

# Statewide Survey of United Methodist Clergy in North Carolina

In an effort to better understand and describe the multiple demands and rewards of clergy life, the Duke Clergy Health Initiative has conducted a longitudinal survey of North Carolina's United Methodist clergy every two years since 2008. Additional information about this landmark study and a summary report of the 2014 survey findings are available on our website: [www.clergyhealthinitiative.org](http://www.clergyhealthinitiative.org).

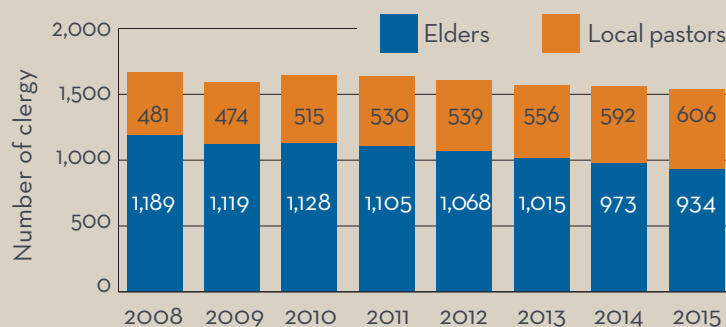
For this report on **appointments**, we paired our survey findings with publicly available data from the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences. The findings illuminate shifts in the demographics of elders and local pastors actively serving congregations. Elders are ordained ministers in the United Methodist Church. Local pastors are not ordained, but are licensed to perform all of the duties of a pastor in a specific church or in a group of churches called a charge.

## Changes in the Number of Clergy in Church Appointments

In 2008, there were 1,670 elders and local pastors serving church appointments. Overall, that number has seen a slight decline nearly every year: 130 fewer clergy were serving church appointments in 2015 compared to 2008.

This overall decline has been driven by a reduction in the number of elders serving church appointments. Their ranks decreased by 255 between 2008 and 2015. Conversely, the number of local pastors serving church appointments increased by 125 during the same time frame.

Clergy in church appointments  
by ordination status



28.8%

In 2008, 28.8% of church appointments were served by local pastors

39.4%

In 2015, local pastors served 39.4% of church appointments

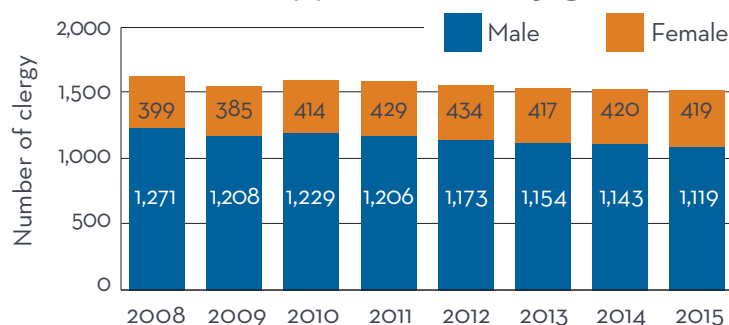
# APPOINTMENTS

## Gender and Appointments

The majority of United Methodist pastors are male; however, their numbers are decreasing. There were 152 fewer male clergy appointed to churches in 2015 than in 2008, while the number of female clergy rose slightly from 399 in 2008 to 419 in 2015. This shift yielded an increase in the percentage of clergy who are women.

In 2008, almost **24%** of clergy were female. By 2012, this percentage had increased to **27%** and remained stable into 2015.

Church appointments by gender

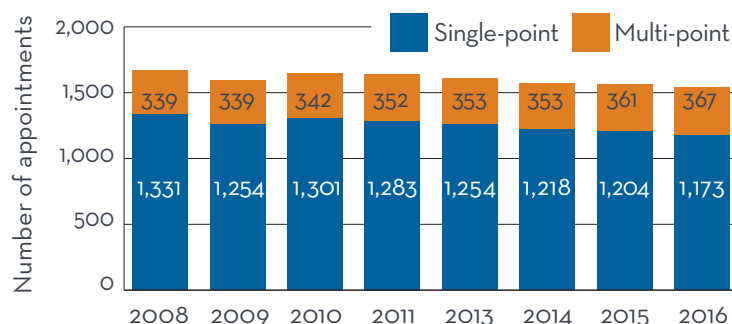


## Appointments to Single- and Multi-point Charges

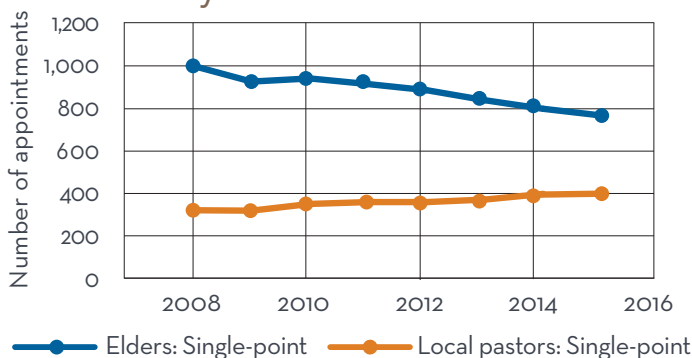
Clergy who serve one church are considered to be in a single-point charge. When a group of churches shares the services of a pastor, this arrangement is known as a multi-point charge. The majority of appointments are single-point charges; however, there were 158 fewer in 2015 than in 2008. By contrast, the number of multipoint charge appointments increased slightly over this same period.

Elders have historically held the majority of both types of appointments, but between 2008 and 2015, the number of local pastors appointed to both single- and multi-point charges grew. As of 2012, local pastors began to hold the majority of multi-point charge positions.

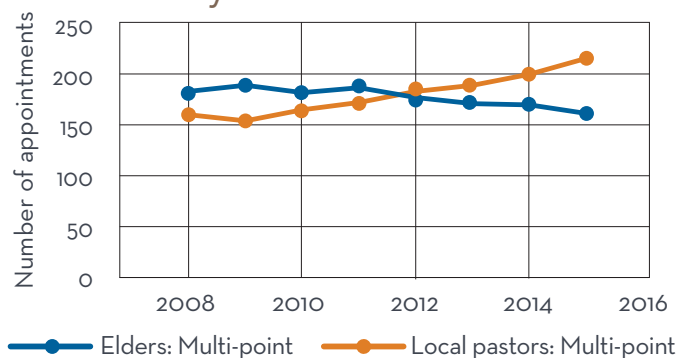
Single-point and multi-point charge appointments



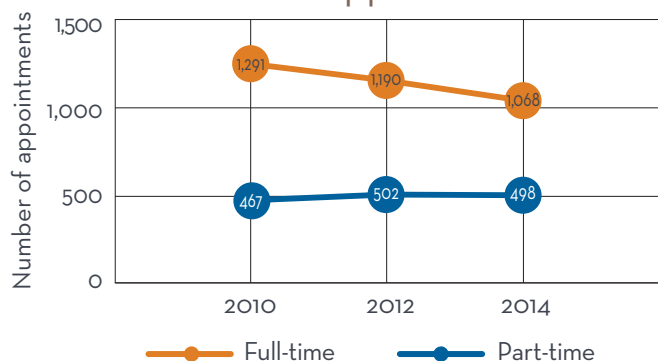
Single-point appointments by ordination status



Multi-point appointments by ordination status



## Clergy in full-time and part-time church appointments



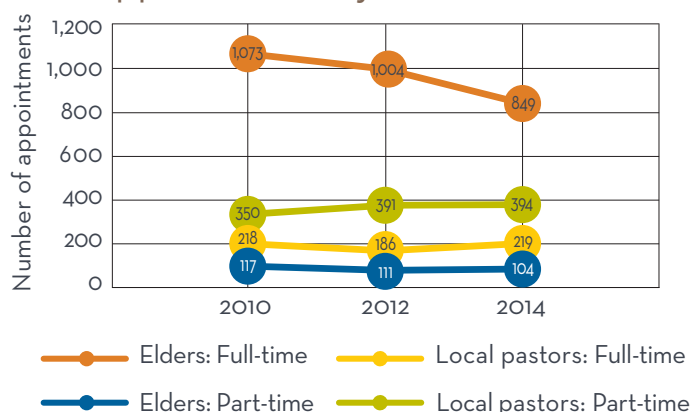
## Full-time versus Part-time Church Appointments

We began asking pastors about their full- or part-time appointment status in the 2010 survey. Looking at that biennial data, we see that the number of full-time church appointments has decreased, while the number of part-time church appointments has generally increased. We believe that these survey data - and therefore these trends - are representative of all the church-appointed clergy, but because some clergy did not take the survey, the numbers indicated here are fewer than the actual number of UMC clergy serving statewide in those years.

## Full-time and Part-time Appointments by Ordination Status

A deeper look into the full- and part-time data by ordination status reveals that the number of elders in full-time appointments decreased between 2010 and 2014. Meanwhile, the number of elders serving part-time appointments remained mostly unchanged, as did the number of full-time local pastors. However, the number of local pastors in part-time roles increased.

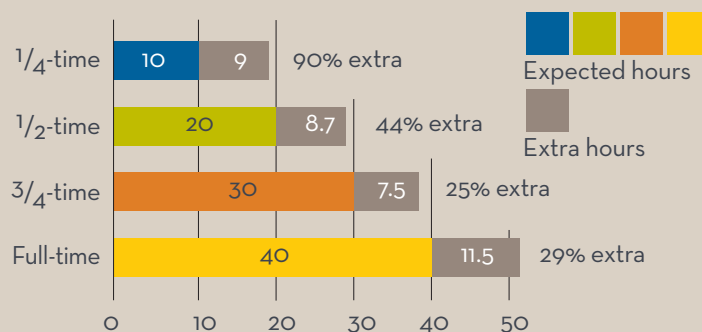
## Clergy in full-time and part-time appointments by ordination status



## Full-time and Part-time Work Expectations in 2014

We have reported on work time expectations in previous reports, but with an increasing number of clergy serving part-time appointments, this point remains highly relevant. We know that all pastors, regardless of whether they serve in full- or part-time appointments, tend to work more than their expected hours each week. However, this increase in work time is much greater for 1/2-time and 1/4-time clergy, who report working 44% to as much as 90% over their expected hours each week!

## Hours worked per week

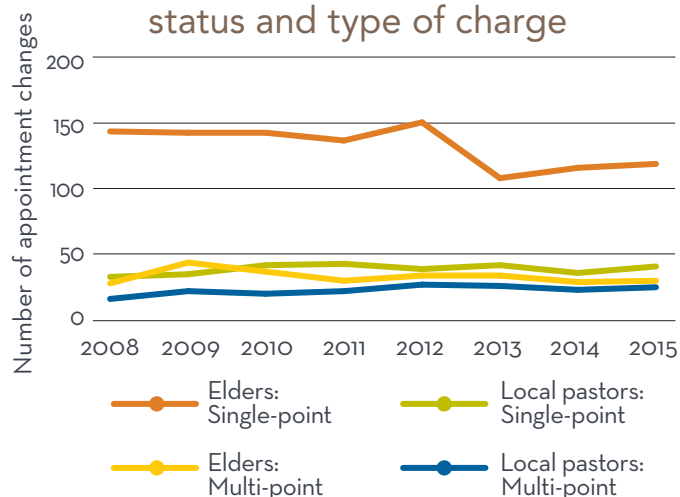


# APPOINTMENTS

## Number of Appointment Changes Made Annually

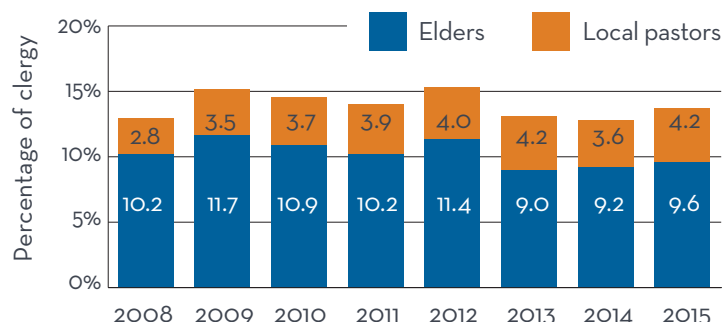
On average, 14% of clergy are assigned to a new church or set of churches each year. (This does not include clergy who are entering their first appointment ever.) A change in appointment usually means the pastor will have to relocate to another part of the state. Since 2008, the overall percentage of clergy changing appointments has not changed significantly, but we do see a slight decrease in the percentage of elders changing appointments in the past three years.

### Appointment changes by ordination status and type of charge



When examining the gender of those clergy changing appointments, we do not see any significant shifts or trends. Women comprised a slightly higher percentage of the appointment shifts in 2015 than they did in 2008, but this 2.7 percentage point shift seems to match the overall increase in women serving church appointments statewide during the same period.

### Elders and local pastors changing appointments



Not surprisingly, a majority of the appointment changes involve elders serving a single-point charge. These peaked at 151 in 2012, dropped by over 40 in 2013, and rose only slightly into 2015. Despite the fact that local pastors are now serving more multi-point charges than elders (see graph on page 2), elders are changing appointments in multi-point charges at a slightly higher rate than local pastors. This discrepancy is likely explained by the influx of local pastors in their first appointments, who are not represented in these graphs of changing appointments.

### Male versus female clergy receiving new appointments

