



CONSULTATION COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION.

Term: 6 years. Elected at Synod Assembly.

Commitment: Panels from this committee meet only for specific situations. Fortunately, these have very seldom been necessary. (*No regular meetings*).

This committee is a team of persons, from which a panel may be chosen to advise the bishop and/or other leaders on specific matters. For example, advice may be sought as a preliminary step toward possible disciplinary action, or on a controversial and difficult decisions.

- 20.22.04.** When there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation; for assistance in these efforts, the bishop may utilize either a consultation panel or an advisory panel as herein provided:
- a. When requested by the synod bishop, a consultation panel consisting of five persons (three rostered ministers and two laypersons) appointed from the members of the Consultation Committee of the synod by the synod bishop, or, at the request of the synod bishop, by the Synod Council's Executive Committee or other committee authorized to do so by the Synod Council, shall assist the synod bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
 - b. When requested by the synod bishop, an advisory panel consisting of five persons (three rostered ministers and two laypersons) appointed by the synod bishop shall assist the synod bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
- 20.22.05.** If appointed, a consultation panel or advisory panel shall advise the synod bishop as to whether the bishop should bring charges or may make other recommendation for resolution of the controversy that would not involve proceedings before a discipline hearing committee. To these ends, the panel may meet with complaining witnesses as well as with the concerned minister of Word and Sacrament. If requested by the synod bishop, members of the panel also may assist, as representatives of the accuser, in the presentation of evidence and examination of witnesses before a discipline hearing committee.
- 20.22.06.** When charges are brought other than by the synod bishop or the presiding bishop of this church, the synod bishop may refer such charges to a consultation panel as provided in 20.22.04.a.
- a. If, as a result of meeting with a consultation panel, the charges are withdrawn by the accuser(s), no further proceedings shall be required.
 - b. Upon recommendation of the consultation panel that the charges be dismissed, the synod bishop may dismiss the charges, in which case no further proceedings shall be required.
 - c. Upon recommendation of the consultation panel that some of the allegations supporting the charges be stricken, the synod bishop may strike some or all such allegations, and further proceedings shall be required on the remaining allegations.
 - d. In the case of charges that do not anticipate disciplinary action, the consultation panel shall submit a report in writing to the synod bishop that sets forth the action or actions recommended by the consultation panel, and the synod bishop shall convey the recommendations to the parties. If either party does not accept the recommendations, that party may appeal to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.
 - e. In the case of charges that anticipate disciplinary action that have not been withdrawn or dismissed as a result of 20.22.06.a. or b. above, the charges shall be referred to a discipline hearing committee for a hearing.
 - f. The work of a consultation panel under this section shall be completed within 30 days from the time the panel was constituted.