

Responsibilities of Lay Members on Cooperative Parish Councils

In Your Local Church

1. Find out what people in your congregation want to do that would strengthen your church and could be done more effectively through the cooperative parish than by each church individually.
2. Interpret to the people of your church what the cooperative parish is, why it is important to work together, and how your church can benefit by working with other churches.
3. Make reports to your church after each cooperative parish council meeting about what the cooperative parish is doing presently and planning for the future.
4. Tell others in your congregation about cooperative parish activities and ministries, and encourage them to take part.
5. Encourage the other Council members from your church, including laity, youth and your pastor, to participate in cooperative parish council meetings with you.

At Cooperative Parish Council Meetings

1. Attend parish council meetings regularly. It is very important for lay members of Parish Council from all churches of the cooperative parish to get to know each other and to work together on a regular basis.
2. Present the hopes, feelings and needs of your church at parish council meetings as they go about the work of planning what the churches will do together.
3. Know the strengths of your congregation, what is being done well, and which persons have special abilities, gifts and talents. Be willing to share this with lay members of Parish Council from other churches of the cooperative parish to the benefit of all.
4. Bring ideas for special programs, mission projects and ministries that your church is interested in and feels might reach more persons by being carried out with other churches of the cooperative.
5. Be willing to work on a task group to plan projects you feel you are led to be involved in.

On Your Own or With Others

1. Read the Bible, meditate, and pray about the needs of:
 - a. Each church in your cooperative parish
 - b. Your community and its needs
 - c. The Church and the people throughout the world
2. Pray that Christians will be spiritually moved to serve and work together in response to these needs.

Adapted from *A Resource Notebook for Cooperative Parish Ministry* prepared for the *Cooperative Ministry Leadership Team, The United Methodist Church*. Editor: Harold W. McSwain. 1997.