

*UU PASTORAL CARE PROGRAMS QUESTIONS*

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*Theology and Church Relationship*

- What is your vision of pastoral care for your congregation? For your lay program?
- How does your program fit into UU Theology?
- How does the program relate to you congregation's Mission?
- Can we overcome our history of difficulty in providing UU pastoral care?

*Questions of Organization*

- What organization seems to fit your congregation?
- What do you want the "lay ministers" to do? What are their responsibilities? What do you not want them to do?
- What commitment do lay ministers make? How is it clear?
- What qualities and knowledge do they need to do their duties?
- How is the program different from therapy or from a social service agency?
- What is the relationship between your program and the other care services of the church?
- What name do you want for the program and for the lay ministers? What are the implications of the names, and how does the name clarify their role to the congregation?
- Who supervises the program? What knowledge and abilities does the supervisor need? What will be the structure of the supervision? What do Lay Ministers have to tell their supervisor? Does the parish minister have a right to have any information about a parishioner's problems?
- How will referrals get to the lay ministers?
- Who do you wish to serve? Do you serve only church members? Or do you extend services to visitors given that new members often come to us at times of life transition? Do you serve people outside your church community as a form of outreach?
- What records will you keep and who has access to them?

*Decision Making Questions:*

- Who has authority to establish this program, formally and informally?
- How do you communicate your planning steps and recommendations to the congregation? What are the selling points for such a program? What will the congregation worry about?
- Do budgetary requirements enter into the answer?
- Will you do an application process or an appointment process?
- To what degree is the process confidential?
- What expertise or representation do you want in the decision making process?
- What forms do you need?
- How can you structure your process to achieve diversity goals? How do you communicate to the church your decisions?
- Do you want a church service ritual to formally induct the lay ministers?

*Training and Pastoral Team Formation*

- What Training should lay ministers have before providing services?
- What follow-up training structure and topics do you want?
- Who is (are) your trainers?
- What will training cost you?
- What will be your group norms and philosophy of interactions?
- What benefits do lay ministers receive by virtue of their service?

*Ethics and Legalities*

- What ethical and legal considerations do you need to know about?
- Do you want your lay ministers to sign a principles of ethics promise?