



The Ministry of Circuit Elders

PURPOSE

Circuit Elders serve as an extension of the District Office, which is an extension of the Episcopal Office, to encourage vitality in congregations, so that congregations make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world.

OUTCOMES OF A HEALTHY & VITAL CIRCUIT ELDER INITIATIVE

1. Greater mission field engagement among congregations in the circuits
2. Measurable growth in small membership churches
3. Local pastors and lay supply preachers will experience encouragement in their ministry
4. Congregations and clergy will experience the connectional relationships
5. Circuit Elders will gain experience and equipping as leaders in their circuits and in their appointments

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS/TASKS:

Collaborate with the District Superintendent to fulfill Administrative Functions by:

1. Assist pastors in preparing for charge conference and other connectional administrative responsibilities
2. Preside at charge conferences as requested by the District Superintendent
3. Serve as Clergy Mentors to local pastors in their circuits who have not completed COS
4. Monitor sacramental practice in churches served by lay supply preachers, assuring that Sacraments are appropriately celebrated in local congregations
5. Communicate regularly with the DS regarding the ministry of the churches on the circuit

Collaborate with the District Superintendent as Chief Missional Strategist by:

1. Encourage prayerful discernment and discussion of Charge Conference Mission and Ministry Questions
2. Resource the DS/CMS and the District Strategy team by identifying opportunities for missional growth and fresh expressions of faith communities
3. Facilitate strategic missional assessments in congregations as requested by the District Superintendent, including utilizing Discipline Paragraph 213 as a guide for conversation as directed.

Embody the United Methodist Connection by:

1. Inform the District Office of special events happening around the circuit
2. Attend special events of the circuit as a representative of the connection if possible
3. Provide pastoral care to the clergy and lay supply preachers in the circuit, and keep the District Office informed of situations of concern.
4. Assist pastors with questions of ministry practice

**Creating vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ,
who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world.**

EXPECTATIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

The Ministry of Circuit Elders

Circuit Elders

1. Attend Circuit Elders training programs and required meetings
2. Fulfill essential functions of the Circuit Elder role
3. Communicate with DS regularly (*use @arumc.org email*)
4. Be readily available to the circuit pastors and circuit congregations
5. Hold conversations and circuit work as a sacred trust with the congregations, pastors and district superintendent

District Superintendent

1. Communicate with Circuit Elders (individually and in groups) regularly
2. Communicate with Circuit Elders' SPRCs concerning the role and time requirements of serving as a Circuit Elder
3. Be available for conversation and collaboration concerning local church potential and congregational issues
4. Provide clear boundaries for Circuit Elder authority
5. Provide clarity of purpose for designated missional circuit and other strategic connectional relationships
6. Communicate plans and schedule for Sacramental celebration in congregations served by lay supply preachers
7. Share appropriate contextual mission field information with Circuit Elders

Pastors and Assigned Supply Preachers in the Circuit

1. Attend Circuit gatherings
2. Communicate with Circuit Elder regularly
3. Complete and submit reports in a timely manner

Churches in the Circuit

1. Prayerfully participate in missional conversations.
2. Utilize the Circuit Elder as the initial contact for questions of practice, policy, and polity
3. Collaborate with pastor to have charge conference packets completed and submitted as required

Center for Vitality

1. Resource congregations for vitality in ministry
2. Equip Circuit Elders to facilitate strategic missional conversations
3. Create and facilitate Circuit Elder skills training
4. Maintain open dialogue about mission and strategy with District Superintendents
5. Lead in assessment and revision of the Arkansas Conference Circuit Elder initiative