

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa



**REVIEW
OF
MINISTRY**

A growth reflection exercise for Ministers



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Preamble:

Ministry is a difficult journey without companions. The formation years at Seminary can only set strong and important foundations and even patterns for the rest of their ordained life. Nonetheless, this formation is only the beginning of a process of lifelong learning and the continued acquisition of knowledge and skills in the context of Christian formation.

The context and complexity of our ministry suggest that Ministers need support and encouragement in continuing their formation. This Review of Ministry Document is a tool to be used to review and assist Ministers to reflect on what God is doing 'in and through' their lives and witness. Its aim is to ensure that Ministers are held accountable for the work they do and to assist them to identify their strengths, passions, gifts and how to use these to contribute effectively to the life of the Church. All discussions between the Minister and the Review Panel are confidential.

REVIEW OF MINISTRY

What is the “Review of Ministry”?

The “Review of Ministry” is a process that has been carefully developed to give ministers of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa an opportunity to:

- Reflect on their ministry, work, calling and personal life
- Be clear about what is expected of them
- Receive feedback, affirmation and support
- Reflect on their needs for continuing formation and development
- Be clear about what standards and values are required
- Talk freely about their visions for ministry, their hopes, fears, challenges and opportunities
- Reflect on how their work affects others
- Allow themselves to be accountable
- Reduce their sense of isolation and perhaps even of alienation or anger

The “Review of Ministry” provides for:

- **Six- monthly discussions between the minister and her/ his Review Panel**
- **A time to speak freely about their work and concerns**
- **An opportunity to set objectives and be held accountable**
- **A written covenant between the minister and the Review Facilitator**
- **A respect for confidentiality**
- **Maintaining informal contact between meetings**

How to prepare

- Spend time going through the **Ministry Analysis Exercise** on pages 8 - 12. Make your own personal notes and comments (for your eyes only). **Extract only the main concerns you want to discuss with your Review Panel. Fill them into the “Review of Ministry”, pages 6-7.**
- List the **action steps** you intend to undertake during the year, pages 7
- Prepare a **Vision statement or Purpose statement** for your ministry. (about 100 words) - page 6

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PANEL

At the beginning of the year

- **Discuss**
 - the minister’s vision/purpose statement
 - the main concerns identified
 - the action steps they want to undertake
- **Review any other items** from the Review guide which the minister wants to discuss
- **Write a brief record** of the meeting with the commitments and decisions made. Have a copy for each of you.
- Set a date for the next meeting

Mid-year

- **Review the purpose statement**, commitments, action steps etc.
- **Discuss the progress made.** Give feedback.

- **Make adjustments** if necessary and review plans for the next six months
- **Keep a brief written record** with copies for each of you.

Who should conduct the Review of Ministry?

- The Review Panel is to be made by the minister's Superintendent/ supervisor and two or more people to whom the minister is willing to account. One of these people is to be a lay leader in the minister's society or circuit. The Superintendent is to facilitate.
- Superintendents are responsible to see that all ministers in the Circuit do the Review of Ministry. They are to facilitate themselves or delegate suitable people to facilitate e.g. Supernumerary ministers. What is important is that there be a good relationship between the facilitator and the minister.
- Bishops are responsible to see that the Review is done with all Superintendents in the District. They are to facilitate themselves or delegate Vice Chairs.
- The Presiding Bishop is responsible to see that the Review is done with all Bishops, Unit Directors and the General Secretary.

Action steps

- **'Action steps' refer to what you intend to do to improve your ministry.** Covenant with your Facilitator to hold you accountable for carrying them out.
- Make sure your **action steps** and plans are
 - S- Specific and clear**
 - M-Measurable**
 - A-Achievable. Don't try to do too much**
 - R- Responsibility. Who will do what?**
 - T-Timetable. When will they be done?**
- There are **two types of action commitments**
 - **Time-limited.** Tasks or goals to be done at a specific time, e.g. hold a leaders meeting, run a training course etc.
 - **Ongoing,** e.g. set aside 2 hours a day for study, personal devotions etc.

NOTES FOR THE FACILITATOR

- **Try to make the interview helpful and enjoyable.** Your task is to help the other person become a better, more whole, more confident minister. Help them to relax. Choose a **place to meet** where you will all feel comfortable. Begin and end the interview with **prayer**.
- **Ensure that you everybody understands what the meeting is about and clarify the expectations.**
- **Structure the meeting as a shared conversation** in which the minister speaks more than you do
 - Listen
 - Focus on the positive
 - Give feedback
 - Allow them to make their own plans and set their own objectives
 - Affirm and focus on the positive
 - Be caring and honest enough to also focus on what may need correcting
- **Model what it means to be servant leader**
- Remember the **central principle** is **"management by grace"** and not **"management by guilt"**
- **If change is required,** discuss alternative positive behavior which the minister might adopt.

- **Look at what you or others in the church could do to support the minister’s performance and personal growth.** But do not raise unrealistic expectations. Leave them in charge of their own development. Do not disempower them by taking over.
- **Remember that the “Review of Ministry” is not meant to be Spiritual Direction.** If pastoral needs emerge, **finish the “review” process first** and then return to the pastoral matter.
- **If there should be dissatisfaction with the minister’s work**
 - Explain clearly what you are dissatisfied about
 - Explain in practical terms what they need to do to change behavior or rectify things
 - Try to ensure they have the resources to correct the problem
 - Give them the opportunity to respond
 - Write these points down and agree on them. Ensure you both understand them the same way
- **In the unlikely event that you reach a disagreement which you cannot resolve,** the next step is to refer the matter to the Bishop, or in the case that the Bishop facilitated the Review, the matter is to be referred to the District Vice Chair.

**THE REVIEW OF MINISTRY
FOR DISCUSSION WITH YOUR REVIEW PANEL**

Take time before the meeting with your Panel to think about the following questions and prepare for the things you want to discuss. Don’t feel restricted if there are other matters you want to talk about which are not covered by the questions. This is a chance to talk freely. **The Ministry Analysis Exercise on pages 6-10** can help you with preparation but you are not obliged to use it.

VISION STATEMENT

Write a personal vision statement for your life and ministry (about 100-150 words.) Discuss this with your Panel.

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are you satisfied with your ministry in your present appointment?
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2. What do you consider your major achievements/ disappointments over the past 12 months?

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3. In what way is your ministry making (or not making) the best of your gifts?

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4. What do think your congregation appreciates about your ministry?

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5. Identify one or two areas of strength in your ministry. What are you planning to do to improve these?

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6. Identify one or two areas of weakness in your ministry. Are you aware of expectations from your members which you are not meeting? What are you planning to do about these?

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7. What mission and growth plans for your Circuit/ Society do you have for the year ahead?
(Not more than three)

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8. Where do you see your ministry going in the future?

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9. What areas of personal concern would you like to talk about? (e.g. family, finance)

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10. What other matters would you like to talk about?

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ACTION STEPS

As a result of your discussion with your Review Panel, list the action steps which you intend to take to improve your personal life or ministry. (Not more than three) Make a copy for the Panel. This will form the basis of your discussion in six months' time. (Mid-year). Covenant with your Panel to hold you accountable for your progress in these areas.

1.
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2.
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3.
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MINISTRY ANALYSIS EXERCISE

THIS EXERCISE IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU REFLECT MORE DEEPLY ON YOUR MINISTRY SO THAT YOU CAN COMPLETE THE QUESTIONS IN THE REVIEW OF MINISTRY ON PAGES 4 AND 5 IN A MORE MEANINGFUL WAY.

- The **results are confidential** and for your use only. You need only share what you choose to in the interview.
- **First go through each item and rate yourself on a scale of 1-5** (1=weak, 2=below average, 3=average, 4=above average, 5=strong.) **Do this fairly quickly. Don't think too long.** On the other hand, don't rush the exercise. You might like to spread it out over a few days or a few sections each day. The list is very detailed and can be a bit overwhelming if taken all in one go.
- **Now go back and select one to three weaknesses in each section A, B and C. Reflect more deeply on these. Make notes** in the comment and action columns.
- **Do the same for two to three strengths** in each sections A, B and C.
- **Use the results to prepare the questions for the Review of Ministry.**

NB. Don't be discouraged by your weaknesses. No minister can be good in every area. The secret is to be aware of what we need to work on, or else to be aware when we need to bring someone onto our leadership team who can make up for our weaker areas. (E.g. if you are not good at administration, make sure you have a good administrator alongside you. if it's handling money, bring in a capable accounting person etc.)

	RATING	Comment	Action required
A. Personal Qualities			
1. Character			
• Personal discipline			
• Moral values			
• integrity			
• stewardship			
2. Personal Spirituality			
• Relationship with God			
• Spiritual life			
• Prayer			
• Bible reading			
• Quiet time			
• Meditation			
• Personal worship			
• Journaling			
• New faith experiences			
• Spiritual direction			
3. Fitness and health			
• Exercise			
• Sport			
• Recreation			
• Addictions			
• Day offs			
• Hobbies			
• Fun times			
4. Relationships			
• Spouse			
• Children			
• Family			
• Friendships			
• Members of opposite sex			
• Colleagues			
• Those in authority			
• Interpersonal relationships			
5. Development and Growth			
• Reading			
• Study			
• Courses			
• Others			
6. Personal matters			
• Stipend			
• Manse			
• Working conditions			

B. MINISTRY TO THE CONGREGATION			
1. Spirituality			
• Spiritual renewal			
• Prayer			
• Bible study			
• Retreats			
• Small groups, class meetings, cells			
2. Worship			
• Leading			
• Sacraments			
• Openness to the new			
3. Preaching			
• Preparation			
• Delivery			
• improvement			
4. Teaching			
• Bible content			
• Doctrine			
• Christian life			
• Morals and ethics			
• Giving & stewardship			
5. Training			
• Empowering lay people for ministry			
• Discovering spiritual gifts			
• Ministry skills			
• Mission skills			
• Witnessing			
6. Pastoral work			
• Counselling			
• Visitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sick ○ Hospitals ○ Emergencies ○ Routine 			
7. Interest Groups			
• Youth			
• Children			
• Care of aged			
• Men's and women's groups			
8. Leadership			
• Awareness of Methodism vision and goals			
• Clarity about congregational vision			
• Accountability			
• Delegating responsibility			

• Holding people accountable			
• Control vs. freedom			
• Modelling servant leadership			
• Handling conflict			
• Handling criticism			
9. Communication			
• How well?- verbal -written			
• Modern methods			
10. Administration			
• Record keeping			
• Correspondence			
• Financial records			
• Handling money			
• Staff supervision			
• Maintenance of building			
• Chairing meetings			
C. Mission & Outreach			
1. Evangelism			
• Faith sharing and lay witnessing			
• Campaigns and revival			
• Seeker sensitivity			
• Youth evangelism			
• Children's evangelism			
• Friendships outside the church			
• Planning for evangelism			
2. Mission and outreach			
• Planning for growth			
• Outreach-local			
• Outreach-Wider field			
• Social concerns (needs)			
• Social action (causes)			
• Prophetic witness			
• Reading on mission and growth			
• Unity			
• Poverty			
• Transformation issues			
3. Ecumenical/ Other Faiths			
• Relationships with other churches/ faiths			
• Relationships with other ministers/ Religious leaders			
4. Outside the congregation			
• Community involvement			
• Service organizations			

• Contribution to circuit or Connexion			
• other			