

Equitable Compensation Application Supplement Plan to Become Self Supporting

All churches/charges requesting Equitable Compensation funds from the Alabama-West Florida Conference are encouraged to draft and submit a plan to become self-supporting. This plan is **required for churches requesting funds for more than three years** although it is strongly recommended for all churches. Funds are available for a maximum of five years (on an annual basis subject to approval of the committee), so church leaders **are strongly encouraged** to examine and implement strategies for supporting a full-time pastor on a long term basis once equitable compensation funds are no longer an option.

The plan should be **1-2 typewritten pages (single spaced) in narrative form**. The plan should include answers to the following questions. Your answers should be brief and the plan should not be more than two pages. This plan is to be submitted along with your application and budget to your district superintendent.

1. Briefly explain the circumstances surrounding your request for equitable compensation funds. Explain why you anticipate being unable to support a full-time pastor. Have you been able to support a full time pastor at any time in the past five years? Please include any extenuating circumstances or other factors that you feel have significantly impacted your financial stability.
2. Describe the “life” of the church, how the church lives out its mission to make disciples. How does the church reach those outside its doors? If you are not paying 100% of apportionments, please explain why. If you have not had a new profession of faith in the past year, please indicate how you plan to reach the unchurched.
3. Discuss what strategies the church will pursue over the **next twelve months** to make progress toward becoming self-supporting. Where do you expect to be financially in one year? Do you expect to be self-supporting at the end of twelve months? If not, what is your goal for the coming year in terms of supporting a full time pastor? Strategies toward becoming self-supporting might include (but are not limited to):
 - a) Stewardship campaign
 - b) Fundraising campaign
 - c) Review and reduce operating budget
 - d) Explore electronic giving options
 - e) Sermon Series and/or bible study on stewardship/tithing
 - f) Offer new/different programs/ministries
 - g) Year-round stewardship emphasis
4. Discuss what strategies the church will pursue over the **next three to five years** to meet the goal of becoming self-supporting. What strategies will you pursue long term? What will need to happen (or change) for your church to becoming self-supporting within this time frame?
5. How can the Committee on Equitable Compensation, your District Superintendent, conference staff and/or other churches help you attain your goals? Are there services, tools, education and/or programs that would help you in becoming self-supporting?