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THE VISION, FOUNDATION AND GUIDELINES
FOR
CROSS-Racial AND CROSS-Cultural APPOINTMENTS
IN
THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE
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Bishop's Task Force
on Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments

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OUR MANDATE

"Open itinerancy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement... Through appointment-making, the connectational nature of the United Methodist system is made visible." (2000 Book of Discipline, ¶430.1)

"Racism plagues and cripples our growth in Christ, inasmuch as it is antithetical to the gospel itself..."

"Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth

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of all persons. We rejoice in the gifts that particular ethnic histories and cultures bring to our total life. We commend and encourage the self-awareness of all racial and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them to demand their just and equal rights as members of society. We assert the obligation of society and groups within the society to implement compensatory programs that redress long-standing, systemic social deprivation of racial and ethnic people. We further assert the right of members of racial and ethnic groups to equal opportunities in employment and promotion...and to positions of leadership and power in all elements of our life together." (2000 *Book of Discipline*, ¶162A)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to assist the Cabinet, Districts, Local Churches and Pastors to successfully receive and engage in cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments in the New York Annual Conference. By acknowledging the prophetic and challenging nature of the task, and by creating a context for support, compassion and celebration, this document aims to provide useful information for all parties to enter into the unique opportunities of cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.

DEFINITION

A cross-cultural or cross-racial appointment is the appointment of a person from one racial or cultural group to a congregation composed in its majority of another racial or cultural group. It means to appoint a pastor (or to hire and/or appoint an associate pastor or other church leader) to a church which is comprised mostly of members from a different racial or cultural group.

Cultural difference is distinct but may be intermingled with racial difference. For example, a Korean pastor serving a white congregation deals with both racial and cultural differences (as does the congregation). A Caribbean-African or African pastor serving an African-American congregation deals with cultural differences and with likely differences in experiences of racial discrimination that may impact interaction and mutual understanding. The congregation also should address these differences. Dominant-culture congregations (European-derived "white" culture) may be greatly challenged to check assumptions of cultural and racial superiority in receiving a pastor of another culture or race.

**FOUNDATIONS FOR
CROSS CULTURAL AND CROSS RACIAL APPOINTMENTS**

Biblical and Theological Foundations¹

1. God is Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all creation. All people are a loving expression of God's creative work. "Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and God's love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:11-12)

2. God's saving grace is inclusive for all. "For God so loved the world that God gave God's only Son so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

3. "There is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male nor female; for all are one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28) From this company of believing people, God calls individuals into the representative ministry of the church.

4. The Christian church was given birth at Pentecost when God's Holy Spirit came to empower it for witness and mission. People from every part of the world were present in Jerusalem on that day, and did receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:5-11) God gives the Spirit for ministry to all God's diverse people.

¹ Hackbardt, Carol and Deanna L. Shimko-Herman, Working document of the Wisconsin Annual Conference Standing Committee on Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments titled *Guidelines for Encouraging and Supporting Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments*. Prepared February 1998. Revised May 1999, p. 3. (editor made changes based on *The 2000 Book of Discipline*.)

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Foundations: *The 2000 Book of Discipline*²

1. *The Book of Discipline* addresses cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments on the levels of the local church's pastor-parish relations committee, the Bishop/Cabinet and the Annual Conference.

2. The local church pastor-parish relations committees are instructed as part of their responsibilities to "communicate and interpret to the congregation the nature and function of ministry in The United Methodist Church regarding open itinerancy, the preparation for ordained ministry, and the Ministerial Education Fund." (§258.2(f)(4))

3. Bishops and Cabinets are guided in appointment-making by the directives of *The Book of Discipline* which states: "Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itinerancy. Open itinerancy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement." (§430. 1) Such appointments are gifts to pastors and congregations.

4. *The Book of Discipline* states that "The Annual Conference... will assume responsibility for such matters as: ... Consulting with the board of ordained ministry and the cabinet to determine what provisions are made for the recruitment and itinerancy of racial and ethnic minority pastors." (§640.3e)

² Hackbardt, p. 4.

THE VISION

Diversity in the New York Annual Conference

The New York Annual Conference has been committed to appointments regardless of race since at least 1958, when George T. Johnson was the first black pastor of this conference to serve an all-white congregation. He served Modena and Clintondale in the Hudson Valley.³ In the 43 years since then, our Conference has no doubt become more and more diverse. Women have entered the ministry in greater and greater numbers since the 70s. Korean pastors and seminary students are the fruit borne of 100 years of mission work in Korea. There are 600 Korean UM pastors in the U.S., mostly concentrated in California, Illinois, New Jersey, New England and New York. Approximately 140 of these pastors are serving in cross-cultural appointments.⁴ Spanish culture preceded Northern European and English settlers to this hemisphere and is still an influence in this land. Demographic projections indicate that the U.S. will only become more diverse in the future. The vision of our Conference has been that this diversity is something to embrace as a gift, rather than something to fear as a threat. At the same time, local churches have accepted cross-cultural or cross-racial appointments with trepidation and with little guidance how to proceed with challenges to their established ways--whether these challenges are real or only perceived. Every new appointment is a transition and requires trust and understanding. The unique challenge of cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments sometimes needs some special attention because of the unspoken, and perhaps unrecognized, biases that are present in all persons.

A recent survey of cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments points to the continued commitment of the New York Annual Conference. As of the 2000 Annual Conference, there were 56 such appointments as follows:⁵

³ Information from the memorial service bulletin for Rev. Dr. George T. Johnson, St. Mark's UMC, NYC, June 9, 1998.

⁴ Pak, Grace, JongWoo Park, Phillips Soo Y. Whang and Myung Ji Cho. *Witness from the Middle: Korean-American Pastors in Non-Korean Local Churches in The United Methodist Church*, The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 1999, pp. 5-6.

⁵ From list developed by Cabinet for Task Force Listening Sessions, January 2000.

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	Korean, Japanese, Indian	African, African American, Caribbean	Hispanic	White	TOTALS
LIE	5	2	1		8
MS	1	2	3	2	8
MN.	2	2	2		6
HN	2				2
DH	1	3			4
C/NY	7	3			10
CC	4				4
TOTALS	22	12	6	2	42

Creating A Beautifully Diverse Garden

Our God has seen it fitting and a good and joyful thing to create peoples of diverse colors, shapes, cultures and histories. It is often helpful for humans to understand our work in God's Church in the form of metaphors to articulate a larger context for our specific tasks. When our task force met at Camp Olmsted to plan activities for the year, we were graced with a beautiful landscape to enjoy. Set against the native plants of the area were trees that originated far from the northeast region of the United States--Japanese maples, Norway spruce, European Beech, Mediterranean herbs and others. God created a world of expanding diversity and this diversity has been enjoyed by humans who have transplanted trees and flowers from far and wide to create gardens of various colors, textures, blooming times, and shapes. These plants intermingle to complement each other's strengths and to enhance our pleasure, which is a form of worship and praise of God.

This metaphor of a beautifully diverse garden is appropriate for our understanding of the work of the Church through the New York Annual Conference in making successful cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments.

A master gardener has a number of tools for use in creating a garden. The gardener begins with a plan or design. But even before this step, is the vision of the possibility of what can be done. The gardener chooses plants appropriate for the climate and soil, prepares the ground and amends the soil if necessary, uses healthy transplants or seeds and takes steps to assure good root growth. The gardener waters, fertilizes and nurtures the transplant or new seedling until it is well-established. In time, the new plants grow into their own distinct shapes and forms in the new setting, creating a distinct garden.

At every level, we need to move from the idea of cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments as "potential-problem appointments" to the concept that they are celebratory affirmations of God's great and diverse creation.

The larger vision may be that we are being called as a Conference to educate ourselves and our people about the damaging effects of racism and cultural supremacy. Racism and supremacy are not questions of “political correctness” but are systems that operate to separate people from one another. These systems create barriers to loving relationships between God’s people and stunt the growth of all of us--whether we are “dominant culture” or “minority culture.” The work that needs to be done is the work of all of us; it is not the job of the less-numerous to win acceptance of the majority.

We are being called to recognize the often unconscious basis for rejection of openness to cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments as racism or cultural supremacy, or in some cases, sexism. It is the obligation of all of God’s children to lovingly and seriously address this issue. “Dominant culture” pastors and lay persons can be challenged to recognize their role in perpetuating racism and sexism and receive guidance in working through these issues for the good of God’s kingdom--or God’s beautifully diverse Garden, if you will.

As Rev. Dr. Chester Jones, General Secretary of the Race and Religion Commission of the General Board of Global Ministries, has stated: “We recognize that there may be no church that is truly ready for a cross-racial/cultural appointment, however, we believe, with faith and good planning, some churches can become accepting of pastors without regard to race, class or gender. Also, it is important that the district superintendent help the Staff Parish Relations Committee understand that cross-racial/cultural appointments are a part of the United Methodist Church’s commitment to inclusiveness.”⁶

ESSENTIALS FOR THE CABINET

Start with yourself as an individual and as a group

Think about how race and cultural differences operate in your life. Be conscious of building relationships with persons of different backgrounds and identities. Notice the emotions, joys and challenges that arise. Identify the cultural or racial assumptions under which you operate in your life. Use your position as leaders to create programs and support systems to help churches and pastors in your charge to confront and address the challenges and celebrate the joys of cultural and racial difference.

District Superintendents play important role in preparing congregations and pastors

Look for signs of openness in congregations and pastors who want to work toward more inclusiveness. Work closely with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee to affirm support and understanding of open itineracy. Acknowledge the church’s fears, but affirm the gifts and graces of the incoming pastor and the successes of many cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments. Provide extra support for the

⁶ Jones, Chester R., *A Comprehensive Plan for Making Cross-Racial/Cultural Appointments in The United Methodist Church*, General Commission on Religion and Race, p. 11.

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period of transition.

Tasks for District Superintendent after the appointment

Some appointments require more attention than normal, such as first-time pastors, or those in communities that are undergoing major transitions (new yokes, anticipated closings, etc.). Cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments will often, though not necessarily, need more attention from their DS in the first year or two. The DS may want to set up support systems, using district committees, clusters and leaders, so that he or she is not unduly taxed, while providing the needed support.

SPR Committees and church staff must be supported and affirmed as advocates to the congregations for the appointments. Laypersons who participated in the Task Force's Listening Sessions expressed frustration with accessibility to Cabinet regarding concerns and responses on cross-cultural and cross-racial matters. A structure of support and affirmation, especially in the beginning stages of this new kind of relationship can ease the stress before it interrupts the ministry.

The DS has an important role in assuring support for the pastor and his or her family. Connect the new pastors and families with other cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments in the district. Be sure that other pastors affirm such appointments, providing welcome and fellowship for the pastor and family, and refusing requests to provide pastoral services that would undermine the new pastor's ministry. Make sure the new pastor takes care of his or her own spiritual and cultural needs and those of his or her family. Assure the pastor that you want to know the truth about how the appointment is going--good news and bad, and earlier rather than later.

ESSENTIALS FOR PASTOR/STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEES

The laypersons who serve on the PPRC or SPRC play a critical role in the success of a cross-cultural or cross-racial appointment. When SPRC members ground themselves in an understanding of the theological, Biblical and doctrinal basis for open itineracy and cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments, they are better equipped to address the fears they and other parishioners may confront when they are preparing to receive such an appointment or working to make a successful ministry. These sources help us to lift up the special gift and work of God in the appointment, challenging us to reassess cultural assumptions and look to the unity of Spirit that is possible in the Church.

The PPRC can lead the parish in making the effort to understand cultural and racial diversity and in building a loving, welcoming and affirming relationship with the new pastor and his or her family. Practical issues that may hinder communication should not be ignored, but should be discussed directly and lovingly, with an openness to the possibility of various solutions. Be sure that your pastor receives the standard provisions that any pastor would receive and that she or he finds support systems to care for the spiritual and cultural needs of herself/himself and the family.

Share the history and culture of your church and community with your pastor. Don't operate on the basis of unspoken assumptions, but use this as an opportunity to assess cultural traits that may be considered "natural," but in fact, vary from place to place. Use this as an opportunity to understand why you do what you do the way you do it.

Make the effort to learn on your own about the cultural or racial experiences that a person from your pastor's background may have. Seek out resources in the District or Conference that may help the congregation understand issues involved in the appointment, as well as means to strengthen and celebrate the appointment.

ESSENTIALS FOR CROSS-APPOINTED PASTORS

Clergy entering into a cross-cultural and/or cross-racial appointment for the first time are served well by a strong sense of God's call for your ministry and a good knowledge of Biblical and theological affirmations of diversity. Confirm your strengths for ministry, while honestly acknowledging your limitations. Use your knowledge of the history, structure, doctrine and mission of the Church to provide a broader context for your leadership of the local church. Become informed about the history and culture of your new church and new community. Develop caring relationships with parishioners and other community members--show through your presence and activities that you are delighted to be their pastor and that you expect them to embrace and respect your ministry among them. Be positive in your leadership, flexible and patient, but firm in your commitment to your call. Provide opportunities for congregants to give you feedback about your ministry together.

Pay attention to your personal needs and those of your family. Seek support networks from a variety of sources. Find at least one friend (perhaps another clergy person) of the same ethnic group as your congregation who you can trust to be direct, honest and respectful with you in discussions about cultural differences. Keep your DS and mentor informed of both the joys and concerns in your ministry.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL THE CHURCHES AND DISTRICTS OF THE NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE

There are opportunities and ways in which congregations and districts of the Annual Conference can participate in the vision of a more inclusive society and Church.

Let us be intentional about educating ourselves and each other: When we experience peoples of other cultures and races, we come to understand more about our own cultural identity and its role in our suppositions about others. When we acknowledge that all persons are forced to learn racist attitudes in an historically racist society, we can let go of guilt, grief and fear to reclaim our connection with people who have been separated from us. Any church or district can develop programs to work together (and play together!) on this education and re-education effort. It is strongly recommended local churches, pastors and conference leaders actively pursue some of these suggestions on a regular basis.

1. Congregations can recognize and address racism, so that it is brought to the

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- conscious level of understanding the basis for behaviors, attitudes and actions.⁷
2. Pastors and members of differing racial/ethnic backgrounds can seek opportunities to work together on various forms of shared ministry (workshops, study groups, work projects).⁸
 3. Pastors and lay people can come together in cluster groups to discuss what it means to be inclusive and how inclusiveness impacts the local congregation.⁹
 4. People can have the opportunity to be led in workshops and seminars by men and women of different races and cultures.¹⁰
 5. All pastors can increase a climate of openness to all people through their preaching and pastoral ministry. All pastors can work with their congregations to establish mutual love, respect and understanding for each other and all people.¹¹
 6. Congregations can exchange pastors, choirs and lay speakers of diverse racial/ethnic heritages. Some members of each congregation can also exchange congregations either at the same time or at any time.¹²
 7. Congregations of different racial/ethnic backgrounds can worship together on a Sunday or other special event.¹³
 8. Congregations and districts can share common meals, such as potluck dinners, for the purpose of racial/ethnic experiences. Share hospitality, fellowship, friendship and fun.¹⁴
 9. Congregations of predominantly different races and cultures can arrange events together. After these events, each congregation takes time for prayer and reflection to identify areas for further learning and sharing.¹⁵

⁷ Hackbardt, p. 4.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 5.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

10. All pastors and district officers can be conscious of the special need for training and support in situations being considered for cross racial and cross cultural appointments or in new appointments.¹⁶
11. The spiritual, theological and Biblical basis for eliminating racism and cultural supremacy can be addressed in Bible studies or spiritual formation programs.¹⁷
12. All persons can make the effort to learn about the experiences of persons of differing cultures and races. Whether reading quality books of fiction or non-fiction about or from other cultures or races, or selecting some of the better television programming, individuals and groups can learn to step outside of the “givens” of dominant-culture thinking that may stereotype certain groups of people. (Black History Month programming on PBS is only one example.)

Several years ago, an ethnic minority pastor asked a group of denominational leaders, “You know how to laugh with us. But do you know how to weep with us? You appreciate us when we succeed but would you be there when we fail? You welcome us when the fruits of our labor become visible, but do you know what cost we pay as a family? Christian ministry may foster fellowship and community but most of us who are merely known as ‘ethnics’ are lonely and friendless.”

Perhaps The United Methodist Church’s cross-racial and cross-cultural appointment will become successful in so far as we get to know our colleagues who are different from us culturally, racially, and linguistically, and know them well enough to both rejoice and weep together.

[Box]¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Jacob Dharmaraj and Glory Dharmaraj, *Ethnic Minority Pastor in a Majority Culture*, General Board of Higher Education and Ministries, Nashville, TN (under review for publication in 2001).

GUIDELINES FOR THE CABINET

BEGINNING THE TASK AT THE CABINET LEVEL

1. *Develop a theological framework.*

- a. Read the biblical stories as multicultural, cross-national, and cross-racial narratives.
- b. Affirm as normal in our Judeo-Christian tradition God's pattern of working through multicultural ministry.
- c. Understand and identify the cultural biases that are part of our theological perspective.

2. *Affirm your own cross-cultural and cross-racial ministries.*

- a. Form friendships with persons of other cultures and races.
- b. Identify how cultural traits shape the way we use time and exercise authority.
- c. Observe and study cultures and racially related experiences different from your own in our Annual Conference.
- d. Experiment with being bicultural or multicultural and multiracial in cabinet life.
- e. In the process of making appointments, use words and procedures appropriately. For example, when introducing pastors to local churches, use positive and affirming language and gestures.

3. *Get acquainted with pastors from other cultures or races.*

- a. Know that each pastor and family is unique, and that the fact that they are from another culture or race is only one part of their identity.
- b. Take time to listen to and talk with pastors and members of their families.
- c. Value pastors of all cultural and racial identities and notice the gifts and graces they bring to ministry.
- d. Experience the cultures of origin of pastors and learn their histories.
- e. Listen to the perspectives of the ethnically identified Caucuses and attend their meetings. Facilitate the integration into district and conference leadership positions of pastors from non-dominant cultural and racial origins.
- f. Be consistent in supervision, especially in supporting and holding all clergy accountable, regardless of their cultural or racial background.

4. Establish policies and procedures.

- a. *Language.* Establish guidelines for English language proficiency, so that ESL pastors can continue to improve their English proficiency and receive support. If needed, provide opportunities to learn English as a second language on a one-to-one basis. Clergy may be recruited to provide mentoring in language skills. Promote the understanding that not just the pastor but the entire congregation is responsible for good communication. In fact, difficulties between pastor and parishioners with speaking or hearing may provide a perfect opportunity to build relationships, in addition to solving a communication problem. This may include using the pastor's language of origin in some settings, such as in some prayers (for example, the Lord's Prayer, simple greetings, or music).
- b. *Infrastructure and Support.* Be aware of particular needs--health, educational, housing--that the pastor and family may have, and help the local church to respond positively.
- c. *Salary and benefits package.* Ensure that the conference guidelines for equitable salary are observed in cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments. Bicultural ministry is a special gift and should be remunerated accordingly. Clergy of certain cultural backgrounds will not take the initiative in discussing salary amounts. You do not want clergy in cross-cultural appointments to feel that they are forced to "come cheap."
- d. *Immigration law.* Be knowledgeable about immigration law and procedures in the United States. In instances where clergy or candidates for ordained ministry need assistance with their immigration status, seek advice from competent sources.
- e. *Conference Support Systems.* Develop a conference-wide support system for clergy and congregations in cross-cultural and cross-racial ministries. Such a system may include an orientation program for congregations getting ready to receive a pastor of a different cultural or racial background than themselves..
 - assistance for the clergyperson in finding resources to learn about a church and a community.
 - recognizing, strengthening, and celebrating cross-cultural and cross-racial ministry in the life of the Annual Conference.
 - assisting clergy in cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments in forming a supportive network among themselves.

ESTABLISHING GOALS

In the midst of one of the most racially and culturally diverse regions of the country, the Cabinet would benefit from devising a specific plan for preparing,

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identifying and supporting the players in cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.

1. Habakkuk 2:2-4: Write your goals down and make them plain enough so all cabinet members, pastors and churches will understand them.¹⁹
2. "Who, what, when, where, why and how" should be written down in the master plan.²⁰

BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT: PREPARING PASTORS AND CHURCHES

1. *Seek out pastors and congregations moving toward more inclusiveness*²¹

Who are the pastors that are ready to devote themselves to paving the way for cross-racial and cross cultural appointments? Where are the churches that are ready or can be readied? Here are some preparatory activities to consider:

- a. Interim appointment of a "John the Baptist" preparatory pastor (two years)
- b. Training for churches who will receive cross-racial or cross-cultural appointments (Opportunities to discuss dreams/fears) Common fears are:
 - (1) "What will my friends think?"
 - (2) "What will this person's preaching style be like?"
 - (3) "How many members will we lose?"
 - (4) "Will our church finances suffer?"
 - (5) "Who will bury our dead and conduct the weddings for our sons and daughters?"

There are signs, which assist in identifying congregations (white and ethnic/racial), and pastors (white and ethnic/racial) that are ready to work towards inclusiveness.

2. *Signs of openness in congregations*²²

¹⁹ Jones, p. 13.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., pp.13-14.

²² Hackbardt, pp. 5-9.

- a. The congregation accepts and works well with pastors.
- b. The congregation's priority is Christ's mission, ministry and outreach. The congregation sees the building as a resource to facilitate this mission, ministry and outreach.
- c. Strength is evident in mission outreach, finances, church growth, and in the capacity to persevere in the face of opposition from within/outside the congregation.
- d. A key leader with good support in the congregation is ready and able to embrace the appointment. (More than one is helpful; one is essential!)
- e. The pastor-parish relations committee gives strong leadership. It inspires and equips the congregation to see possibilities and develop tools for inclusive leadership. It initiates conversation with the Administrative Board or Council to share vision and build support.
- f. Members are learning that inclusiveness is a basic part of the congregation's identity and mission, not just something added on.
- g. Members have the capacity to love and grow with new patterns of pastoral ministry.
- h. The membership is diverse and/or the community is diverse, and the participation and leadership in the congregation is representative of this diversity.

3. Signs of openness in pastors who can act as preparatory pastors²³

- a. Pastors are loving and have worked effectively with the congregations they have served. Love and effectiveness are both **needed**.
- b. Pastors have the respect of their congregations. Healthy relationships and good organizational patterns are in place.
- c. Pastors are effective preachers and teachers in calling/equipping Christian disciples.
- d. Pastors are committed to the vision of inclusiveness as part of the church's mission.
- e. Pastors have the pastoral ability to continue to care for persons who do not share their vision of inclusiveness.
- f. Pastors possess strong faith and self esteem and are willing to persevere

²³ Hackbardt, p. 6.

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in face of challenges to ministry which affirms and includes the gifts of all God's people.

- g. Pastors possess the ability to appreciate cross racial differences and look for the possibilities and gifts in these differences.

4. *Signs of openness in pastors who will receive cross racial and cross cultural appointments*²⁴

- a. Pastors have some specific experience in moving across cultural/racial lines.
- b. Pastors can give examples of their openness to people and their learning from people in their present congregations.
- c. Pastors are effective preachers and teachers and faithfully communicate in person with their members.
- d. Pastors have demonstrated their commitment to the vision of inclusiveness.
- e. Pastors possess the pastoral ability to remain loving yet firm with those who do not share their vision of inclusiveness.
- f. Pastors have strong faith and self-esteem and the ability to persevere in the face of opposition.
- g. Knowledge of the primary language of the congregation is vital for communication though not more important than items a through
- h. Knowledge of the language(s) and culture(s) of the local community is highly desirable for effective pastoral ministry and effective leadership of the congregation for its ministry in the local community.

5. *Preparing Churches to Receive Cross-Cultural and Cross-Racial Appointments*²⁵

- a. Talk with the Staff Parish Relations Committee about what would help a cross-racial and cross-cultural appointment to work in their church and community.
- b. Make sure that the Staff Parish Relations Committee understands that race is not a reason for reconsideration.
- c. Share some "success stories" of cross racial and cross-cultural appointments within the Church.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

²⁵ Jones, pp. 14-15.

- d. Help the Church to understand that they are a part of our Denominational thrust, rather than being “singled out.” (We are a connectional church).
- e. There must be sensitivity and intentionality about planning the transition for a cross-racial or cross-cultural appointment.
- f. The District Superintendent should be kept apprised of the progress in reaching a wholesome environment for a cross-racial and cross-cultural appointment.
- g. Every United Methodist pastor must assume the responsibility of enabling congregations to be supportive of cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.
- h. The Committee on Staff/Parish Relations should ensure that it is supportive of the concept of open itineracy and experience workshops/seminars on inclusiveness, racism, cultural awareness, and the like, as needed to enhance effectiveness as facilitators for congregational acceptance of the cross-racial and cross cultural appointment.

THE CABINET’S WORK AFTER THE APPOINTMENT

1. Supporting the pastor²⁶

After the cross-racial or cross-cultural appointment is made the Cabinet must provide the necessary support for the pastor and family for at least two years by:

- a. Identifying and preparing persons who will be supportive of the pastor’s spouse and children. (Network for children very important)
- b. Providing pastors with a support system of other pastors and families involved in similar experiences.
- c. Insuring that the Church has a supportive, knowledgeable person as church secretary. (The person in this position is critical to an effective transition).
- d. Insuring that other pastors in the district support the appointment. They should not undermine the appointment in ways such as offering to

²⁶ Jones, pp. 16-17 and Hackbardt, pp. 8-9

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provide services, comfort and other forms of ministry to non-supportive members.

- e. Being sensitive to possible media interest in the appointment and plan the desired response.
- f. The DS must clearly define some expectations from the pastor and the Church and get them to develop a covenant by which they can minister together.
- g. Encouraging intercessory prayer groups that will lift the pastor as well as the pastor's spouse and children up before God.
- h. The Bishop, the District Superintendent and the Cabinet will work with pastors who may be involved in cross racial and cross cultural appointments initially and throughout their ministry.
- i. Concerns will be heard such as "how my family will be received; ability to adjust to different worship experiences and the effect this appointment will have on my salary and future appointments."
- j. Working collaboratively with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee to ensure that adequate support groups are provided for the pastor, the pastor's spouse and children.
- k. A support group is appropriate for the pastor and family within the congregation.
- l. Congregations are to be made aware that the pastor and family have a need of other support groups beyond the local congregation and with other congregations.
- m. The Bishop, the Cabinet and all pastors in the Conference need to support and affirm the cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

2. Supporting the Congregations²⁷

Steps to take place with the congregation which will be receiving a specific cross racial or cross cultural appointment is pending or in process.

- a. Training for local congregations who will receive cross racial or cross cultural appointments will include open discussion of dreams and fears.
- b. Appointments will be fixed and announced as early as possible

²⁷ Hackbardt, pp. 7-8 and Jones, pp. 16-17.

prior to moving date in order that local congregation and incoming pastor may become acquainted before the present pastor moves.

- c. Possible ways this might be done: incoming pastor could preach a revival or lead a Bible study at the receiving church; a pulpit exchange, but not on the same Sunday for the present pastor needs to be present with the incoming pastor; joint visitation, if this is geographically possible.
- d. Having monthly meetings of the SPRC during the first year of the appointment.
- e. Providing multicultural education and elimination of racism training for church staff and on a volunteer basis for interested church members. Emphasis should include how racism and spiritual "mono-culture" is damaging to dominant culture persons as much as target groups.
- f. Having the congregation do a study of the "Charter for Racial Justice." (available from the Women's Division of the GBGM).
- g. Continual affirmation must be given to congregations that have entered into this covenant relationship for fulfillment of this new opportunity for ministry.
- h. Training and support for pastor-parish relations committees will be offered where there are cross racial and cross cultural appointments and available to any congregation.
- i. Arrangements are to be made for sharing of experiences among pastor-parish relations committees where cross racial and cross cultural appointments have occurred or are occurring.
- j. Special occasions for celebration are to be shared with the broader church (i.e., articles in *The Vision*, general publications, programs in neighboring congregations, conference and district events).

The United Methodist Church is not merely a sending mission body. It receives pastors and missionaries from other parts of the world. Hence The United Methodist Church is a site of mutuality in mission.

The church in the US is used to giving. Not receiving. In the ever-changing global context of mission being interpreted as "from everywhere to everywhere," the church in the US has to get used to receiving missionaries from other parts of the world.

GUIDELINES FOR PASTOR/STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE²⁹

Most local churches receiving a cross-cultural or cross-racially appointed pastor did not request the appointment. However, the appointment can be an opportunity to realize that many gifts which God gives are not requested. As a congregation receives a pastor of a different cultural or racial background, God offers it the gift of a new adventure. Some church leaders react as though such a gift is an interruption and problem. Yet others grasp the gift and follow the adventure. The choice rests with each congregation and with each church member.

The following guidelines support a cross-cultural or cross-racial ministry and strengthen local congregations. The vigorous leadership of the pastor/staff-parish relations committee can make the difference between a positive ministry and a "problem" ministry.

A. Develop a theological framework.

1. Read the Biblical stories as multicultural, cross-national, and cross-racial narratives.
2. Affirm as normal in our Judeo-Christian tradition God's pattern of working through multicultural ministry.
3. Understand and identify the cultural traits that are part of our daily lives, language, and faith. If you were to describe our culture to another person, what would you say?

B. As church members, affirm our cross-cultural world.

1. Form friendships with persons of other cultures and races, and move beyond your own culture and race.
2. As you form friendships with persons in other cultures and races, describe differences and similarities.
3. Observe and study cultures in your community.
4. Experiment with being bicultural or multicultural or multiracial in church. For example, learn the Lord's Prayer (or other simple Bible verses) in the first language of your pastor. Display posters that are bilingual. Learn and use simple words of greeting, thank-yous, or good-byes in your pastor's first language.

C. Get acquainted with your pastor and family.

1. Know that each pastor and family are unique, and that the fact that they

²⁸ Dharmaraj, p. 17.

²⁹ Pak, et al, pp. 33-35.

are from a different cultural or racial group is only one part of their identity. They are the same as any other pastoral family.

2. Be cognizant of the pinch an associate pastor may experience if they are from a different racial or cultural group than either the senior pastor or the congregation.
3. Celebrate birthdays and anniversaries (including ordination anniversaries) with the pastor and family. Enjoy being cross-cultural or cross-racial in these celebrations. When the pastor or family experience problems or have needs, provide help. Know that many clergy live as part of an extended family and that extended-family members may live across the state or across the world. Yet, these family relationships are integral to the day-to-day life of the pastor.
4. Identify and communicate with the congregation and community the gifts and graces your pastor/associate pastor brings to ministry.
5. Experience the culture of origin of your pastor/associate pastor and learn the history.
6. Facilitate the pastor's entrance into community organizations and events.
7. Communicate everything that you intend to communicate with the district superintendent with the pastor also. Approach problems as opportunities for gaining new insights together.

D. Practical issues

1. *Language.* When necessary, help the pastor with oral and written communication. (For example, in one local church the pastor handed out copies of his sermon prior to preaching, until such time that the congregation members were acquainted with his manner of speaking.) If the pastor would like to take an English-as-a-Second-Language course, help arrange to make this possible. Come to an agreement with the pastor about how to correct his or her mistakes in the English language. Be aware that humor can be particularly difficult to understand in another language. Take time to discover humor styles that can be shared. Remember: *No one can learn another language without someone correcting errors. At the same time, all of us make mistakes, even in our own language, and usually without being aware of these mistakes or being embarrassed by them.*
2. *Infrastructure and support.* Be aware of particular family needs-health, education, housing that the pastor and family may have. Cooperate with the pastor and district superintendent to respond positively.
3. *Salary and benefits package.* Take the initiative to ensure that all Annual Conference standards for clergy compensation, housing, insurance, and pension benefits are met. Clergy from other cultural backgrounds may not come forward to discuss these issues.
4. *Conference support system.* Establish relationships with other congregations in cross-cultural and cross-racial ministries, or ask the Annual

- Conference office for assistance. Such a support system can help to
- orient congregations to receive a cross-cultural or cross-racial pastor.³⁰
 - assist cross-cultural and cross-racial clergy to find resources about a church and a community.
 - recognize, strengthen, and celebrate cross-cultural ministry in the life of the annual conference.
 - assist clergy in cross-cultural appointments to form a supportive network among themselves.

The best way to welcome a new pastor to the parish is to give an appropriate farewell to the former pastor. Do not fault the Bishop or the Cabinet for the change of pastors. Pastoral change is part and parcel of the United Methodist Church's structure and ministry. All appointments are made for only one year at a time and the pastors are sent to any church within a conference where their gifts and graces could be used for the mission and ministry of the church.

[box]³¹

GUIDELINES FOR CROSS-APPOINTED CLERGY³²

If you are a clergy person anticipating, or engaged in, cross-cultural and/or cross-racial ministry, consider the following guidelines as a way to nurture your spirit and enliven your ministry.

A. Find theological and biblical grounding.

1. Affirm God as Creator of all humanity.
2. Celebrate diversity within God's creation.
3. Use Bible stories like these as a precedent for cross-cultural ministry:

³⁰ See case studies including a role-playing skit, liturgy and Biblical texts in the Appendices of Chester Jones' *Comprehensive Plan for Making Cross-Racial/Cultural Appointments in The United Methodist Church*.

³¹ Dharmaraj. p. 202.

³² Pak, et al, pp. 36-38.

- Peter's vision of unclean animals
- Paul's ministry to the Gentiles
- Many Old Testament stories

B. Know yourself.

1. Discover and affirm evidence of God's grace in your life and ministry.
 - Know that cross-cultural/racial ministry is an opportunity for God's inclusive love.
 - Remember you are worthy of your call. Claim your gifts for ministry.
2. Acknowledge your limitations in ministry.

C. Know the organization.

1. The structure of The United Methodist Church
2. *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*
3. The structure of the local church
4. The denomination's history, as well as the history of the local church and its community
5. Church functions
6. The mission of the church

D. Know the culture of the local church.

1. Assumptions about relating to authority figures that differ from your own
2. Expectations about time and its use
3. Rituals and observances
4. Taboos

I will never forget what my senior pastor told me when I entered the church ministry: "Build your church, your church will build you!"

[box]³³

³³ Dharmaraj, p. 72.

E. Know the congregation and the community.

1. Observe much and always learn.
2. Do lots of pastoral visitation.
3. Listen and clarify by summarizing conversations.
4. Be empathetic.
5. Keep personal integrity.
6. Communicate clearly.
7. Study demographics.
8. Use available resources-denominational, governmental, and private sector.
9. Learn the issues currently facing the church.
10. Learn how the congregation makes and carries out decisions.
11. Learn the congregation's history and its expectations of the pastoral office.

F. Provide positive leadership.

1. Build multiracial relationships and friendships.
 - a. Learn about the experiences of different ethnic groups.
 - b. Study racism with a core group.
 - c. Use the resources of the annual conference.
 - d. Use the indicators of racism provided by the General Commission on Religion and Race.
2. Be flexible by using multiple leadership styles; also be patient with the variety of leadership styles in the congregation.
3. Invite and use feedback about how people experience your leadership. Articulate God's call to the congregation and the gifts with which the congregation can respond to that call.
4. Live out your ordination to Word, Sacrament, Order; and
Service.

G. Care for self.

1. Relate to other clergy in cross-cultural appointments in the conference.
2. Select and use a mentor.
3. Build a support group.
4. Have family gatherings for cross-cultural clergy in the conference.
5. Plan and live for the "long haul."
6. Keep Sabbath time; use your "day off."

7. Take vacations.
8. Take a study leave yearly; take sabbaticals.
9. Do fun things-play.
10. Keep your family connected to your community and culture of origin.
11. Pray and practice a devotional life.
12. Exercise regularly.

H. Use the district superintendent.

1. Suggest pre-orientation for the local church.
2. Provide an orientation for the district superintendent and cabinet.
3. Relate to the district superintendent as a colleague, not just a superior.
4. Keep the district superintendent appraised regularly of your ministry.

RESOURCES

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*Cokesbury will have another book by these authors titled *Mutuality in Mission*, available for \$10 at conference or through the Service Center in Cincinnati.

Also available from the task force is the *Summary of Responses to Listening Sessions, March 2000* which may be helpful to new appointments.