

**TENNESSEE-WESTERN KENTUCKY CONFERENCE
POLICY ON RESTRICTED ITINERACY**

Our *United Methodist Book of Discipline* states that “All elders in full connection who are in good standing in an annual conference shall be continued under appointment by the bishop unless they are granted a sabbatical leave, a medical leave, family leave, a leave of absence, retirement, or have failed to meet the requirements for continued eligibility...” (§ 337 2016 *Book of Discipline*).

While itineracy is at the heart of United Methodism, the bishop and cabinet continually strive to adapt the itinerant system to the needs of our appointed clergy, taking into consideration concerns pertaining to family, job, school, housing, health, and finances. At the same time, the bishop and cabinet are primarily responsible for the missional priorities of the larger church and each local church.

While recognizing that itineracy is a commitment that each elder in full connection willingly accepts as part of ordination, the bishop and cabinet understand that appointed clergy may wish to request that their itineracy be restricted in some way, most likely geographically. The bishop and cabinet will strive to accommodate requests for restrictions on itineracy that are made after prayerful consideration of the impact on the appointed clergy, the Conference and the affected congregations. However, requests for such adaptations must always be considered in light of the impact on the entirety of the Conference and decisions must be made in that context. Accordingly, the bishop and cabinet must explicitly communicate to those clergy who request a restricted itineracy that (1) such request will be given due consideration, but that restricted itineracy may not always be possible and that (2) if restricted itineracy is granted, an appointment limited by restricted itineracy may not (a) maximize the use of a particular appointed clergy’s gifts, (b) provide salary increases or sustain their current salary, or (c) provide increased leadership responsibility and opportunity. Furthermore, it must be explicitly stated that the bishop and cabinet *may* discern that clergy who request a restricted itineracy consider changing their relationship to the conference (i.e. honorable location or voluntary leave of absence) or request a less-than-full-time appointment.

To that end, the Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry have approved the following two documents to be used in cases of requests for restricted itineracy: (1) Request for Restricted Itineracy and (2) Refusal of Appointment Statement.

NOTE: *The (1) Request for Restricted Itineracy document and (2) The Refusal of Appointment Statement are attached to this Policy as a part of the Consultation Process.*

REQUEST FOR RESTRICTED ITINERACY

“The itinerant system is the accepted method of The United Methodist Church by which ordained elders, provisional elders and associate members are appointed by the bishop to fields of labor.” ¶ 338, *The Book of Discipline, 2016*.

“Clergy shall be appointed by the bishop, who is empowered to make and fix all appointments in the Episcopal area of which the Annual Conference is a part. ¶ 425 *2016 Book of Discipline*.

Understanding that the Bishop and Cabinet of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference are responsible for appointing pastors for the sake of the mission of the church, and in keeping with its commitment to consult with clergy in appointment decisions, I am requesting the Bishop and Cabinet seek to appoint me as a pastor with the following restrictions on my itinerary:

Because of my decision to request to restrict my availability to open itineracy in the ordained ministry of The Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of The United Methodist Church I assume responsibility for my decision by:

- ❖ Understanding that, given the missional needs of the congregations and the Conference, my request for restricted itineracy may not be granted, and I may be asked to accept an appointment outside my requested restrictions, should the needs of congregations and the Conference so dictate;
- ❖ Understanding that if my request for restricted itineracy is granted, I will not be guaranteed a compensation level beyond the minimum salary as set by the Conference Board of Pensions, and may limit the ability of the Bishop and the Cabinet to fully maximize my gifts and/or provide me with leadership opportunities.
- ❖ Understanding that I may need to request Less Than Full-Time Service as provided by ¶328.2, The 2016 Book of Discipline in order for my request to be granted.
- ❖ Understanding that I may need to consider a Voluntary Leave of Absence as provided by ¶353, The 2016 Book of Discipline in order for my request to be granted.

Name: (Please Print) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

REFUSAL OF APPOINTMENT STATEMENT

“The itinerant system is the accepted method of The United Methodist Church by which ordained elders, provisional elders and associate members are appointed by the bishop to fields of labor.” ¶ 338, *The Book of Discipline, 2016*.

“Clergy shall be appointed by the bishop, who is empowered to make and fix all appointments in the episcopal area of which the annual conference is a part.”
¶ 425, *2016 Book of Discipline*.

The Cabinet of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference, in keeping with its primary responsibility to appoint pastors for the sake of the mission of the church, and in keeping with its commitment to consult with clergy in appointment decisions, has sought to appoint me to serve as the pastor of the _____ United Methodist Church.
(See ¶¶ 426 – 427 *2016 Book of Discipline*).

Because of my decision to restrict my service in the ordained ministry of Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of The United Methodist Church, I hereby refuse to accept this appointment.

To assume responsibility for my decision:

- ❖ I will keep confidential the name of the appointment I have refused.
- ❖ I understand that, given the missional needs of the congregations, the Conference, and my refusal to accept the aforementioned appointment, I am not guaranteed an alternative appointment within my requested restrictions, and if afforded another appointment, I am not guaranteed a compensation level beyond the minimum salary as set by the Conference Board of Pensions.
- ❖ I understand that I may need to request Less Than Full-Time Service as provided in ¶338.2 in order for my request for restricted itineracy to be considered.
- ❖ I understand that I may need to request Voluntary Leave of Absence as provided in ¶353 in order for my request for restricted itineracy to be considered.

Name: (Please Print) _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____