**EXPECTATIONS**

**6261 Ministry Community**

**Each congregation of a 6261 Ministry Community will have the following characteristics:**

* Openness to sharing a common life of ministry and mission - inside and outside their walls - to be transformed by the neighbor and each other.
* Willingness to share pastors, deacons, lay ministers, and administrative staff.
* Call and capacity to lift up local leaders to serve as lay ministers.
* Geographic proximity, ideally within 15-25 minutes of the other 5 congregations in its 6261 Ministry Community.
* Focus on our common synodical goals of: Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life.
* Approval by its congregational council and written commitment to participate in the 6261 Ministry Community. This includes appointing 2 members to serve on the 6261 Ministry Community Joint Council.
* Willingness to actively participate in Congregational Learning Opportunities.

**The NEPA Synod expects the following of congregation in 6261 Ministry Communities:**

* Prays for the 6261 Ministry Community – the shared ministry, the staff, the 6 congregations and their members, and all who encounter it.
* Supports its staff (pastors, deacon, and lay ministers) with grace and flexibility.
* Encourages, prays for, and supports the lay ministers within the congregation and the 6261 Ministry Community, accompanying them on their journey and training through the LLM formation path.
* Remains open to trying new things, new types of ministry, and incorporating technology where and as needed.
* Commits to meeting neighbors of the community and forming relationships, based in the knowledge that all people are created in God’s image. Completes a demographic study/review when desired and beneficial.
* Works with staff to ensure vital, authentic, creative worship that nourishes souls and empowers worshippers to live out their faith in their everyday lives in the community. Openness to a variety of worship materials and worshipping in languages other than English.
* Appoints 2 members of the congregation to serve on the 6261 Ministry Community Joint Council. Supports these 2 members in prayer, relationship, and participation.
* Actively participates in the biannual Congregational Learning Opportunities. Ensures the 2 Joint Council members are able to attend the annual 6261 Ministry Community Joint Council retreat. Promotes, advertises, and works with Synod staff to host and participate in “God’s Work Our Hands” Sunday service sharing day.
* Financially supports and budgets ongoing support of 2 pastors and 1 deacon, including benefits, housing, and cost of living adjustments. Financially supports lay ministers with scholarships and mileage reimbursement for the LLM formation path as well as budgets appropriate compensation of lay ministers for Sunday worship leadership.

**Additionally, each Congregational Council is responsible for the following:**

* The Congregational Council and the 6261 Ministry Community Joint Council commit to praying regularly for one another and listening to how the others hear the Spirit calling the 6261 Ministry Community into shared ministry.
* The Congregational Council attends all Coaching sessions, whether scheduled adhering to an already scheduled Council meeting or scheduled as a separate session. The Council commits to working hard through issues that bubble up, to being honest and open to direction from the Coach, and reliant upon the Holy Spirit to guide the process.
* The Congregational Council commits to intentionally reaching out to Council members from the other 5 congregations of the 6261 Ministry Community to build relationships.
* The Congregational Council members nominate and encourages the congregation to nominate members to serve on the 6261 Ministry Community Joint Council.
* The Congregational Council communicates regularly and transparently with the congregation concerning 6261 Ministry Community happenings and ministries.