



The United Methodist Church
Eastern Shore District, Virginia Conference

Tammy L. Estep, District Superintendent
Connie M. Owens, Administrative Assistant

November 17, 2011

To: 2011 Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee Chair:

From: Tammy L. Estep, District Superintendent

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY PROFILES: As most of you know, we are preparing to move into the appointment season. As the cabinet sits around the table to discern the gifts and graces of each pastor and attempt to match them with the mission and ministries of each church, we seek the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit and the churches and pastors involved. One of our greatest resources in our discernment process is the Church, Community and Pastoral Profiles. It is the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee responsibility for preparing the information in the Church Profile *and* Community Profile. The Committee may ask for input from their pastor and other lay leadership but it is your Committee's responsibility for the final profile. It is your responsibility to make sure the Church and Community Profiles accurately reflect the settings and missional needs of the congregation.

It is absolutely essential that every Pastor, Church, and Community Profile be reviewed and updated every year, *even if an appointment change is not anticipated*. Sometimes, for the good of the larger Body of Christ, the Bishop and Cabinet will make a move that a pastor and congregation are not expecting. When this happens, we literally look at the Church, Community, and Pastoral Profiles on our laptop computers as we discern the possibilities for appointments. Know that the appointment to your church will be based on the information you have given us through these profiles.

To access these profiles, you will need someone who has a computer and is computer literate. If you do not have such a person in your church, contact us here at the District Office for assistance.

To access your profiles:

1. Go to the Virginia Conference Website (www.vaumc.org)
2. Under the "Administrative Services" tab, click on "COLTS" (Church Online Tracking Service)
3. **IMPORTANT:** Read the instructions provided on the COLTS web page.
4. Use the link "Click here to log on COLTS" and enter your Church ID and your password. These are on the yellow paper attached to this letter. Should you misplace your ID and password, contact the District Office.
5. When you have completed the profiles, make a copy of the profiles for your Staff/Pastor Parish Committee to review and edit.
6. You have until Sunday, **January 15, 2012** to enter and edit your Profiles. After that date the Profiles will be locked by the Cabinet.

Our Vision Statement:

"We envision churches where all God's people are welcomed at table, nurtured and transformed to be Christ to others in the world"

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I cannot emphasize to you how important this process is for every church and every pastor, whether a move is anticipated or not. Please give this your faithful attention and honor the **January 15th** deadline.

APPOINTMENT PREFERENCE FORM: Included in this mailing is the Appointment Preference Form for your Committee, as well as the Appointment Review guidelines to assist you and your committee in its discernment. Your Committee will need to meet with the pastor concerning your preference and your pastor's preference in December or January. If you meet in December, you can include the new committee members of 2012 but they may not vote. If you meet in January, you are encouraged to include the outgoing class of 2011 in the discussion process but they may not vote. The incoming class of 2012 may participate in the discussion *and* vote only in the January meeting. Remember that your preference form should be completed and in my office no later than **Sunday, January 15, 2012**. Do not fill out or sign your pastor's Preference form until s/he has checked her/his preference and signed it. Please record the count of the vote on the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Form.

Let me remind you that all preferences by clergy and Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees are advisory to the Bishop and the Cabinet (see Guidelines for Appointment-Making and ¶ 431 2008 Book of Discipline). We seek to be faithful to the needs of the local church, the gifts and graces of each pastor, and the ministry of the Body of Christ as a whole. Sometimes that means a requested move doesn't happen, and sometimes it means a requested stay becomes a move because of a greater need elsewhere. Whenever a move is anticipated, I will schedule a meeting with the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee so we can discuss the missional needs and desires of the church. I will be meeting with each pastor during the months of December and January, no matter what preference s/he checked.

Thank you for all you do to serve the Body of Christ and to take the Good News of Jesus outside the walls of your church. If you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to call me or Connie. Blessings to each of you and the work you are doing.

ENCLOSURES:

- ✓ COLTS Church ID and password
- ✓ Preference Form for the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee and Pastor
- ✓ Appointment Review Guidelines
- ✓ Guidelines for Appointment-Making

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