



A Disciple-making Network of Free Methodist Churches

Stewarding, Expanding, Multiplying

The MEG Board Action Guide

A Quick Reference Guide for the Work of the Acts 12:24 Churches
Board of Ministerial Education and Guidance

But the word of God increased and multiplied! Acts 12:24 (ESV)

Acts1224Churches.com

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Legend of Abbreviations

Conference Leadership Roles

CSupt = Conference Superintendent
ExSupt = Executive Superintendent
Rsupt = Regional Superintendent
CDNDir = Church Development Network Director
1KCF = 1000 Churches Facilitator
D-OP = Director of Operations

Leadership Teams

CMEG = Conference Board of Ministerial Education and Guidance
RMEG = Regional Board of Ministerial Education and Guidance

CMAC = Conference Ministerial Appointments Committee

RMAC = Regional Ministerial Appointments Committee

BoB = Board of Bishops

CMEGEXC = Conference Board of Ministerial Education and Guidance Executive Committee

Other:

BOD = Book of Discipline

CBOA = Conference Board of Administration

CMC = Conference Ministerial Candidate

LMC = Local Ministerial Candidate

Dbase = Database

Creating the Setting

The RMEG Chair works with the RSupt's office to determine the location most convenient for the meeting. In general, we try to sit around a table for a meeting where everybody can see everybody; we avoid the appearance of putting an individual "in the hot seat." We don't place an interviewee at the far end of a table separated from the MEG team. It's good to have bottled water on the table.

The RMEG Chair convenes the meeting, welcoming the interviewee and facilitates introductions. Typically, each MEG member will introduce himself/herself. When you introduce yourself try to put the interviewee at ease by being warm, real, and personable about your heart for the Lord and his church. This is not the time to recite your degrees and credentials. Be careful about making playful statements. This is a first impression setting and a somewhat nervous interviewee may misunderstand your humor.

After introductions, the Chair will give some background on what has led up to the interview, just to make sure everybody is on the same page. Oftentimes the RMEG Chair invites the RSupt or conference staff to provide the synopsis.

Be attentive to how you present yourself during the meeting. Leaning back with your arms folded can communicate a judgmental dynamic. A super-serious facial expression or thoughtful scowl may communicate that you're bothered by the interviewee. Make eye contact without staring intently. Have non-verbals that communicate that you're listening – put a "smile in your eyes" and nod to show that you're listening and understanding.

Fundamentally, we want to communicate to an interviewee that "we are happy to meet you and we are with you in this effort to see what God is doing here."

Sometimes an interview team member will sense a need to ask a hard question. It might be a query about a divorce and the interviewee seems hesitant to disclose what happened. Maybe the individual refers to a previous church member or leader in a somewhat critical manner and that needs to be challenged a bit. Perhaps the interviewee seems to be glossing some problematic patterns that are evident in his/her description of past ministry, and the MEG realizes they need to be sure that there has been growth and change. Or it could be the reality of a past addiction, some time in jail, and so on.

The team should neither avoid tough topics, nor "jump on them." These should be approached with friendly non-verbals (leaning forward slightly, extending an open hand, making eye contact but not glaring, using a conversational voice) and prefaced with a supportive statement followed by the inquiry.

Here's an example of that: "I'm sure it is difficult for you to talk about this, but I want you to understand that we care about you, and we need to understand this issue a bit better. So could you help us out by explaining..."

The work of the MEG Board is confidential. Board members are not free to tell others about the personal or sensitive information that you learn regarding interviewees and/or churches. Interviewees need to know that that they can speak openly to the MEG Board without fear that Board members will violate confidentiality.

Our Way of Hearing & Deciding

The process of listening during an interview is three-fold:

1. You listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit;
2. You listen to the individual being interviewed; and,
3. You listen to yourself – your own reactions and thoughts.

In MEG Board meetings the decision-making process entails reporting your reactions to the interviewee. Once the interviewee is dismissed from the room each MEG member is asked to report their reactions – what did you hear, what did you sense, what do you think. We each listen one another. This is as important as the interview itself. Many times, a MEG member will receive much clarity in what Jesus is saying by listening to the others speak.

From this process we begin to sense where Jesus is leading us. No-one on the MEG is asked to make a case or argue a point. We're not trying to convince other people on the MEG. The goal is to reach a consensus, and the Chair of the meeting has latitude to determine when, to his/her satisfaction, the MEG has reached a clear decision about the interview. If it seems that an additional process is needed before making a decision, the Chair is asked to provide directions as to the next steps that need to be taken.

If there are additional steps that are needed, the MEG Board is to identify what needs to be done (reference checks, follow-up interactions, etc.) and assign responsibility for these tasks.

Behavioral Interviewing

While there are certain interview topics where it is necessary to ask “what do you think?” or “what do you believe?” or even “yes or no” questions, you will learn the most about an interviewee by asking behavioral questions. Here is a comparison between non-behavioral and behavioral questions:

Non-behavioral Questions

1. What do you think is the best way to deal with destructive conflict in the church?
2. How do you lead people to Christ?
3. How is your marriage doing?
4. Does your spouse support your ministry?
5. Do you have regular personal devotions?

Behavioral Questions

1. Can you tell us about a time when you were involved in a church conflict? What did you do? What did you learn?
2. Tell us about the last person who came to Christ through your ministry. Describe what took place.
3. Give us some examples of what you do to maintain a healthy marriage.
4. What specific statements has your spouse made recently about this ministry opportunity?
5. Describe your devotions yesterday and today. What did you do for devotions? How did your time alone with God impact you?

More Behavioral Questions

MEG Boards are called to discern the substance of the demonstrated character and capacity of potential pastors and CMCs. Here are some additional behavioral questions that can be a resource to the MEG Board. The goal is not to ask every question—rather it is to ask sufficient questions to come to an understanding of how to guide this individual and what to decide about their journey in ministry.

Personal Motivation

1. In what ways have you attempted to make yourself more effective in your job or ministry?
2. Describe your most important accomplishments. How did you go about reaching your goals?
3. Describe your typical work week. How much time and effort do you put in?
4. Describe your ideal work or ministry assignment. Tell me about the time you came closest to having this kind of assignment and what you found rewarding about it.

Building Body Cohesiveness

1. Describe a time when members of your church were divided over an important issue. What did you do to resolve the conflict?
2. How do you help new people become an integral part of the group?
3. How do you establish a group identity among your people?
4. Describe the steps you take to get a group to work as a cohesive unit. Give me an example of when you did that.

Relationship Building

1. To what extent are you the initiator in developing relationships? Tell me about the last relationship you built.
2. How do you help others to develop relationships?
3. What steps do you take in helping people feel secure, trusting, and open with you?
4. Tell me about a relationship you salvaged after a conflict or falling out with a person.

Commitment to Church Growth

1. Articulate your philosophy of church growth and how you have implemented that philosophy.
2. Tell me about a time when you were unsuccessful in applying church growth principles. What did you learn from the experience, and how did you benefit from your learning in a later effort?
3. How have you kept yourself up-to-date on church growth principles and practices?
4. What training have you provided other people interested in church growth?

Vision Casting Capacity

1. When was an important time you created an opportunity out of an obstacle? How did you create that opportunity?
2. When were you successful in selling a concept to people who initially opposed you? How did you convince them?
3. What is your best example of building a project, program, or group from the ground floor up?
4. Describe a situation that was stagnant or failing, and how you stepped in to revitalize it.

Responsiveness to Community

1. How do you put your fingers on the pulse and culture of a community surrounding your church? Or the community in which you live?
2. How have you used social outreach as a tool of the church?
3. How have you ministered in ways that improve the quality of life in your community?
4. How have you shifted church priorities to be responsive to needs in the local community?

Communication Skills

1. What critical feedback have you received on your ability to speak in public?
2. Describe your public speaking style.
3. Compare and contrast your approaches to teaching and preaching.
4. How have you modified your speaking to be more effective?

Gift Utilization

1. How do you help lay people discover their spiritual gifts?
2. What process do you use to match individuals with ministry opportunities?
3. How do you cultivate giftedness in others?

Creating Ownership of Ministry

1. In what ways have you motivated your people to commit themselves to growth goals?
2. How do you typically give ministry away?
3. What steps have you taken to ensure that your ministry would flourish in your absence?
4. Describe someone you developed who is now reproducing other disciples. How did you develop that person and what kind of results is he or she having?

Flexibility

1. Describe a situation in which you coped with ambiguity while adhering to a theoretical framework.
2. Tell me about a demanding period in your life. How did you manage the multiple demands upon you?
3. How do you see that your work gets completed when it is disrupted by emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances?

Demonstrating Strong Christian Faith

1. Describe how you exercise such disciplines as Bible study, prayer, sermon preparation, and personal devotion.
2. Describe your most serious compromise on your Christian convictions and principles.
3. What examples of demonstrating Christian faith in your personal life could you share with others who struggle with faith issues?
4. In what ways is it costly because of your convictions?

Developing Faith Formation

1. How do you develop faith formation in other people?
2. How do you help people integrate theological truths into personal lifestyle practices?
3. Describe how you discipled someone on a one-to-one basis.

Roles & Responsibilities

The **Board of Ministerial Education and Guidance** (which our policy documents call the MEG Board) is responsible to see that godly, competent pastors make a maximum impact for the Kingdom of God at the front lines of ministry. The MEG Board also works to care for churches in times of crisis and/or transition. We do that by:

1. Carefully screening potential pastors,
2. Developing new pastors (which includes training and credentialing),
3. Matching qualified pastors to existing congregations and new church planting projects,
4. Providing care and support to these front-line leaders and local churches, and,
5. Providing guidance to churches and pastors who are in transition.

The presiding **Bishop** is the designated Chair of a Ministerial Appointments Committee. The bishop may choose to lead a meeting of the MAC but in customary practice, does not. The Conference Superintendent, as Vice Chair, leads meetings of the MAC, routinely communicating with the bishop about the life and leadership of the Acts 12:24 Churches.

The Acts 12:24 Churches has one **elected Superintendent** and a flexible number of **appointed Regional Superintendents**, according to the needs of our regionalized system. We also have the role of **Executive Superintendent, Church Development Network Director, and Director of Operations**. The authority of the superintendency resides with the CSupt who then delegates authority to the ExSupt, to each RSupt, to the CDNDir, and to the D-OP.

The Acts 12:24 Churches has created a **comprehensive system of regional leadership** with RSupts, RMEGs, and RMEG Chairs. The RMEGs also serve as RMACs. **When an RMEG convenes as the RMAC**, the RSupt has the delegated authority to lead the meeting, unless she/he chooses to request that the RMEG Chair lead the RMAC meeting.

The **Conference MEG Chair and Vice Chair** provide oversight to all the RMEG Chairs and RMEG Boards of the conference. Under the leadership of the CMEG Chair, the CMEG Vice Chair, RMEG Chairs, and the CSupt serve as **the Executive Committee of the Conference MEG Board** – with full authority for MEG action. The CSupt may convene the Executive Committee of the CMEG as the CMAC.

The **Conference Board of Administration** provides administrative oversight to the Acts 12:24 Churches. As specified in the Book of Discipline, the CBOA may act on behalf of the Annual Conference between meetings of the full conference.

The **Office of the MEG Chair** includes the Conference MEG Chair, the Conference MEG Vice Chair and the Dean:

- The **Conference MEG Chair** is elected to support the superintendents by overseeing the MEG system— which includes pastoral development, activities of RMEG Chairs and RMEG Boards, personnel matters, and fund development for the work of the MEG.
- The **Conference MEG Vice Chair** is hired to assist the Conference MEG Chair by overseeing the day-to-day operations of the MEG Board’s personnel and pastoral development systems.
- The **Dean** advises MEG Boards regarding the apparent effectiveness of the educational systems in place. The Dean also guides Schools for Ministry as how to best serve the pastoral development and empowerment priorities of the Acts 12:24 Churches.

Point of Entry Interviews

Types of Point of Entry Interviews

- The *Approval for Ministry Interview* provides the MEG Board a way to determine if an individual who is not currently appointed (or is currently appointed as an interim pastor) in the Acts 12:24 Churches demonstrates the call of God and the capacity to serve in a pastoral role in our network. An Approval for Ministry Interview process may also be used to interact with currently appointed pastors who are on a short-list of potential appointees to another church in the conference.
- The *New CMC Interview* determines if a person who is interested in gaining greater capacity for Christian ministry may benefit from entering the rigorous discernment, development, and deployment journey that we call Conference Ministerial Candidacy. Many Interviewees will already be in a local church-based process called Local Ministerial Candidacy.
- Typically these interviews are an hour in length, with the MEG taking an additional 15 minutes to debrief and make a decision.

Point of Entry Interview Questions and Goals

Each RMEG Board will develop its own practice of conducting a discerning and supportive interview. Some MEGs decide to assign different members to take the lead in asking certain questions or categories of questions. The goal is not to rigorously ask everything that could be asked. The goal is to get a sense if God is calling this individual to begin the process of discernment and development in the Acts 12:24 Churches. As a result of the interview, you need to be satisfied that you understand the following:

Who is this person?

1. Please introduce yourself to us.
2. What would you like us to know about you on a personal level?

What is this individual's personal testimony?

1. Please share with us how you came to a personal faith in Jesus.
2. What are some significant turning points in your spiritual journey?

What are his/her qualifications and abilities for ministry?

1. We would like to hear about how Jesus has equipped you to serve Him.
2. What training have you had in ministry?
3. What are your strengths as a servant/leader?

What experience does he/she have in previous ministry and evidence of fruitfulness?

1. Please tell us about your ministry experience.
2. Specifically, what church work have you done?
3. Can you give us some examples of your fruitfulness in ministry?

What is the current dynamic of his/her relationship with Jesus?

1. Tell us about you and Jesus here and now.
2. What are you hearing from God?
3. What is Jesus teaching you?
4. In what specific ways do you see the transforming work of Jesus in your life?

Does he/she understand who we are?

1. Please tell us what you know about the Acts 12:24 Churches.
2. What is your understanding of who we are?

Is this person in essential agreement with the values/goals/beliefs of the Acts 12:24 Churches?

1. Please tell us your thoughts about our priority of rapid Kingdom expansion.
2. What do you understand about our core values of STMOEH (Submission, Transformation, Multiplication, Order, Encouragement, Hospitality)?
3. What is your response to our Enduring Initiatives (Steward, Expand, Multiply)?
4. Can you share your thoughts about the dynamics of a Disciple-Making Movement?
5. What do you know about the doctrine and practices of the Free Methodist Church?
6. How does our support for the authority of the local church balanced with spiritual oversight from the conference match your perspective?

If this individual has a difference regarding doctrine or practice can he/she work in a healthy way within our system?

1. We would like to hear about any differences you have with us in doctrine or practice.
2. Do you have strong disagreement with the doctrines or practices of the Free Methodist Church? If so, in what area(s)?
3. Can you tell us about any experience you have in successfully working with other Christians with whom you have differences?

Is there anything in the individual's history that would create complications if discovered after he/ she is appointed to a church?

1. Let us know if there are any concerns we may find from references or a background check.
2. Are you currently under church discipline?
3. Do you have past or potential charges for allegations of misconduct or crimes?

Point of Entry Interview Processes

Pre-Interview Action Plan

1. **RMEG Chair** receives a letter (cc CMEG office/RSupt) from a pastor, LMC Mentor, or a conference leader that recommends an individual for a CMC or Approval for Ministry Interview.
2. **RMEG Chair** gathers necessary contact information and makes initial contact with the interviewee.
3. **RMEG Chair** communicates the following overview of process and expectations to the interviewee:
 - Explanation of role of MEG and what to expect in the interview
 - Interviewee needs to open a file with CMEG via the link on acts1224churches.com

- Interviewee reads the most recent edition of “Leading People, Following Jesus” and completes the “FM History and Polity” course
 - Discuss options for decision-making/timing
 - Final approval is delayed until a Background Check is completed
 - If approved, attendance at Annual Conference is expected
4. **Interviewee** opens/updates file; reads “Leading People, Following Jesus;” completes “FM History/Polity”
 5. **CMEG Office** notifies the Dean of the new/updated record for review of transcripts.
 6. **RMEG Chair** contacts RMEG Board and RSupt to schedule a meeting, copying CMEG Office, allowing three weeks for the CMEG Office/Dean to process newly opened/updated file/transcripts.
 7. **CMEG Office/RMEG Chair** prepares Face Sheet and any additional documents to be provided to the RMEG. *All interviewee info will be in the online dbase.*
 8. **CMEG Office** makes a plan with Regional MEG Chair for Face Sheet to be provided to the RMEG.
 9. **CMEG Office** makes a plan with RMEG Chair to assist the interviewee with a) opening/updating file, b) upload-ing documents, and c) the required Background Check

Interview

1. **RMEG Board** learns personal testimony, personal journey, ministry experiences, sense of calling to ministry.
2. **RMEG Board** responds to any questions from interviewee.
3. **RMEG Board** concludes interview with a clear statement of what’s next (when will decisions be made, etc.) and then excuses the interviewee.
4. **RMEG Board** has a discussion during which each member shares her/his view of the interviewee’s gifts and graces; as well as any possible red flags. Through careful listening to each other, the members arrive at a shared understanding of what decisions to make and/or actions to take.
5. **RMEG Board Secretary** creates minutes that document the meeting and any decisions/action points. The preferred method is through the MEG Website Link.

Post-Interview Action Plan

1. **RSupt/RMEG** communicates with interviewee— outcomes, action plan. This communication typically is done by the RMEG Chair unless the RSupt/CDNDir has planned follow-up with the interviewee
2. **RSupt/CDNDir/RMEG** provides a newly appointed pastor with an overview of expectations for pastors in the Acts 12:24 Churches
3. **RSupt/CDNDir** communicates interview results with Supt Team
4. **RSupt/CSupt** notes any placement decision in the Appointments.
5. **RMEG Chair** communicates interview results with CMEG Office
6. **RMEG Chair or Secretary** submits minutes to CMEG Office
7. **CMEG Office**—If approved as CMC—add to “The Journey” distribution list, approved Mentor noted in Dbase, send detailed information regarding the date, time, and setting that the new CMC will be received by the Annual Conference
8. **CMEG Office**—Updates CMEG Report to Annual Conference and notifies Office of the Bishop to prepare CMC Certificate

Ordination Interviews

Types of Ordination Interviews

- The *Pastoral Transfer Interview* provides the MEG Board a way to decide if an already credentialed pastor may serve in our network AND whether to accept her/his credentials as presented. The MEG may stipulate additional requirements to be met prior to granting a specific credential.
- The *CMC Ordination Interview* provides the MEG Board an opportunity to discern if a Conference Ministerial Candidate is developing toward the place of being deployed as an ordained Elder in the Free Methodist Church. The “Leading People, Following Jesus” development process strengthens every participant and helps clarify how this person may best serve Jesus in Kingdom-expanding and Kingdom-multiplying ministry.

The Ordination Interview provides the MEG Board an opportunity to discern if someone is to be ordained as an Elder in the Free Methodist Church. The “Leading People, Following Jesus” process of development strengthens Conference Ministerial Candidates and helps clarify how a CMC may best serve Jesus in Kingdom-expanding and Kingdom-multiplying ministry.

The Ordination Interview is much more rigorous, but no less supportive than the Point of Entry interviews. There should be a greater “sense of moment” to an Ordination Interview. The Ordination Interviews should last at least one hour for a candidate that is well-known to the MEG and could last two hours if they are not well-known.

Here are some questions and topics the MEG Board is likely to discuss with the CMC:

1. Tell us something you have learned recently from Scriptures.
2. What are some concepts or passages from the Bible that are a struggle for you? How do you wrestle with these?
3. How does being Wesleyan impact how we approach Scripture?
4. What are some unique core values of Free Methodism, both from our history and from the present?
5. What is your understanding of what it means to be connectional?
6. What have you done in the past year to develop your mind?
7. What are your plans for your continued learning in the next year?
8. Tell us about your experiences working with people or organizations that are not Free Methodist.
9. How would you explain the Gospel message to a 10-year-old who has never been to church?
10. Describe a recent example in which you saw God at work in an everyday situation
11. What opportunities have you had to preach or teach? What have these looked like? What did you preach/teach about?
12. What is the demographic breakdown of your church and/or the ministry that you lead?

13. Tell us about a time recently when you had a faith conversation with someone who was not yet fully committed to Christ. What happened?
14. Who would you describe as the marginalized people in your community?
15. What is your understanding of why they are in the situations they are in?
16. How are you personally involved in ministries of justice and compassion?
17. In whom are you personally investing? How did you get connected with them?
18. Who have you identified and “shoulder-tapped” recently as someone with ministry and/or leadership potential?
19. What are your experiences in working with and discipling people who are of the opposite sex? What are your experiences in connecting with people of different racial and/or ethnic backgrounds?
20. Consider the ministries of your church that you lead or are involved in. What is working well and what isn’t? What are your criteria for determining effectiveness?
21. What is the short-term and long-term vision for the ministries you lead or are involved in? What would need to happen practically in order for this vision to be fulfilled?
22. What do you think you need for healthy, effective, long-term ministry in the Free Methodist Church? What gaps do you see in yourself, whether personal, intellectual, or practical?
23. Ordained Elders are called to go wherever God sends them and serve wherever God calls them. What are your thoughts about the possibility of relocating? (If married): How do you think your spouse would respond to this? (If a parent): How do you think your children would respond to this?

Ordination Interview Processes

Pre-Interview Action Plan

1. **RMEG Chair** receives request (cc CMEG office) from CSupt, ExSupt, RSupt or CDNDir to schedule an interview
2. **RMEG Chair** gathers necessary contact information and makes initial contact with the interviewee.
3. **RMEG Chair** communicates the following to the interviewee:
 - Explanation of role of MEG
 - Overview of Process and Expectations:
 - a. What to expect in the interview
 - b. Interviewee needs to open a file with CMEG via the link on acts1224churches.com
 - c. Interviewee is told of basic course requirements for transfer, “FM History and Polity,” “Wesleyan Theology” and “Disciple-Making Movement”
 - Discuss options for decision-making/timing
 - Final approval is delayed until a Background Check is completed.
4. **Interviewee** opens or updates file; documents completed/planned required coursework; uploads resume, transcripts, etc.
5. **CMEG Office** notifies the Dean of the new record for review of transcripts.
6. **RMEG Chair** contacts RMEG Board and RSupt/ CDNDir to schedule a meeting, copying CMEG Office, allowing three weeks for the CMEG Office/Dean to process newly opened file/transcripts.

7. **CMEG Chair/ Office /RMEG Chair** prepares Face Sheet and any additional documents for the RMEG. *All interviewee info will be in the online dbase.*
8. **CMEG Office** makes a plan with RMEG Chair to assist the interviewee with a) opening a file, b) uploading documents and, c) the required Background Check. When the Interviewee cannot submit information online, the CMEG Office will help provide an alternative way to submit the needed information.

Interview

1. **RMEG Board** learns personal testimony, personal journey, ministry experiences, sense of calling to ministry.
2. **RMEG Board** responds to any questions from interviewee.
3. **RMEG Board** concludes meeting with a clear statement of what's next (when will decisions be made, etc.) and then excuses the Interviewee.
4. **RMEG Board** has a discussion during which each member shares her/his view of the interviewee's gifts and graces; as well as any possible red flags. Through careful listening to each other, the members arrive at a shared understanding of what decisions to make and/or actions to take.
5. **RMEG Board Secretary** creates minutes that document the meeting and any decisions/action points.

Post-Interview Action Plan

1. **RSupt/RMEG** communicate with interviewee—outcomes, action plan. This communication typically is done by the RMEG Chair unless the RSupt/CDNDir has planned follow up with the interviewee
2. **RSupt/CDNDir/RMEG** provides a newly appointed pastor with an overview of expectations for pastors in the Acts 12:24 Churches.
3. **RSupt/CDNDir** communicates interview results with Supt Team
4. **RSupt/CSupt** notes any placement decision in the Appointments.
5. **RMEG Chair** communicates interview results with CMEG Office
6. **RMEG Chair or Secretary** submits minutes to CMEG Office.
7. **CMEG Office**—If necessary, initiates Background Check.
8. **CMEG Office**—Updates CMEG Report to Annual Conference and notifies Office of the Bishop to prepare ordination parchments, if necessary

Post-Interview Action Plan—Continue as CMC

1. **RSupt/RMEG Chair**—Communicates the recommendations for continuation as CMC to the interviewee and her/his pastor mentor
2. **RSupt** communicates CMC continuation decision with Supt Team
3. **RSupt** notes any placement decision in the Appointments
4. **RMEG Chair**—Communicates CMC continuation decision to CMEG Office
5. **RMEG Secretary**—Submits minutes to the CMEG Office
6. **CMEG Office**—Update CMEG Report to Annual Conference

Post-Interview Action Plan—Non-Ordained Ministry

1. **RSupt/RMEG Chair**— Communicates with interviewee and her/his pastor/mentor:
 - We have decided that it is now time to conclude your journey as a CMC
 - We recommend that you pursue non-ordained ministry in the area(s) of: (specify)
 - We refer you to your local church’s leadership for further guidance about your role in ministry there
 - If you wish to have further conversation about this decision, please contact: (specify—RSupt, CMEG Chair, other Regional leader)
2. **RSupt**—communicates CMC conclusion decision with Supt Team
3. **RSupt** notes any removal from appointment decision in the Appointments
4. **RMEG Chair**—Communicates CMC conclusion decision to CMEG Office
5. **RMEG Secretary**—Submits minutes to CMEG Office
6. **CMEG Office**—Updates CMEG Report to Annual Conference

“How are you Doing” Interviews

A “How are you doing?” Interview is a supportive conversation with an appointed pastor (and often spouse, too). The purpose of this conversation is to reassure a pastor that she/he has the support of regional leaders. The “How are you doing?” Interview also helps the RMEG to maintain a first-hand awareness of the experiences and needs of pastors (individual/couples/families).

Each appointed pastor is to be invited in for a “How are you doing interview?” at least once every three years. A typical “How Are You Doing?” interview is 30 minutes for the pastor to share, and 10 minutes to pray for the pastor/ spouse.

Some sample questions:

1. How are you doing? What would you like us to know?
2. How is your church and ministry?
3. How is your marriage?
4. Are you having regular dates with your spouse?
5. How are your theological views developing? Any deep-er understandings? Any change of theological perspectives?
6. Are there any conflicts in vision or practice with your board or other leaders?
7. What are your new ministry initiatives?
8. How are you developing lay leaders in your church?
9. How have you recently identified and “shoulder-tapped” someone with ministry and/or leadership potential?
10. How are you mentoring Conference Ministerial Candidates in your church?
11. Tell us about someone who recently came to Jesus through your ministry?
12. In whom are you personally investing?
13. How do you create connections with new people?
14. What is your strategy for connecting with the people of your church? Home visits? Hospitality? Group gathering?
15. How can regional leadership support you?
16. Are you and others from your church attending Annual Conference?
17. How is your connection with your district meetings impacting your life?
18. What do you do to establish relationships with non-Free Methodist pastors in your community?
19. How can we pray for you?

Action Plan

1. **RSupt/RMEG Chair** receives a “Region at a Glance” summary from the CMEG office.
2. **RSupt/RMEG Chair** meets at the beginning of each conference year, to review their list of churches and appointed pastors and set the goal to invite specific pastors for a supportive interview during that Confer-ence year.
3. **RMEG** may intersperse supportive interviews into their available time slots, possibly when the RMEG will be convened for other interview purposes. Or the RMEG may plan to meet specifically to invite a list of pastors to a supportive interview (typically 30 to 45 minutes in length).
4. **RMEG Chair** updates the CMEG’s online database— finding the pastor’s name in the database and entering the date of the “How Are You Doing” Interview.
5. **RMEG Secretary** submits minutes to the CMEG office that document that the interview has taken place, and, if there are any actions the MEG has taken relating to this pastor.

Other Situational Interviews

Types of Other Situational Interviews

- There are times that the MEG Board will need to intervene in difficult situations. Some examples of needs for intervention by the MEG Board include moral failure or other misconduct by a pastor, conflict between pastors or between a pastor and the church's Board of Administration, mental health issues for the pastor or within the pastor's family, or breakdown of a pastor's marriage.
- An Exit Interview is a meeting with a pastor who will not be continuing in the previously appointed role of pastoral ministry. The purpose of the interview is to help the RMEG gain a full understanding of the reasons for the transition and to help the pastor develop a helpful plan for the next steps.
- When a Staff Pastor concludes at a local church, once the decision is made, but **before** it is implemented, the MEG Board will conduct an Exit Interview with that Staff Pastor. In an Exit Interview, the RMEG gains an understanding of the decision and helps the pastor develop a plan for next steps in ministry.

Pre-Interview Action Plan – “We have a Situation”

1. **RSupt/RMEG Chair** becomes aware that an appointed pastor or CMC has a situation that requires RMEG intervention and consultation.
2. **RMEG Chair** invites the pastor or CMC to a MEG interview.

Pre-Interview Action Plan – Exit Interview

1. **RSupt/RMEG Chair** becomes aware that an appointed pastor has asked to conclude a pastoral appointment or has been asked to conclude by a Conference leader
2. **RSupt/RMEG Chair** invites the pastor for an exit interview—clarifying that the meeting is a usual and customary follow-up for a pastor with the standing of CMC, Licensed Pastor or Ordained Elder in the FMC.

Interview

1. **Welcome the participants, pray, and state the goals** of seeking an outcome that is good for the Kingdom of God and benefits all parties, as much as possible.
2. **Provide the ground rules** for the meeting. Here are some ground rules that are often helpful:
 - **“My meeting, my rules”** - The MEG Chair (or other designated leader such as a Superintendent) is responsible to guide the meeting. Her/ his guidance is to be honored at all times.
 - **“This is a safe place”** - We provide support and guidance. We help you to participate constructively, not allowing destructive dynamics.
 - **“Respectful conduct is non-negotiable”** - No name-calling, put-downs, mocking behavior, shouting, threats or intimidation are permitted,
 - **“You may take a break at any time”** - If you need to step out of the room or ask for a break in order to manage your own strong feelings, your request will be immediately honored. If possible, the meeting will resume after a break.

- ***“I may call a time-out at any time”*** - If the leader calls “time-out” or asks someone to leave the room, everyone complies immediately.
 - ***“Describe actions, words, and events”*** - When problematic behaviors or situations are recounted, participants describe what was done or said in a factual way. Don’t use negative labels, project feelings, allege negative motives, or accuse someone of character flaws.
 - ***“Confidentiality is a given unless someone may be in danger”*** - What is said here stays here, unless information suggests a history/risk of abuse, violence, or self-harm. Proper authorities/professionals may need to be contacted.
3. ***Clarify the options for anticipated possible out-comes*** of the meeting. This interview seeks to provide the MEG Board with a better understanding of what decisions are necessary and what redemptive goals need to be established for each party in the situation.
 4. Ask for participants to provide the MEG with the information ***relevant to understanding the problem*** being addressed.
 - What is your best understanding of the problem that made this meeting necessary?
 - What steps have already been tried to resolve this matter?
 - What problem-solving plans seemed to help?
 - What problem-solving plans did not help?
 - What have you learned in this situation? (about yourself, about what went wrong, about what might improve the problem, about spiritual matters)
 - What questions do you have for the MEG Board?
 - What decisions/actions do you now believe are needed?
 5. The MEG Members assure the participants of their plans to:
 - a. ***discuss the information,***
 - b. ***develop for-mal guidance,*** and
 - c. ***debrief the participants*** as to the MEG’s guidance and decisions. This may take place on the day of the initial meeting or the debrief may take place at a later time and manner determined by the MEG.

Post-Interview Action Plan

1. ***RSupt/RMEG Chair*** communicates any necessary actions to the interviewee/CMEG/CSupt
2. ***RSupt/CSupt*** notes any placement decision in the Appointments
3. ***RMEG Secretary*** submits minutes to the CMEG office that document that the interview has taken place, and, if there are any actions the MEG has taken relating to this pastor.

Completing Minutes

The written minutes of meetings of the MEG Board document activity of the MEG Board that impacts the personnel and churches of the conference. Writing good minutes requires using the “art of summary.” Minutes should be succinct, to the point and absent of information that is not necessary for the formal record of our ministry organization. In general, it is not necessary to describe detailed information that was disclosed to the MEG Board or the details of the discussion that took place. Minutes should simply answer the questions: who, when, where, why, what was decided and what next.

Who

At the top of the minutes a heading should identify roster of MEG members in attendance and who chaired the meeting. At the end of the minutes should be a notation of who wrote the minutes.

When

The date of the meeting is to be noted.

Where

The location needs to be included.

Why

This indicates the purpose of each element of the meeting.

An example is: “*Firstname/Lastname, present with his wife, Firstname, was interviewed for ordination as an Elder.*”

Here is another example: “*Pastor Firstname/Lastname, Assistant Pastor at Churchname FMC in City, State, met with the MEG Board to offer his resignation from the Churchname FMC.*”

What Was Decided

A succinct statement of what action was taken by the MEG Board is needed, with any qualifying statements (advice, plans, directions) that are directly part of the MEG’s action.

An example of an action taken is: “**Recommend that (*name*) be received as a member of Acts 12:24 Churches and ordained Elder.**”

An example of a qualifying statement is: “**The MEG Board discussed options and gave full support to Supt. Harvey who will work with the Official Board of the church and with Pastor *Firstname/Lastname’s* family to address issues of concern relating to Pastor *Lastname’s* continuation as the Senior Pastor at the church.**”

What Next

The minutes should note any assignments made to members of the MEG – references to check, letters to be sent, calls to make, research to complete, etc.

Distribution of Minutes

1. **RMEG Secretary** writes the minutes for approval by the RMEG Chair/RMEG.
2. **RMEG Secretary** submits approved minutes to the CMEG office. (*Online submission of minutes is available and recommended in most cases on the MEG page of acts1224churches.com.*)

Completing Background Checks

The Acts 12:24 Churches, in 2018, established a policy to conduct background checks on individuals we are considering for positions of responsibility in our organization. The goal of background checks is to help us document with reasonable certainty that a person has no issues of personal history that would inhibit them from a role of leadership in our network.

We require a background check for potential lay nominees for our MEG and BoA. We require a background check for persons in our pastoral development/ministry deployment process.

Background Check Process:

1. **RMEG Board** approves a pastor for ministry in the Acts 12:24 Churches or determines an interviewee should move forward as a CMC or be received as an Elder by transfer. All people to be appointed in the Acts 12:24 Churches will have a background check completed.
2. **RMEG Chair** notifies **CMEG Office** of **RMEG Board** decision and requests Background Check to be completed.
3. **CMEG Office** e-mails the Interviewee/Ministerial Candidate a link with instructions for fees and for how to complete a Background Check.
4. **CMEG Office** receives notification of the completed background check and reviews results for compliance. Once cleared and reviewed, **CMEG Office** notifies **RMEG Chair** of the determination.
5. If cleared to join Acts 12:24 Churches: **RMEG Chair** notifies candidate of **RMEG Board** decision and next steps.
6. If the Background Check documents some matters of concern, these will be addressed with the Interviewee/ Ministerial Candidate according to the Adverse Actions Guidelines maintained in the Office of the MEG Chair.

Divorce Clearance

Divorce is never part of God's perfect plan. That stated, some marriages, even among followers of Jesus do dissolve. Having experienced a divorce or being married to one who has experienced divorce does not automatically disqualify someone from fruitful ministry. But the brokenness experienced in divorce must be addressed by forgiveness and healing.

Healing can only take place when those who have sinned confess it, ask for forgiveness from those they have harmed, and commit to the hard work of walking in wholeness. The same standard applies to those who have been sinned against in a divorce situation—that they find healing, and that they both offer and experience forgiveness. In the Acts 12:24 Churches we walk through a Divorce Clearance Process with individuals who seek to enter the CMC status or clergy who seek to transfer into the FMC.

Action Plan

1. **RMEG or CMEG Office** notes, based on information an individual provides when opening a file with CMEG Office that a Local Ministerial Candidate, applicant for CMC status or applicant for transfer of clergy credentials from outside the FMC has been divorced and/or is married to a spouse who has been divorced.
2. **RMEG** notifies the RSupt and the CMEG Office that the Divorce Clearance Process must be activated for the individual who is seeking a ministerial standing with the Acts 12:24 Churches.
3. **RSupt and RMEG Chair** consult to determine who will take the lead on initiating and explaining the Divorce Clearance Process.
 - For a new LMC, the RSupt or RMEG Chair will make a personal contact with the LMC applicant and her/his pastor to describe the purpose and the process of the Divorce Clearance.
 - For a potential transfer, the RSupt will make a personal contact with the applicant for clergy status transfer to describe the purpose and the process of the Divorce Clearance.
4. **RSupt/RMEG Chair** communicates the following to the applicant who needs a Divorce Clearance:
 - The purpose of the divorce clearance is to help the applicant and the MEG mutually understand if there are any unresolved spiritual issues or unhealed personal wounds that might impede fruitful ministry. If so, they develop appropriate plans to address unresolved issues.
 - The function of a completed Divorce Clearance is to help a pastor to put the past in the past. Once a **BoB** approves a completed Divorce Clearance, the pastor is not to be subject to scrutiny by local church boards or local church participants over a divorce issue that has been reviewed and declared closed by a MEG and Bishop.
 - The applicant will be asked to recommend a Divorce Clearance Advocate (DCA) to act as a liaison to the MEG. This could be an LMC's local ministry mentor, a transferring staff pastors senior pastor, or a conference-level official for transfer candidate for a senior pastor role. If the candidate's spouse has been divorced, the DCA may be someone who serves in a formal leadership capacity in the local church, the Acts 12:24 Churches or the FMC-USA.
 - The **RSupt/RMEG Chair** will consider the recommended DCA and either approve or recommend an alternate for this role.
 - The candidate/spouse will unpack the story of the marriage and divorce with the DCA. A guide for the DCA's inquiry is provided in "Acts 12:24 Churches Divorce Clearance Form"
 - The candidate/spouse should complete page 1 of the form and the DCA should complete pages 2 & 3 as a part of the interview.

- The DCA will compose a letter to the MEG in which s/he provides factual information and a subjective assessment of the candidate's healing/spiritual health as and any concerns (if any) s/he has about unresolved issues.
 - The candidate may also submit a written response to any concerns as well as any information they wish to share directly in their own words with the MEG.
5. The applicant/spouse and DCA will implement the above noted process, consulting with the RSupt or RMEG Chair, as needed.
 6. **The CMEGEXC** will review the DCA's letter, the candidate/spouse's written responses, and any other properly submitted reports to determine the following:
 - Has the one who experienced divorce gained an awareness of his/her personal responsibility related to it?
 - Has the divorcee received God's grace for healing and transformation?
 - Does the applicant's current marriage appear to be healthy?
 - Are the current viewpoints on marriage and divorce in line with biblical guidance?
 7. **If there are no hesitations**, the CMEGEXC would vote to recommend authorization of the Divorce Clearance, notifying the RSupt/Conference Supt.
 - a. **If the MEG (or Bishop) does not believe Divorce Clearance is appropriate**, they should articulate the reasons why in written form. If the reasons are determined by the MEG to be insurmountable, they will out-counsel the applicant from the pastoral development process. If the impediments to the Divorce Clearance can potentially be resolved, the MEG should communicate this in written form and have (a) representative(s) meet with the candidate/spouse and DCA to discuss the decision.
 8. **The MEG has full discretion** to conclude the Divorce Clearance process by out-counseling the applicant.
 9. The work of the DCA and the written responses of the applicant/spouse **must be received no later than 60 days before the next Annual Conference** in order to be considered for action at that Annual Conference.
 10. The CMEG will send a the DCA's Letter, Acts 12:24 Churches Divorce Clearance Form, any written responses from the candidate/spouse, and minutes from the CMEGEXC meeting recommending the divorce clearance be authorized and approved to the presiding Bishop.

Confidentiality Pledge

Confidentiality Pledge

I realize that the work of the Acts 12:24 Churches Ministerial Education and Guidance Board is highly confidential and that failure on my part to recognize this may result in harm to those whom we seek to serve.

Therefore, I, _____ do hereby pledge myself to hold in strict confidence, both now and in the future, all information, written or spoken, which comes to me as a member of the Acts 12:24 Churches Ministerial Education and Guidance Board.

This pledge refers to specific information relating to individuals, churches, or ministry organizations that I receive in interviews, meetings, or other communications. Any discussion of this confidential information outside of MEG-related duties is a violation of confidence.

I understand that this pledge also covers unnecessary discussion on my part with MEG Board members or other leaders in the Acts 12:24 Churches, and any discussion with personal acquaintances or family in private, semi-private, or public settings.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

