

VOCATIONAL REVIEW AND DISCIPLINE ACCOUNTABILITY

Origin:

1. What is the issue? While there is a great deal of accountability for ministry personnel within the denomination, there is little accountability for those overseeing the review and discipline process.

We believe God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is calling us to:

- Ensure that ministry personnel are treated equitably, competently, justly and with compassion
- Ensure that the Offices of Vocations and review and discipline processes are transparent and accountable to the broader church.
- Ensure review and discipline decisions are subject to analysis and assessment by the broader church as well as by past and current ministry personnel.

2. Why is this issue important?

- The call to ministry is a sacred covenant with God that needs to be respected and cherished. Those who are called to this covenant will be treated with respect and justice.
- There is a wide divergence in review and discipline practices in the Regions, and even between various subjects of review and discipline, within individual regions. This may be due to divergence in the competence of Offices of Vocations staff and reviewing disciplining bodies.
- We are a justice seeking church, and justice requires fairness and impartiality.
- The apparent arbitrariness of the justice issue causes distrust between General Council, the Regions and the Communities of Faith who are in relationship with ministry personnel.

3. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

- Many current and former Ministry Personnel who have been subjects of discipline in the church have given input in the drafting of this proposal. They have identified feeling unduly reviewed and disciplined on the basis of age, gender identity, education, disability, ethnicity, culture and race. Current and former Ministry Personnel who identify with each of these communities have given input to the development of this proposal.

Creating a more transparent and equitable review and discipline process benefits all ministry personnel and the communities they serve.

4. How might the General Council respond to the issue?

The (Regional Council) proposes that the General Council will:

- Establish a discipline process oversight body that includes non-staff representatives from each region, with a mandate to conduct regular assessments of the Offices of Vocations and its review/discipline actions and activities.
- There will be SMART (Standardized Metrics that are Achievable and Realistic in an appropriately Timely manner) requirements for review/disciplinary action.
- Establish a central repository of official review and disciplinary documents accessible for analysis and assessment.
- Upon completion of a review and/or disciplinary process, the subject of the review, and the subject's companions, families and advocates will be invited to conduct a confidential review of the review and disciplinary process and structures, and of the Office of Vocations.
- Provide to the advocate of any subject of review and discipline access to all meetings associated with the review and discipline action when the subject of the review and discipline wishes.

5. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council:

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