. Subsequent entry into the Plan is by approval of the UCC Pension Boards. Once included in the Plan, clergy and their families are insured for life as long as premiums are paid. The church should pay the entire premium for family coverage unless only single coverage is needed.

Different coverage options are available for both Health and Dental Benefit Plans with differing yearly premiums. The three coverage options for the Health Benefit Plan are identified as Plans A, B, and C. The deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums are lowest for Plan A, mid-level for Plan B, and highest for Plan C, while the yearly premium decreases from Plan A through Plan C. More information is available for Health, Dental, and Vision Plans on the Pension Boards UCC website at [https://www.pbucc.org/images/pbucc/publications/Health/Non-Medicare\\_Highlights.pdf](https://www.pbucc.org/images/pbucc/publications/Health/Non-Medicare_Highlights.pdf) or by calling 1.800.642.6543. Congregations are strongly encouraged to participate in the UCC Health, Dental and Vision plans for church staff that work 20 hours or more per week.

## **2. Annuity**

The Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ administer an annuity fund for clergy and lay workers. This tax-sheltered fund is very carefully invested to provide maximum benefits at retirement. Annuity payments are calculated at 14% of the base salary+housing. When a parsonage is used, the value of housing is calculated at 30% of the base salary. Thus, the annuity payment for a pastor living in a parsonage would equal 14% x 130% of the base salary. Additional tax-sheltered payments may be made by agreement of the church, the pastor and the Pension Boards. Congregations are strongly encouraged to participate in the UCC Pension Plan.

## **3. Disability and Death Benefits**

Congregations should provide disability insurance through the UCC Pension Boards 'Life Insurance and Disability Income Benefit Plan. This insurance relieves the church of liability in the event of their pastor's total or partial disability or death. The program provides for Short Term coverage beginning after 30 days and continuing for 5 months. Long Term disability benefits would begin after the 6 months and would pay a percentage of base salary and housing, plus annuity, to age 65. The congregation is responsible for continuation of benefits during the first 6 months of disability. Decreasing term life insurance is included in the Plan. The annual premium is 1 1/2% of the base salary +housing. Contact "Member Services" at the Pension Boards for details by calling 1.800.642.6543.

## **4. Social Security Reimbursement**

Congregations should budget an amount equal to at least an employer's portion of base salary+housing (currently 7.65) as a social security offset (reimbursement). The IRS considers ordained clergy employees in relation to the income tax, but self-employed in relation to the social security tax. Clergy must pay the self-employed social security tax rate (currently 15.3) on base salary+social security offset (reimbursement).

## **E. Sabbatical Leave**

Congregations are strongly encouraged to offer a sabbatical leave of three months after five years of full-time ministry with the church. A part-time minister is eligible for two months of sabbatical leave after seven years of ministry with the church. During the sabbatical, the congregation pays the pastor's full salary and benefits. The pastor is expected to share with the Governing Board or Council, at least one year before beginning the sabbatical, the developing plans for time away. In the pastor's absence, a covenant to care for the church, its programs, and worship life is created. Upon return, the pastor is invited to share with the church an overview of activities and learnings from the sabbatical. Unless otherwise agreed before the sabbatical, the pastor is expected to serve for at least one year after his/her return. If a supply pastor is needed during the sabbatical period, the church can prepare for that expense by adding annually to an escrow account for that purpose. Lay persons also can be prepared to lead worship and carry responsibilities for visitation, community leadership, and other regular pastoral duties. For further information about Sabbath leave, contact the Conference Office.

#### **F. Parental Leave**

Parental leave should be extended to the pastor when he/she experiences the birth or adoption of a child. Twelve weeks of paid parental leave is granted so that the pastor can care for self and family. Unused parental leave is forfeited.

#### **G. Personal and Sick Leave**

In the event of the pastor's illness, provide up to 12 days of sick leave per 12 months of service; sick leave can accumulate up to 120 days across the years of the pastor's ministry, though accumulated sick leave is not payable upon termination. (For extended illness, see "Short-Term Disability.") In the event of circumstances such as but not limited to the illness of a dependent, the death of a family member, or a personal crisis, provide up to 5 days of personal leave per incident, not to exceed 10 days per 12 months of service. Personal leave does not accumulate. Sick time and personal leave are not meant to be utilized as additional vacation time.

### **III. Professional Expenses**

Professional expenses are reimbursable expenses to the pastor that are incurred in the performance of duties. They are not part of the person's compensation. They are "business" expenses for which the congregation is responsible.

#### **A. Mileage**

The IRS establishes annually a maximum allowable rate for deducting business mileage. For the year 2021, the rate is 57.5 cents per mile. The rate includes the full costs of auto depreciation, insurance, maintenance and operation as a per mile cost. It is recommended that churches reimburse pastors for actual mileage logged in the performance of the ministry at the IRS allowable rate. Unless the actual mileage is logged and accounted for by the pastor, it will be considered taxable income by the IRS.

## **B. Continuing Education**

Congregations should expect a pastor to be committed to continued professional growth and development, since both truly benefit from it. Continuing education leave of at least two weeks each year is recommended, with an amount budgeted to cover a major portion of the expenses for tuition, travel, housing and meals that might be involved. The church board or appropriate committee should be involved in approving a mutually beneficial experience.

## **C. Ministry Expenses**

The church may budget an amount for annual professional expenses including such items as: professional journals, books or periodicals; hosting or entertaining church leaders, members, or guests; dues to professional organizations such as the Academy of Parish Clergy, the Association of United Church Educators, or the Interim Ministry Network. A portion of home office expenses, (i.e., printer paper and ink) a percentage of phone expenses and internet should also be included as ministry expenses.

## **D. Conference, Association, Cluster and Wider Church Meetings**

Pastors are expected to attend official Conference, Association, Cluster and Wider Church meetings. A pastor is encouraged to serve in ministry in the wider church: Association, Cluster, Outdoor Ministries, Conference, or National settings. This service is to be considered part of the congregation's and pastor's ministry. Such service is neither time off nor vacation. Expenses, including mileage and registration fees, are to be reimbursed by the local church.

## **E. Pulpit Coverage for Vacations and other Schedule Absences**

During periods of scheduled absence of the pastor, such as the Sundays of scheduled vacation, Conference meetings, continuing education, sick leave, or other approved personal leave, the payment for pulpit coverage is the responsibility of the church.

Suggested compensation for worship leadership contracted for one or more consecutive weeks is \$150 plus mileage - IRS set 57.5 cents per mile for 2021 is a standard amount for that service. An additional amount is to be added if the church involves more than one service.

## **F. Worker's Compensation Insurance**

In Missouri, an employer is required to carry Workers Compensation if there are 5 or more employees. The employees can be either full or part-time. There is no payroll qualification.

In Arkansas, the Division of Workers Compensation indicates that there is a series of rules that apply making it difficult to make any general statements. Churches in Arkansas can call the Arkansas Workers Compensation Commission, Compliance Division, 1.800.622.4472.

In Tennessee the Churches should call the Workers Compensation Commission, 1.800.332.2667.

Basically, any church with an employee can purchase Workers Compensation coverage, and we recommend that churches purchase the coverage. If a claim should occur, the payments are made under the Schedule of Benefits set forth by the state.

The United Church of Christ Insurance Board (UCC-IB) "Workers Compensation" coverage automatically includes coverage for volunteers, where applicable by state law.

### **G. Malpractice Insurance**

In today's litigious society, it is advisable for churches to carry malpractice insurance to protect both the pastor and church in the event of a lawsuit. Congregations insured through the UCC-IB Insurance Program have that coverage.

### **H. Background Checks**

Since January 1, 2007, all persons seeking to circulate a profile in the United Church of Christ are required to pay for a national criminal background check, the cost of which is to be reimbursed by the congregation that calls them. There is an additional line item added to the attached worksheets indicating this cost to the congregation. Background checks are considered valid for 18 months.

### **I. Boundary Awareness Training**

All authorized ministers (including retired ministers and members in discernment) serving in any capacity in churches of the Missouri Mid-South Conference are required to participate in, and be certified as having completed, periodic Boundary Awareness Training. While this does not insure against sexual and other forms of misconduct, the requirement does ensure that those serving our churches are cognizant of the issues. Boundary Awareness Training must be completed every three years.

### **J. Racial Justice and Equity Training**

All authorized ministers (including retired ministers and members in discernment) serving in any capacity in churches of the Missouri Mid-South Conference are required to participate in, and be certified as having completed, periodic Racial Justice and Equity Training. Please check with your particular Association's Committee on Ministry to find out what programs are offered in your area that will meet this requirement. Racial Justice and Equity Training must be completed every three years.

## **IV. Part-time and Specialized Ministry**

No pastor is to be expected to serve full-time for less than the minimum compensation guidelines outlined in this document. While compensation for part-time ministers may be negotiated below the guidelines, there must still be fair and adequate compensation for the responsibilities involved. Therefore, the following three plans of action provide a way forward:

### **A. Part-Time Pastors**

*Plan A:* Churches that cannot afford the recommended full-time salary package may wish to consider offering their minister a part-time salary package, which is based on the minister's time commitments in terms of "units." Transparency and good communication is key to this package, because without those a church might easily develop unrealistic time expectations of its part-time minister.

In this approach, morning, afternoon, or evening constitutes one unit of work (e.g., 3-4 hours). For example, a minister who spent a morning on worship preparation, an afternoon on hospital visitation and administrative work and an evening at a church meeting would have worked 3 units that day.

- A full-time pastoral position would average 12-13 units/week over the course of a year.
- A three-quarter time position would average 9 units/week over the course of a year and the minimum salary and benefits should be calculated at 75% of a full-time ministry package.
- A half-time position would average 6 units/week over the course of a year and the minimum salary and benefits should be calculated at 50% of a full-time ministry package.

This approach permits a church to set priorities while also providing considerable flexibility. Lay people might prepare the newsletter, teach an adult Bible Study or make routine visits to shut-ins, freeing up the part-time ministers to concentrate on worship preparation, a limited number of meetings, and counseling of and visitation to those in need. In this way, a church may provide a professional-level ministry with a part-time minister.

A possible, but not exhaustive list of church activities and responsibilities that might be included in a minister's total units of time are:

Worship planning and preparation

Sunday worship and Sunday programs

Visitation at hospitals, nursing homes, personal homes

Administration, phone calls, emails

Church, community, and denominational meetings which includes clusters

Counseling, weddings, funerals, and other pastoral concerns

Teaching, Bible Study, Adult Education

Communication Venues: bulletins, newsletters, website, other Community-based chaplaincy at nursing homes, jails, hospitals, etc.

(Travel to any of the above should be included in work time units)

*Plan B:* Another means for determining part-time compensation would be to consider the cost of leading worship at \$125-200/day plus mileage reimbursement (note: this cannot be paid for trips from home to the church but only for visits and other off-site ministry miles), and that of all other pastoral responsibilities at \$20-30 per hour plus mileage reimbursement.

*Plan C:* A church can always request a special consultation with Conference Staff or the Association's Committee on Ministry to assist in exploring shared ministry options in which two or more congregations work together to search and call a minister. In some cases, shared ministry may include churches from other denominations.

Churches offering Plan A automatically comply with the Missouri Mid-South Conference guidelines for part-time clergy compensation and that box can be checked on the church's local profile for Search & Call purposes.

Churches offering Plan B or wish to explore Plan C need to request a consultation with their Association's Committee on Ministry for support and to determine whether or not it's appropriate to list the church as meeting Conference guidelines for part-time clergy compensation.

**B. Settled Pastor:** a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related Association. An Associate Pastor is also a Settled Pastor and although an Associate Pastor might earn 80% of a Senior Pastor's salary, that Associate Pastor should not fall below minimum compensation guidelines. In other words, the disparity between Senior and Associate should be achieved by increasing the Senior Pastor's salary, not decreasing the Associate's. Full benefits should also be offered.

**C. Intentional Interim Pastor:** a called position for a temporary term of congregational preparation for a Settled Pastor search, in which the minister does not typically move church membership to the congregation served or move standing to the related Association. In the Missouri Mid-South Conference, an Intentional Interim Pastor must have completed the Interim Ministry Network's training (see [imnedu.org](http://imnedu.org)), or the Intentional Interim Pastors training course offered by the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. to be designated an Intentional Interim Pastor.

**D. Supply Pastor:** a temporary position in which the pastor does not move membership to the congregation served or move standing to related Association.

**E. Designated-Term Pastor:** a called position for a designated time period for a defined purpose, in which the pastor may move church membership to the congregation served and may move standing to the related Association.

**F. Commissioned Minister:** is a lay person authorized to serve in the United Church of Christ according to the guidelines of the Manual on Ministry. He/She normally has a college degree plus specialized training in a specific area of ministry not requiring ordination, such as Christian education, music ministry, congregational health ministry, parish nursing, administration, outdoor ministry, etc. Compensation should reflect experience, education and special training. Full-time Commissioned Ministers should receive all the benefits recommended above in Section II, D.

**G. Licensed Minister:** is a lay person who has received special training to preach, lead worship, and administer the sacraments in settings where an ordained pastor is not available. Compensation should comply with the minimum compensation guidelines to address fairly the time and responsibilities required by the position. Churches may wish to consider a percentage of the recommended guidelines for base salary, housing, and benefits if part-time ministry is involved. Licensed Ministerial standing must be renewed annually in accordance with the Manual On Ministry (MOM) of the Association's Committee on Ministry (COM).

## **V. Working Together for Effective Ministry**

The covenant that binds a pastor and congregation in mutual ministry and mission needs to be nurtured, strengthened, and sometimes renewed. Here are some specific ways this can be checked on:

### **A. Pastor-Parish Relations Committee**

A small committee of three to seven persons is given the specific job of nurturing the pastor, the relationship between the pastor and the congregation, and clarifying the role of the pastor. Such care can build the trust and communication necessary to deal effectively with the inevitable tensions and conflicts that arise. Guidelines for such a committee can be found in the document, *The Pastoral Relations Committee*, available from the United Church of Christ website.

### **B. Annual Review of Compensation**

An important task for the Church Board or appropriate committee (Pastor-Parish Relations, Personnel, or Finance) is an annual review of the pastor's compensation. The review is to be an open and caring conversation allowing the pastor to express changing needs or expectations. An annual increase of base salary reflecting any increase in the cost of living should be considered. This should include a review and adjustment of mileage reimbursement (if applicable) based on current IRS guidelines. Compensation should reflect the congregation's intentions to take seriously their own calling. Additional salary increases reflecting meritorious service or increased responsibilities affirm the mutual covenant between pastor and congregation. Increases in pastoral compensation are to be advocated by a member of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or Personnel Committee. A pastor ought not be put in the position of defending his/her own compensation.

### **C. Ministry Evaluation**

Any planned evaluation of the church's ministry needs to be done at a time sufficiently distant from annual compensation review to avoid linking the two. Ministry evaluation is best undertaken when the purposes of evaluation are clear, and there are no immediate tensions in the relationship between pastor/lay leaders and congregation. Such purposes might be to clarify congregational goals and objectives, to assess the pastor's use of time in relation to those objectives, to identify unmet ministry needs, or skills that need further development. Evaluation of the congregation's ministry is as important as evaluation of the pastor's. They go together. After all, the ministry and mission belong to both. Deficiencies in ministry by one party can seriously impede effectiveness by the other. Instruments for Local Church Evaluation and Clergy Evaluation are available from United Church Resources. Also recommended is *When Better isn't Enough: Evaluation Tools for the Twenty-First Century Church* by Jill Hudson.

### **D. Flexible Spending Account Plan**

As an additional way of promoting effective ministry in our churches, congregations can choose to add a flexible spending account plan for their clergy person(s), through the Pension Boards. Aside from a modest initial set-up fee, making this account available does not have a cost to the local church as it is funded by the

clergy person's voluntary salary redirection into the account. The account provides participants with tax savings related to medical deductibles, co-pays and dependent care expenses and is an attractive addition to compensation arrangements. For more information, please contact the Pension Boards.

## **E. Being The Church**

During a time such as the pandemic we are all called to **Be The Church** and therefore it is important to recognize that our clergy are working hard to keep the members of their congregations connected. They are tired and worn out emotionally and need the help of our churches to feel loved and cared for in this time. Below are a list of suggested ways in which each congregation can show their appreciation for all that their pastors are doing during COVID-19.

- An additional Sunday off
- An additional day off during the week
- One Sunday a month is lay lead
- Virtual Field Trip Sunday (attending another church service virtually)
- Dividing up pastoral care responsibilities
- Giving them a "staycation" (a vacation at home with no contact)
- Testimony Sunday (instead of a sermon, a church member shares their faith story)
- Early Sabbatical (offering a Sabbatical ahead of schedule)
- Members calling on each other

These are just suggestions for our congregations to think about and potentially offer to their pastor so that they can find rest and restoration.