

# **Personnel Policies**

## **St. James United Methodist Church**

Little Rock, AR

*This manual is presented for information only to clarify and answer questions concerning each staff member's employment. Policies and procedures can be changed by the Staff Parish Relations Committee at any time, with or without notice. This is not an employment contract, expressed or implied. Church employees are employees at will, and either the employee or the church may terminate the employment relationship with or without cause. No representative of St. James has the authority to enter into an agreement with an employee that is contrary to the foregoing. The policies contained in this manual supersede all previous written and unwritten policies of the Church.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***Welcome!***

The church staff is a team ministry serving Christ, His Church and the community. The value of each individual team member must be recognized, nurtured, and guided so that the effectiveness of the total team can be achieved. The responsibility for personnel lies with the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), which takes its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. Within the context of ministry, it is the desire of the church to provide all persons challenging, rewarding, and meaningful employment.

These policies are designed to serve as a source of information about the working environment and procedures of the church and its employee benefits. The information in this set of policies does not constitute a legally binding contract and is subject to ministry considerations as determined by the Senior Pastor in carrying out his or her responsibilities in accordance with The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

The effectiveness of the ministry of St. James United Methodist Church depends to a large extent on the quality of work of its staff and the part each staff member plays in achieving and maintaining a positive team spirit. Important in this regard are compliance with church policy and friendly relationships with other staff members, church members and visitors.

The SPRC wants this church to be known as a friendly, caring, and compassionate church both in its contact with community and in its day-to-day internal operations. The committee also sees each staff member as an important part of the total ministry of the church. It is expected that all staff members will work together to build an effective team and support a meaningful ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.

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## **DEFINITIONS OF EMPLOYEE POSITIONS, POLICIES & BENEFITS**

**Supervisors:** For the purpose of organization and management, staff members serve within a designated Ministry Area of the church (i.e.: Support Staff, Pastoral Care, Children, Youth). Each Ministry Area is overseen by a Supervisor, who serves as a support and resource person for those within his or her Area. This Supervisor is responsible for conducting interim and annual reviews for his or her personnel, based on personal, professional, and church goals and objectives.

**Associate Ministers:** When more than one pastor is appointed or employed at a local church, Associate Ministers are assigned to specific areas of ministry and are designated as Minister or Pastor of those defined areas in addition to duties as assigned by the Senior Pastor.

**Church Administrator:** Plans, manages and directs the Financial and Administrative aspects of the church by providing and supervising a support network of personnel, equipment and supplies in order to enable the Pastors and Program Staff of St. James to maintain their ministries with the congregation and in the community in a pleasant, orderly and efficient way.

**Church Lay Worker or Lay Employee:** A lay person employed either full or part-time in a local church, who is not eligible for, or interested in certification, consecration or ordination (Examples are: Administrative Assistants, Custodians, Support Personnel, etc.).

**Clergy:** Clergy includes all persons appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet for service in our church, and are indicated by the titles "Minister" and "Reverend". This includes Ordained Elders, Local Pastors and Deacons. Clergy may be appointed to serve as "Pastors"; others may serve exclusively as "Ministers" of various ministries. Elders and Local Pastors are not considered by law to be employees of St. James United Methodist Church.

**Deacons:** Deacons are ordained by the Bishop for "Word and Service" and have membership in the Annual Conference. Deacons are specialists who are hired by individual local churches to work in specific areas of ministry, serving under appointment by the Bishop.

**Executive Pastor:** One Associate Minister on staff may serve in an administrative capacity, charged with the day-to-day responsibilities regarding personnel and program issues. The Executive Pastor also executes pastoral and program responsibilities as needed or assigned by the Senior Pastor. The Executive Pastor makes executive decisions relating to the church in the absence of the Senior Pastor.

**Exempt and Non- Exempt Staff:** All staff members are designated either as "exempt" or "non-exempt" employees, which determines some of the elements of their employment. "Exempt" staff members, are defined by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and are considered professional, supervisory and/or program

employees. The administrative staff will normally be classified as "non-exempt." The job description will state whether the staff person is classified as "exempt" or "non-exempt" staff.

**Full-time Employee:** Employed for an average of 32 hours or more per week for an indefinite period of time. Employees with this classification are entitled to certain benefits as indicated below.

**Local Pastors:** Local Pastors are persons who have been certified by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry as having completed all the prescribed educational and Disciplinary requirements for service. They may serve in a full-time, part-time or student capacity. They are appointed by the Bishop to serve in local churches. Requirements for continuation as a local pastor include educational progress and evaluative oversight by the District and local church.

**Maintenance/Custodial Staff:**

These persons are employed either full or part-time to handle the maintenance and custodial needs of the church. The Maintenance/Custodial Staff is managed and supervised under the direction of the Church Administrator.

**Ordained Elders:** An Ordained Elder is a person who is ordained by the Bishop for "Word, Sacrament and Order" and has membership in the annual conference. Elders serve under the appointment of the Bishop.

**Part-time Employee:** Employed for less than 32 hours per week on an average basis. Employees in this category are entitled to some benefits (indicated below) on a pro-rated basis which are proportionate to actual hours worked during the calendar year.

**Program Staff:** Program staff members are employed either full or part-time in specific areas of ministry (i.e.: Youth, Children, Singles, etc.) as indicated by their job description. Program staff members are normally considered "exempt" employees.

**Senior Pastor:** When more than one pastor is appointed or employed at a local church, one is always designated as Senior Pastor, and charged with the ultimate leadership responsibilities. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Executive Pastor makes executive decisions relating to the church.

**Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC):** SPRC is elected by the Charge Conference of the church and consults with the Senior Pastor in regard to personnel decisions and issues, including hiring and firing, and the performance evaluation process. The SPRC also works to enhance and simplify communication within the church by serving as liaison between the pastors and staff, and the congregation, and interpreting the nature and function of the church's ministry. This committee takes its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

**Support Staff:** Employed either full or part-time to perform a specific task or fill a specific need in support of the programs and ministries of the church. The Support Staff is managed and supervised under the direction of the Church Administrator.

**Temporary Employee:** Employed for a limited period of time to perform a specific task or fill a specific need, as scheduled by the church; a temporary employee may be either full or part-time. Employees in this category generally have no benefits except those mandated by law.

**Tuition Based Ministries** (e.g. Learning Center, Life After School Elementary Weekday Ministries and Summer Possibilities): Including the Directors, these employees serve in extension ministries of St. James. All these staff members are covered by the provisions of this Personnel Policy. Exceptions from these policies must receive approval of the Senior Pastor and SPRC and will be included in the Administrative Policy statements of each Tuition Based Ministry. The expenses of all benefits of all staff members of Tuition Based Ministries shall be the responsibility of the respective boards of these ministries. Selection of Directors for the boards of Tuition Based Ministries is subject to approval by the Senior Pastor. Directors of these ministries are evaluated by both their own Boards and the Senior Pastor.

## **SPECIALIZED PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

The SPRC has the responsibility to develop, adopt and administer the personnel policies affecting all staff members. There may be specialized procedures and policies in addition to these Personnel Policies adopted in order to meet administrative needs of various programs and ministries. Matters not covered by these Personnel Policies may be addressed through Administrative Policies when appropriate, upon the approval of the Senior Pastor. Policies and procedures necessary for ministries that are in variance with these Personnel Policies must receive the approval of the Senior Pastor and SPRC and be stated in writing in the Administrative Policies document of these various ministries (e.g. policies relating to tuition-based ministries, nursery policies, etc.).

## **OFFICE HOURS**

The church office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Friday. For holidays or other uncommon circumstances, (e.g. inclement weather, construction, or an emergency) the church may be closed or the office hours shortened. Such will be assessed and determined by the Senior Pastor.

Regular work hours are expected of all employees. Support Staff work hours will be determined by the Church Administrator. Since Program Staff members' work days may vary depending on the ministry assigned, each Program Staff member is to announce and adhere to scheduled office hours, with the schedule approved by his or her supervisor and the Senior Pastor. Variations in any work schedule must be approved in writing by the Senior Pastor.

## **EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES**

All employees of St. James United Methodist Church (including tuition-based and extension ministries) are "employees at will" according to Arkansas State law. None of the personnel procedures or policies shall be interpreted or exercised to change this status.

It is the intent of the SPRC and of the church to afford equal and fair employment to all employees in the context of a religious ministry in accordance with the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

The Senior Pastor, and/or his/her designate, shall accept applications for all positions. Under the direction of the SPRC, the Senior Pastor shall hire and terminate all employees. Employment decisions relating to staff of tuition-based ministries will include input from the directors and boards of those ministries. All new personnel are hired for a probationary period of at least 90 days. At the end of this probationary period, the Senior Pastor may approve probationary staff as permanent staff. The SPRC shall provide regular input to the Senior Pastor in the job performance of all staff members, and shall serve as the final appellate authority for any employee grievances as indicated below.

Criminal History/Background Checks will be run on all persons applying for employment and on all staff members not under appointment. Credit checks may be required on persons who are determined by the SPRC and Senior Pastor to have jobs indicating a heightened level of responsibility and exposure (e.g. monetary responsibilities, the use of financial discretion, or security risks). Credit and background checks will be in accordance with state and federal law. Information received through checks that has no bearing on the person's ability to perform the job appropriately shall not be considered in employment considerations. Applicants and staff members shall be given an opportunity to challenge records they consider to be inaccurate that are revealed through the process.

All staff members must be able to perform the essential functions of their position (e.g. a kitchen employee may be required to carry heavy food platters, a janitor may be required to climb a ladder to replace a light bulb, etc.).

Staff members are expected to be good role models who provide a positive image of our local church and the United Methodist Church in the community as a whole. Religious beliefs and practices, personal conduct, and the Christian lifestyle of all staff members will be considered in the hiring and continued employment of persons for our church.

The church attempts to provide employees with clean and pleasant working facilities. Good housekeeping is not the sole responsibility of the custodians. It is also the responsibility of every employee. Cleanliness and orderliness promote safety, morale, and comfort. Employees are expected to help keep their offices and working areas orderly.

As a religious organization, our church may under the *United States Constitution* and applicable State and Federal laws, discriminate on the basis of religion, religious beliefs, and religious practices; however, our church will not discriminate in the hiring, continued

employment, and other personnel actions regarding staff employees on the basis of race, national origin, sex, age or disability.

Workers Compensation Insurance is maintained by the church. All staff members must report any injury on the job immediately after it occurs, or as soon as possible. Such report must be in writing, signed and dated by the staff employee.

## **STAFF SUPERVISION**

Support Staff members report to the Church Administrator. Administrative Assistant reports to the Senior Pastor.

Program Staff members report to their Supervisor.

Supervisors report to the Executive or Senior Pastor.

All clergy report to the Senior Pastor.

Staff members of tuition-based ministries and nursery workers report to designated supervisors, who report to the Senior Pastor.

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

There will be written job descriptions for each church position. Job responsibilities will be determined by the employee's Supervisor and approved by the Senior Pastor prior to submission to the SPRC. The Supervisor and the employee will consider the contents of the job description when evaluating job performance. The job description will state whether the employee is in an "exempt" or "non-exempt" status of employment.

## **STAFF MEMBER PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT EVALUATIONS**

### **Purpose**

The Staff Member Performance and Development process is a planning, tracking and assessment tool designed to enable and enhance each staff members' performance and productivity. The process is based on establishing and achieving goals through methods determined by both the administration and the staff member.

It is intended that this process be used to establish performance expectations that are clearly understood and easily measured. These results will assist leaders in making decisions regarding staff member development and salary compensation. As a result of implementing the process both the church and the staff member benefit by:

- Clearly stated and mutually held goals and objectives that will tie staff directly to yearly operational objectives.
- The ability to track performance against objectives and make timely modifications and adjustments to assure achievement of the desired results.
- Fair and consistent feedback on performance and methods used to achieve results.
- Establishment of a results-oriented administrative practice that balances support for the staff member while maintaining a focus on accomplishing the task.
- The ability to distinguish low from high performers and justify changes in compensation.

- Staff member strengths and development needs are identified and responded to.
- Staff members experience satisfaction through consistent and fair assessment of their performance based on verifiable and measurable results and practices.

The Staff Member Performance and Development Process encourages staff member input and participation in the planning process. In addition, the staff member provides information that assists the supervisor monitoring the desired objectives and in recalling and assessing the staff member's accomplishments throughout the assessment period.

Assessment and evaluation of staff members of tuition-based ministries and nursery workers may follow a different procedure than the following, upon approval of their boards, the Senior Pastor and SPRC.

### **Evaluation Document**

#### **Expectations of All Staff**

Some areas of evaluation will be inclusive of all staff members (e.g. positive attitude, focus in ministry area, dependability, initiative, etc.)

#### **Expectations of Supervisors**

Some areas of evaluation will be made of persons who have supervisory responsibilities (e.g. maintaining regular supportive contact of the persons they supervise, giving recognition and praise, holding their employees accountable, etc.)

#### **Expectations of Program Staff**

Some areas of evaluation will be made of all program staff (e.g. developing strong, vibrant lay ministry, taking wise, well thought-out risks of faith, etc.)

#### **Job-Specific Items**

Some areas of evaluation will be made relating to each staff member's specific areas of responsibility. Particular attention will be given to his or her job description in developing these items.

#### **Personal/Professional Goals**

Each staff member is encouraged to work with his or her supervisor in developing 3-5 personal/professional goals that will enhance his or her ministry and personal growth.

#### **Staff Member Input**

The performance assessment and review process encourages staff member input. In addition to outlining and submitting his or her ideas for goals, the staff member, prior to interim and annual reviews, provides the supervisor with a written account of accomplishments during the period being reviewed. Involving the staff member increases his or her acceptance of the process and provides added motivation to accomplish tasks and responsibilities.

### Performance Assessment & Development Review

As much as possible, the process should allow the supervisor objectively to measure the accomplishments achieved by the staff member. From the performance assessment, the supervisor should be able to identify and evaluate the staff member's leadership, specific job-related skills and developmental needs. The completed assessment form should provide information that is helpful in recommending compensation changes for the next year.

## **THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS**

### **Setting Goals and Objectives**

All goals and objectives shall be in agreement with the core values, mission, goals and objectives of the United Methodist Church and St. James United Methodist Church.

Expectations of all staff and expectations of all supervisors will be developed and established by the Senior Pastor with input from all staff members.

Each staff member will provide input to establish his or her job specific goals and objectives. The supervisor will be responsible for finalizing them.

Each program staff member will be given the opportunity to provide input for his or her own professional goals and objectives for the next year. They will work with their supervisor and fellow program staff members to define broad area goals, and specific and measurable objectives for meeting those goals for the year, in keeping with the overall goals outlined for the church.

All evaluation documents shall receive the approval of the Senior Pastor. A copy of the finalized goals and objectives will be provided to each staff member and his or her supervisor in order to track the staff member's progress.

### **Development of the Evaluation Document**

The staff member and his or her supervisor are responsible to recommend the staff member's evaluation document for the coming year prior to the beginning of the evaluation period. Each evaluation document will be final upon approval of the Senior Pastor. Changes in the evaluation document may be made during the year as a result of the review process or changing expectations, upon approval of the supervisor and Senior Pastor.

### **Interim Review Discussions**

The staff member will initiate a meeting with his or her immediate supervisor for each Interim Review (March/April, June/July). Prior to the meeting, the supervisor discusses the staff member's performance with the next level management. Using the evaluation document for reference, prior to the meeting the staff member evaluates his or her progress during the last time period, suggests their work priorities for the coming time period, notes any needs or concerns, suggests helpful changes in his or her annual goals, and requests any assistance that would help the staff member be more effective in his or her work. During the discussion with the staff member, the supervisor makes note of the staff member's input on an interim review form and develops a written plan for the staff member for the coming time period. This form is then initialed and dated by both the supervisor and staff member, which indicates the process was followed and that these goals were established. Copies of the final interim review form are kept by the staff member and supervisor.

### **Annual Review Discussions**

The staff member will initiate a meeting with his or her immediate supervisor for the Annual Review (October/November). Prior to the meeting, the supervisor discusses the staff member's performance with the next level management. Using the evaluation document, both the supervisor and staff member rank the staff member according to their understanding, and these rankings are discussed in the meeting between the two. During or following this discussion, the supervisor completes the final assessment form, which is then signed and dated by both the supervisor and staff member. The signatures indicate that the process was followed, not that full agreement was reached on the evaluation. The completed evaluation then is reviewed and signed by the Senior Pastor. Copies of the final evaluation form are kept by the staff member and supervisor. One copy is also placed in the permanent personnel file of the staff member.

### **PERFORMANCE SCORING KEY FOR THE ANNUAL REVIEW**

The performance rating scale is basic to all assessments regardless of a staff member's position. Each item, other than personal/professional goals, is ranked according to the following numerical system:

- 1- Did not meet expectation; poor effort; no results (must include comments)
- 2- Fell well short of expectation; below average effort and poor results
- 3- Fell short of expectation; average effort and poor results
- 4- Met expectation at a competent level, in terms of both expectations and results
- 5- Exceeded expectation in some aspects; good effort and adequate results
- 6- Exceeded expectation in numerous aspects; good effort and good results
- 7- Far exceeded expectation; exemplary effort and results (must include comments)

Assessment of achieving the personal/professional goals is made through discussion between the staff member and supervisor after the staff member provides information on how the goals have been addressed.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING PERFORMANCE**

When assessing a staff member's performance, the supervisor considers the following guidelines:

- Assessments include objective, specific statements about accomplishments, and observable behaviors. When possible, measures or results are quantified and qualified.
- The performance results are those that can be observed by the supervisor and others the staff member may ask to provide feedback on a periodic basis. When a staff member receives work direction from another leader/supervisor, the performance is jointly assessed or the other leader/supervisor is asked for feedback on performance.
- Staff members who perform the same job should be evaluated using the same criteria.
- A staff member's performance is assessed on the extent to which he or she fulfills his or her goals and objectives, rather than on how well he or she performs compared to other staff members.

Should a staff member's performance evaluation show an inability or unwillingness to accomplish his or her ministry goals or should the employee's low evaluation rating reveal an inability or unwillingness to improve, that employee may be terminated by the Senior Pastor.

## **COMPENSATION**

### **Salary Determination**

The key objectives of St. James' compensation practices are to ensure internal equity and external competitiveness. Internal equity means that each employee's salary is compared to others at similar levels of responsibility and performance within the church. External competitiveness means that each employee's salary is compared to jobs at other churches of similar size and circumstance.

The SPRC shall review annually, prior to the development of the upcoming yearly budget, the compensation of all staff. The SPRC will report to the Finance Committee, the Board of Stewards and Charge Conference the maximum compensation available for staff positions for the next fiscal year. The Senior Pastor will make alterations in compensation schedules during the year within the guidelines established by the SPRC.

The wages of an individual shall remain confidential between the SPRC and the individual. Paydays are the fifteenth and the last day of the month unless those days fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday. In such cases, paychecks will be distributed on the last working day prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> or last day of the month.

Salaries of staff members in tuition-based ministries will be established by the boards of these ministries, after input from the director of the ministry and approval of the Senior Pastor. Wages of individual staff members shall remain confidential. Alterations in compensation schedules may be made by the Director of the program within the guidelines established by their board.

## **Overtime and Compensatory Time**

The Senior Pastor may award compensatory time to compensate for excessive hours worked by pastoral, program and exempt staff in the execution of required duties. There shall be no overtime pay for pastoral, program or exempt staff.

Staff members classified as non-exempt employees will be entitled to time-and-one-half compensation or compensatory time (time off) when they exceed 40 hours per week. Overtime and compensatory time should be approved in writing in advance by the employee's supervisor and by the Senior Pastor.

Overtime compensation will be paid at a rate of one and one half times the hourly rate, times the number of hours worked that exceeded 40. Compensatory time for non-exempt employees will be equal to the number of hours worked exceeding 40. Compensatory time for exempt employees will be determined by the Senior Pastor after consultation with the affected employee.

Compensatory time must be taken within the same pay period in which the overtime took place. If there is not enough time remaining in the pay period to accommodate the compensatory hours, they must be taken during the next pay period. Compensatory time cannot be accumulated for use at a later date.

The scheduling of compensatory time to be taken by the staff will be approved by the Supervisor and the Senior Pastor.

Any exceptions to the above procedures for overtime or compensatory time must receive the written approval of the Senior Pastor.

## **Changes in Compensation**

Changes in compensation normally happen at the beginning of a new fiscal year. Changes will be based on information from the employee's formal evaluation, available funds from church and other resources, and other relevant information from church life.

If church finances cannot accommodate staff raises for any given year, the performance evaluation results will be utilized in the determination of additional time off, with pay. The amount of time will be determined by the Senior Pastor, in consultation with the SPRC.

Total compensation includes salary and benefits. Therefore, changes in benefits (insurance, pension, etc.) must be made only when a staff member's total compensation package is considered.

## **Incentives**

Provision will be made in the annual budget for discretionary funds to be used by the Senior Pastor to provide opportunities to encourage, thank and express appreciation to staff members as a group.

All full-time appointed clergy and employees who have worked at St. James for at least five consecutive years may, during the sixth year, be awarded a four-week paid sabbatical in addition to earned paid vacation time. This sabbatical must be scheduled through and approved by the Senior Pastor in January of the year the employee intends to take it. At that time, the employee must offer a plan that will enable the continuance of work responsibilities, minimizing the need to utilize temporary employees in their absence. All four sabbatical weeks must be taken at the same time in order to insure complete rest. The sabbatical may not be taken in conjunction with vacation time.

## **HOLIDAYS**

The church office will be closed, and all full-time employees shall receive equivalent time off for authorized holidays. When the holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday will be observed. When a holiday falls on a Sunday, the succeeding Monday will be observed.

The following holidays are authorized: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day (and the day after), Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

When a holiday falls during an employee's vacation, an additional vacation day shall be allowed, either as an extension of the vacation or at another time. When a holiday falls during an employee's sabbatical, no holiday pay is provided.

When a holiday falls on a full-time employee's regular day off, a substitute paid day off shall be given by his or her supervisor at the earliest appropriate working day, with the approval of the Senior Pastor.

Part-time employees are not entitled to holiday pay.

## **VACATION**

Vacation is a time of rest and renewal, and is provided as a benefit to both staff members and the church.

### **A. Full-time Employees:**

Vacations are earned after a full calendar year of employment for all full-time employees as follows:

Two workweeks after one full calendar year of service.

Three workweeks after seven full calendar years of service.

Four workweeks after twelve full calendar years of service.

### **B. Part-time Employees:**

Vacations are earned after a full calendar year of employment on a pro-rated basis as follows:

Two workweeks after one full calendar year of service.

Three workweeks after seven full calendar years of service.

Four workweeks after twelve full calendar years of service.

C. Clergy (Elders, Local Pastors, Deacons):

Vacations are earned as follows:

Two workweeks after one full calendar year of service under full-time appointment in the United Methodist Church.

Three workweeks after seven full calendar years of service under full-time appointment in the United Methodist Church.

Four workweeks after twelve full calendar years of service under full-time appointment in the United Methodist Church.

Part-time clergy shall receive two workweeks vacation.

Employees must request vacation time giving adequate notice for full consideration by their supervisor. The Senior Pastor shall approve the vacation schedule, taking into consideration the requests of each staff member and the recommendation of their supervisor, so that the work of the church will not be handicapped and the need to employ temporary staffing may be minimized.

Vacation time may be divided. It is highly recommended however, that when an employee has two or more weeks of vacation time, that one period be at least one week in length.

Vacation time is not cumulative from one year to the next. Under no circumstances will an employee be given additional pay for vacation not taken, unless circumstances within the church prevented the employee from taking vacation time.

### **SICK LEAVE**

Sick leave is provided as a means to furnish employees increased economic security at a time of unexpected, prolonged or serious illness. Sick leave is not to be considered as a benefit earned, as with vacation time. It is a benefit intended to provide for long-term illness when the employee has the most need for sick pay and to minimize the disruption of family finances. Sick leave may not be taken for other reasons than those indicated herein.

Sick leave benefits will begin to accrue for all employees who have completed three months continuous service. Full-time staff members earn sick leave at the rate of one workday per month. Part-time staff members who work a minimum of 10 hours per week earn sick leave on a pro rata basis determined by the number of hours worked. Part-time staff members who work less than 10 hours per week are provided no sick leave benefit.

Unused sick leave may be carried over, up to a maximum of 36 days, into the next calendar year for situations of extended illness. Unused sick leave is not reimbursable. Disposition of cases of illness lasting over 36 days will be at the discretion of the SPRC, upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

Employees who become ill while on duty must report at once to their respective supervisor. Otherwise, illness should be reported to their supervisor as early as possible prior to the beginning of that day's work. Failure to report an illness could result in forfeiture of sick leave pay.

If an employee has over three (3) consecutive days, or repeated absenteeism due to illness, a certificate signed by the attending physician must be submitted to the respective supervisor.

Staff members will obtain the standard "Request For Time Off" form and submit it to their supervisor immediately upon return to work after illness or medical appointment. Sick leave is granted for the staff member's actual illness or medical appointment, or medically necessary care of a staff member's immediate family who lives in the central Arkansas area or their medical appointment. The staff member's immediate family shall be limited to the following: father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, son, daughter, in-laws, grandparents, grandchildren, and stepparent or stepchild of staff member or spouse. A person living in the household of the staff member or spouse as a sole dependent of either will also be included.

The Church Administrator will maintain a record of all staff member's sick leave, indicating whether the time missed is paid or unpaid sick leave.

The Church Administrator will inform the staff member and his/her supervisor when the staff member has multiple illness occurrences exceeding six work days in any six month period.

Misuse of sick leave privileges may be cause for dismissal.

Upon termination of employment, the staff member loses all claim to accumulated sick leave.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

It is the church's policy to be open during normal church office hours, and to minimize closures due to inclement weather. The weather will be determined as inclement by the Senior Pastor, if he or she feels conditions are such that it would seriously hamper employees coming to work or returning home from work.

- A. Prior to working hours: Unless otherwise notified, staff members are expected to report to work on time. When inclement conditions are determined, staff members are expected to arrive at work as soon as safely possible. If the church office is open, staff members may take vacation leave or leave without pay for any additional time absent from work beyond what was allowed for inclement weather.
- B. During working hours: If weather conditions become hazardous during working hours, staff members may request permission from their supervisor or the Senior Pastor to leave early. If the staff member receives permission to leave early during time the church office is open, the staff member may do so by using vacation leave, leave without pay, or with agreement of the supervisor, if overtime pay is not required, the missed time will be made up within the next two week period.

## **SPECIAL ABSENCES**

A "Special Absence" may be described as one for any of the reasons listed below. Arrangement for this leave must be made in advance with the respective supervisor.

### **Death in the immediate family:**

Absence for death in the immediate family shall not exceed three days with pay. The employee's immediate family shall be limited to: father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, son, daughter, in-laws, grandparents, grandchildren, and stepparent or stepchild of employee or spouse. A person living in the household of the employee or spouse as a sole dependent of either will also be included. Additional time off for such situations may be authorized as leave without pay or vacation time by the Senior Pastor.

### **Jury Duty:**

Any employee who is summoned to serve on a jury will be excused from work while serving on the jury. The employee will be entitled to salary less jury pay.

When summoned, the employee should notify his or her supervisor immediately, and the employee will be expected to work during normal working hours except for the time the employee's presence is required in court.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

A leave of absence is an absence approved by the Senior Pastor and SPRC that is for a specific purpose (e.g. medical, personal, family, maternity, paternity, educational or military) and for a specific period of time that does not exceed 12 weeks within any 12 month period of time (measured from the date a leave of absence is used). To be eligible for a leave of absence the staff member must have been employed at St. James UMC for at least 12 months and must have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours during the 12 months before the leave begins.

A leave of absence must be requested and approved in advance, unless unavoidable circumstances prevent such process. Circumstances relating to the leave of absence must be agreed in writing and must include agreements concerning insurance coverage, pension and other benefits during the leave.

Leaves of absence must first use any accrued vacation time. Once vacation time is exhausted, the balance of the leave will be unpaid. In the case of medical leave, accrued sick leave shall also be used prior to the leave becoming unpaid. Accrued vacation and sick leave time shall be used for Maternity or Paternity Leave prior to the leave becoming unpaid. Leave may be taken to care for an employee's newborn child, but this leave must be completed within twelve months after the birth. Leave may be taken for care of an adopted infant, but this leave must be completed within twelve months of the adoption.

Intermittent or reduced-schedule leave can be taken when there is a medical necessity or when the Senior Pastor approves such leave for conditions other than medical necessity.

An employee must present a doctor's certification to support a request for medical leave for a serious health condition. Medical leave may be taken for the staff member or if the staff member must provide care for his or her spouse, son, daughter or parent. The doctor's certification must include a description of the condition; the probable length of the condition, and an estimate of the length of care required. When medical leave is for the staff member, the doctor's certification must also state that the staff member is unable to perform the function of his/her position. Periodic reports and recertification updates may be required regarding the status of the medical condition and the staff member's intention to return to work. Failure to provide these periodic reports will result in suspension of the approved leave and disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Under normal circumstances, the request for leaves of absence must be made thirty days in advance of the leave date. An emergency leave request will be processed as soon as possible.

All leave of absence requests (both approved and disapproved) will be acknowledged by direct contact with the Senior Pastor. If disapproved, the reasons for denial will be explained in writing.

During leaves of absence both vacation and sick leave time continues to accrue while using paid leave. However, benefit accruals, such as vacation and sick leave are suspended while on unpaid leave of absence. These benefits will resume upon return to active employment.

Leaves of absence may not be provided or the employee may not be reinstated from leave if:

- 1) the employee advises the church that s/he will not return to work, in which case the employment relationship is deemed terminated and the employee's entitlement to reinstatement ceases,
- 2) the employee fraudulently obtains leave, in which case the church will not restore the employee's job, or
- 3) the employee accepts other employment while on leave, in which case the employee will not be entitled to any benefits, if any, allowed during the leave period, and their employment may be terminated.

Upon returning from a leave of absence, the employee must be aware of the following:

- The Senior Pastor must be notified at least ten days before the proposed return date. Failure to do this could result in a delay in the employee's return.
- Staff members returning from medical leave must have a statement from their attending physical allowing them to return to work.
- If an employee returns to work within the time period established for the leave, reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same job he or she left. However, due to conditions in the church or staff, employees may not be given their same job when they return, but in that situation will be given an equivalent position in the church staff.
- An equivalent position would involve as much as possible the same or substantially similar duties, responsibilities and compensation as the employee's previous position. It would also entail substantially equivalent skills, effort, responsibility and authority.

## **JOB-RELATED CONTINUING EDUCATION AND STUDY**

Time for job-related continuing education and study may be given to program and pastoral staff, upon approval of the staff member's supervisor and the Senior Pastor. Support staff may also be given time for job-related continuing education and study, upon approval of their supervisor and the Senior Pastor. Such time may be with pay. A written request with sufficient notice (approximately three weeks) is to be provided to the Senior Pastor. Continuing Education and Study Leave shall not exceed two weeks annually.

Such leave may be granted by the Senior Pastor on whatever schedule deemed appropriate and acceptable to the staff member and his or her supervisor, whether by the hour, day, week or in one continuing period, including any combination of such times.

Education may take place on the premises, as in study time or the demonstration of equipment, or away from the church, as in workshops, seminars and school classes.

A fund shall be established to help towards the expenses of such education. Assistance in the expenses of staff members of tuition-based ministries for job-related continuing education and study shall be paid by the budgets of those ministries. The amount available to staff members shall be defined in each year's budget and may be dispensed only upon approval of the Senior Pastor.

One-half of the annual education time may be accumulated over a period of time up to six years in order to provide extended study, upon approval of the Senior Pastor.

Continuing Education and Study Time is in addition to, not in the place of, vacation.

### **BENEFITS SUMMARY**

	Full-time Employees	Part-time Employees	Temporary Employees
Holiday benefits	Yes	No	No
Vacations	Yes	Pro-rated	No
Sick Leave	Yes	Pro-rated**	No
Leave of Absence w/o Pay	Yes	Pro-rated	No
Special Absences	Yes	Pro-rated	No
Worker's Compensation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social Security	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wage & Hour Laws	Yes	Yes	Yes

Insurance	Yes	No	No
Pension	Yes	Yes*	No

(\*20 hours/week or more)  
(\*\*10 hours/week or more)

## INSURANCE

Individual medical, dental and life insurance coverage is offered to all full-time staff members. Insurance for Ordained Elders will conform to recommendations of the Arkansas Area of the United Methodist Church. Insurance coverage for all clergy (Ordained Elders, Lay Pastors, Deacons) shall be the same. Insurance costs for staff members of tuition-based ministries will be paid by the budgets of these ministries.

If an employee elects not to be enrolled in the insurance program because of coverage under a spouse's policy, no other benefit or monetary remuneration will be provided to the employee. Coverage is available for a lay employee's spouse and children at the employee's expense. Arrangements for family member coverage must be made with the Church Administrator.

Changes in insurance coverage must be accomplished at a time in which the staff member's total compensation package is considered.

## PENSION

Lay employees working twenty (20) hours per week after 24 months of continuous employment at St. James are offered the opportunity to participate in a pension plan maintained and managed by the General Board of Pensions of the United Methodist Church. Employees must contribute at least two percent (2%) of his/her salary, and an amount equal to four percent (4%) of the individual's compensation shall be contributed by the church into the plan. These funds are fully vested to the individual and payable according to the stipulations of the pension program.

Pensions for ordained elders and local pastors are provided through apportionments paid to the Arkansas Annual Conference. Pensions for deacons shall be on the same level as that for ordained elders and local pastors and shall be paid to the General Board of Pensions of the United Methodist Church. Pension costs for staff members of tuition-based ministries will be paid by the budgets of these ministries.

Changes in pension plan participation must be made at a time in which the staff member's total compensation package is considered.

## **WORKER'S COMPENSATION**

All employees are covered under Worker's Compensation insurance and should report all related accidents, illnesses, or injuries immediately to their supervisor and Church Administrator, who in turn will notify the Senior Pastor.

## **F.I.C.A.**

All employees are covered by F.I.C.A.. All categories are covered under applicable state and federal labor laws and regulations. Clergy are considered self-employed for F.I.C.A. purposes.

## **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Because of the nature of the work done in the church, there will be confidential information handled by staff members. It is expected that all staff members will keep such information confidential. Breach of confidentiality is reason for immediate termination.

## **APPEARANCE**

In carrying on the work of the church our employees will come into contact with our congregation and church visitors. As their work will be under the constant appraisal of those people they come in contact with as they perform their duties, it is necessary for employees to present a favorable, clean and neat appearance.

## **CONSULTATION PROCEDURE**

When an employee or supervisor becomes aware of matters of importance relating to the employment and/or performance of any employee, or other personnel concern, he or she is to fill out a Consultation Form and follow the following process. A Consultation Form may be used in the resolution of the following issues:

- 1) a performance improvement issue,
- 2) the sharing of a grievance,
- 3) consultation on employment issues between an employee and the employee's supervisor, or
- 4) other issues of concern to an employee or his/her supervisor.

Blank Consultation Forms are available from the Church Office. Information recorded in the form should be concise and specific, with time and date references.

After the form is filled out, the person completing it shall make an appointment with his/her supervisor or employee to discuss the issue. All information relative to the consultation should be recorded on the form. The supervisor shall have the responsibility of providing an appropriate response or corrective procedure as a result of the consultation, if such is needed, and indicate it on the form. At the conclusion of the session in which the consultation is held, both parties shall sign the Consultation Form. Signing the form does not necessarily

indicate agreement between the two parties, but rather that the consultation was held and the issues were discussed as indicated. The completed and signed Consultation Form shall become part of the employee's permanent file. Both parties will also receive copies of the completed and signed Consultation Form.

Appeals on decisions made through this process shall be made to the Senior Pastor, who shall make a determinative decision on the issues concerned. The final appellate authority on all personnel issues shall be the SPRC.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY**

St. James United Methodist Church affirms the policies and procedures of the United Methodist Church stating that sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship and sexual harassment within the church is incompatible with biblical teachings of hospitality, justice and healing. Sexual Harassment is described as, "any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive." Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as exclusively a sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender. St. James United Methodist Church has a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment.

Employees are expected to maintain a productive work environment, free from sexual harassment in the form of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or offensive environment.

Supervisors have the responsibility of maintaining a productive work environment for employees, free from any form of harassment and in particular, sexual harassment. No supervisor can create an environment that is sexually offensive or hostile for employees. Nor can supervisors or managers threaten or insinuate either explicitly or implicitly that an employee's refusal or willingness to submit to sexual conduct will affect the employee's job.

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader or other position of authority) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a member of the congregation, a client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker or volunteer. Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship involves a betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of ministerial role and exploitation of those who are vulnerable.

Misconduct of a sexual nature within the life of the church interferes with our moral mission. St. James United Methodist Church stands in opposition to the sin of misconduct of a sexual nature in the church and in society at large. St. James United Methodist Church commits itself to fair and expedient investigation of any charge of sexual misconduct within the church, and resolves to take immediate appropriate action in compliance with The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. Further, St. James United Methodist Church bears affirmative responsibility to create an environment of hospitality for all persons, male or female, which is free of misconduct of a sexual nature and encourages respect, equality and kinship in Christ.

Some cases of sexual harassment can be resolved informally between the parties. In all other instances, misconduct of a sexual nature should be reported to the Senior Pastor. If the conduct involves a clergy person, it should be reported to the Chairperson of the SPRC and the District Superintendent, or in their absence, the presiding Bishop.

### **PROCEDURE FOR RESOLUTION**

If you experience what you consider inappropriate behavior from a church volunteer or a member of the church staff, you may choose to inform the person of the inappropriateness of the behavior and demand that the behavior cease. If you choose not to confront the person alone, or if the behavior persists, ask someone to accompany you to confront the accused. Make every attempt at reconciliation. If you do not wish to confront the person, if the behavior persists, or the behavior places you or someone else in a position of danger, report the incident to your Supervisor and the Senior Pastor.

Keep a written record of your experiences including dates, times, places, witnesses and circumstances. Keep any written material you may have received from the person. Then present a written complaint to the Senior Pastor that includes:

- 1) Name of the accuser,
- 2) Name of the accused,
- 3) Nature of the alleged violations,
- 4) Dates of the occurrences,
- 5) Names of any witnesses to the occurrences,
- 6) Place of the occurrences,
- 7) The resolution you seek, and
- 8) Your signature and the date the complaint is filed

In every instance of a child's or youth's report of experiencing inappropriate behavior, the adult who receives the report shall immediately forward the complaint to the Senior Pastor. According to Arkansas law, any person receiving a report from a child under the age of 18 indicating sexual abuse of that child is required to report the abuse to the proper authorities. Instances involving adults shall be reported to the Senior Pastor.

The Senior Pastor will conduct an examination of the complaint with the tact and discretion appropriate to the circumstances. Action will be taken as quickly as possible, but adequate time must be provided for obtaining all the facts relating to the harassment charge. Confidentiality will be respected as much as possible. Complete confidentiality may not be guaranteed, due to the nature of the grievance. The accuser must provide adequate documentation. No person shall be penalized or subject to retaliation for filing a complaint of sexual harassment in good faith or cooperating in the investigation of such a complaint. While St. James United Methodist Church is committed to prohibiting sexual harassment and encourages employees to report such actions promptly, malicious false accusations will not be tolerated and appropriate action will be taken, up to and including termination.

The Senior Pastor will make a decision as to the validity of the charges and will determine the degree of discipline for the harasser and/or accuser. If any staff member is found after an

appropriate investigation to have engaged in sexual harassment, prompt remedial action, up to and including termination, will be taken to stop the harassment and to prevent its recurrence. If conflicts remain unresolved regarding staff personnel, the SPRC Chair and Senior Pastor shall convene a meeting with the accused, the person bringing the accusation, and each supporting person and will attempt to come to an agreeable resolution of the issues. The SPRC will be the final appellate authority on all harassment charges.

Procedures for dealing with sexual harassment/sexual ethics issues shall be in accordance with and amenable to The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

### **MOONLIGHTING POLICY**

St. James UMC does not wish to interfere with employees' personal affairs or control their time away from the church. However, with the understanding that other employment may interfere with the accomplishment of church responsibilities, and in order to ensure St. James remains each staff member's first priority with regard to employment, full-time employees shall have no job outside the church, without written approval of the Senior Pastor. Part-time employees may hold outside jobs, with the express understanding that such a job should not interfere with the schedule and conditions of employment at the church.

### **SMOKING, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

Smoking by employees is not permitted in buildings of the church. Employees are expected to report to work with no residual effect of smoking, drugs and/or alcohol. Any conviction or verification of the use of illegal drugs may result in immediate suspension or termination.

### **TERMINATION**

With regard to the "employment at will" policy of the church, the following items apply:

1. Staff members are not authorized to say or do anything that is inconsistent with this "at will" policy.
2. Nothing contained in this manual, or in any other documents provided by St. James UMC shall form any basis for an employment contract that will change or otherwise amend the "at will" policy.
3. Nothing contained in this manual, or in any other documents provided by St. James UMC shall constitute any guarantee to continued employment.

A full-time employee wishing to terminate his or her employment shall give notice in writing to the Senior Pastor at least 30 days, prior to termination. Part-time employees are expected to give two weeks notice, exclusive of vacation time, in writing to the Senior Pastor. Staff members of tuition-based ministries will provide notice to the director of the ministry. Failure to give this notice may result in loss of accumulated vacation time, and will be documented in the employee's file for future reference.

Termination of an employee caused by reorganization of the church staff shall require 30 days notice given to the employee.

## **INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION**

An employee deemed to be doing unsatisfactory work shall be informed of such by the employee's supervisor during his or her performance assessment and development review or through the consultation procedure. Because employment is at will, the Senior Pastor may, in his or her discretion, terminate the employment at that time or at any time thereafter. If, however, the decision is made not to immediately terminate the employee and to evaluate the employee's improvement for an additional period, it is understood that the Senior Pastor retains the right to terminate the employee if the required improvement is not made within the additional period.

Termination for cause is not required since each employee is an at will employee. However, if it is determined that cause exists for termination, that shall be a decision of the Senior Pastor, after appropriate consultation with the employee's supervisor. In that circumstance, the employee may request a hearing with SPRC for reconsideration of the dismissal for cause. Employees of tuition-based ministries must first apply to the board of the ministry for reconsideration of their dismissal for cause.

Certain serious types of conduct (theft, criminal charges, insubordination, and any other conduct which the Senior Pastor reasonably determines to be incompatible with the ministry of the church) may result in immediate termination of the employee by the Senior Pastor regardless of any other provision herein. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Executive Pastor or Chairperson of SPRC may terminate the employee, or authorize the employee's supervisor to terminate the employee. If the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor or Chairperson of SPRC cannot be reached immediately, the employee's supervisor may immediately suspend the employee until action is taken by the Senior Pastor.

## **TERMINATION PAY**

Termination pay shall include pay for any unused vacation time due, except in the case of voluntary termination (resignation) without proper notice, and involuntary termination. Accumulated sick leave is not included in any form of termination pay.

## **EXIT INTERVIEW**

Any employee terminated for any reason may have an interview with his or her supervisor, the purpose of which shall be to discuss performance and to outline all remaining aspects of the employee's job in detail in order to make possible the transition of that position to the next employee. This interview and its contents shall be documented in the employee's personnel file.

*These personnel policies affect and control all employment situations at St. James UMC, and are meant to be in accord with, and subordinate to The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. They are intended to be in the best interest of all employees, the church and its members, within the resources of the church.*

10/05