

# Appendix 13

## Council on Caregiving

### Purpose

The council on caregiving has a twofold purpose. First, it functions to offer encouragement to the pastor and staff. Every congregation has as many clients (possibly bosses) as it has members. These persons naturally contact the pastor and staff when they have a need or an expectation. However, no one is charged with the responsibility of offering encouragement to the ministers. The council would encourage the ministers to spend adequate time with family, to give attention to self-care, to develop one's spiritual life, to do continuing education, and similar items. Frequently, the ministers respond to the demands—ministry opportunities—of the congregation and neglect their own families. Second, the council can function as a means to foster good, clear, and open communication among the members of the congregation and between the church family and the pastor/staff.

### Structure

The number of persons serving on the council should be determined by the church's needs and expectations. Generally, there should be three on the council in a church averaging fewer than one hundred in worship. A congregation of up to three hundred in worship might desire a council of five members; a church with more than three hundred in worship might consider adding one council member for each additional one hundred in worship.

### Responsibilities

- 1. Encouragement of the pastor and staff.** The council should encourage self-care, family time, spiritual development, and continuing education. This can be accomplished by seeking information from the pastor and staff on how to accomplish these and negotiating their completion within the church's polity. It would also be appropriate for the council to lead the congregation in remembering special days or special accomplishments of these who serve the church.
- 2. Provide for exit interviews to be held.** Seek the assistance of other appropriate lay leaders to do after worship exit interviews in order to solicit opinions of participants in what improvements might be considered. This information should be shared with the pastor and staff as appropriate.
- 3. Facilitate communication and resolve problems.** Church members frequently fail to communicate their expectations of the pastor and staff. Even though there may be a strong commitment to the life of the church, eventually church member and/or church staff will suffer from broken expectations. The broken expectation may be over something said or unsaid; it may be over something done or not done. Regardless, the person who experiences the hurt may harbor ill feelings toward the church. The council can function effectively by serving as the bridge to hear these concerns.

The Council should inform the congregation that any member of the council (Give names, addresses, and telephone numbers.) may be contacted about any concern a member has. The council member will either go with the person or take the person's concern to the appropriate staff person and will report back to the church member. The goal is clear, open communication. Even if a person's concerns cannot be remedied, at least an explanation of church policy can be given. While this may not resolve the issue, the reason for the decision can be given.