Boundaries Training for Pastor Parish Relations Committees
Conversation Guide

Facilitator's Notes
This conversation guide is meant to help make the instruction led by Dr. David Olsen applicable and helpful for your ministry context. This training can be completed as one 3-hour session or divided into 3 sessions of 45-60 minutes.

Video run time: 22:00 min. This is a series of three 45-minute training sessions or they can be combined for a 3-hour training session for church leaders. Great for use with lay leadership and paid and unpaid church staff. This series is designed to help expand the circle of accountability around clergy professional boundaries and the establishment of healthy practices in local churches.

Session 3: Saying No in Order to Say Yes
This session helps reframe the conversation around boundaries for Pastor Parish Relations Committees and their pastoral staff to one of support. Additionally, Dr. Olsen asks groups to think about shifting the focus on their pastor's gifts and setting expectations that frees their pastoral leader for his/her gifts that align with the church's vision.

Instructions: Play Session 3. At the end, invite the group to think about the following questions. Before discussion, you might revisit your covenant around confidentiality. Consider sharing the sections on confidential and limited access information from Healthy Disclosure: Solving Communication Quandaries in Congregations by Kibbie Simmons Ruth, Karen A. McClintock.

1. Invite your pastor to spend time sharing what they love best about ministry, where they think their gifts are (their "creative zone"). What areas might our pastor consider saying 'No' to in order to say 'Yes' to ministry that would be life-giving for the community and our pastor?
2. How can we better protect our pastor's time and communicate our expectations for pastoral leadership to our congregation?
3. How do we, as a committee, manage criticism (valid and non-valid), gossip, or affirmation of our pastor?
4. How can we help work with our pastor on an annual continuing education plan that complements his/her gifts and supports the vision for ministry in our context?
5. Ask your pastor: what would you do if you had more time during the week?
6. Are we helping our pastor avoid over-functioning?

Take Action:
Take time to establish some protocols and policies based on your conversation. Consider inviting a working group to spend some time working on this in greater detail before your next meeting.

- Spend time reviewing the work from your previous session.
- Review your Pastoral Support Form, particularly the continuing education and professional travel and expenses line items. Are you allocating enough financial resources to help your pastor accomplish the continuing education plan you have worked out together?

Visit www.moumethodist.org/boundaryresources for additional resources for group and individual study.

About the Video Host
David Olsen, PhD is an ordained American Baptist minister and the current executive director of the Samaritan Counseling Center of the Capital Region and adjunct faculty member of the Sage Graduate School. Together with Dr. Nancy D. Devor of the Danielsen Institute in Boston, he has co-authored *Saying No to Say Yes: Everyday Boundaries and Pastoral Excellence*. He often consults with congregations and clergy around the integration of spirituality and psychotherapy.

More Boundaries Resources
- *Saying No to Say Yes: Everyday Boundaries and Pastoral Excellence* by David Olsen and Nancy G. Devor
- *Healthy Disclosure: Solving Communication Quandaries in Congregations* by Kibbie Simmons Ruth (Author), Karen A. McClintock
- *Sex in the Parish* by Karen Lebacqz and Ronald Barton
- *Caring Enough to Confront: How to Understand and Express Your Deepest Feelings Toward Others* by David Augsburger
- *Rising Strong* by Brené Brown
- *Healthy Churches, Faithful Pastors: Covenant Expectations for Thriving Together* by David Keck