Course of Study
Summer 2015

Advanced UM Polity and Leadership
Session 2: July 20-23/7:45-10:00am

(Additional ministry project hours equal to at least 5 hours will be assigned below.)

Pre-work and Syllabus

What does it mean to lead as a United Methodist pastor? Is that the same things as being the shepherd of the flock, a vision-caster, a preacher, a prophet? How does a pastor lead in the most basic of ways: biblically, faithfully, fruitfully, and effectively? There are the questions we will explore, paying particular attention to both each pastor’s self-awareness of call and purpose, as well as, the needs of local churches where the call for “leadership” is universal. Specifically, we will consider essential practices of ministry like prayer, self-examination, vision-casting, decision-crafting, consensus-building, conflict management, peach-making, and motivation, all in the context of The Book of Discipline and The United Methodist connection.

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry describes the course this way: “This course focuses on the pastor’s formation and competency in fulfilling the role of pastoral administrator, so that a unity is achieved between the pastor’s doing and being. The development of administrative skills in keeping with the theology and polity of The UMC is addressed.” Therefore, we will consider together our shared role and reasonability as congregational leaders and examine how the pastor serves and equips, manages and leads, inspires and directs, speaking out of and into the context in which each student currently serves.

Course Objectives

1. Explore the biblical nature of leadership.
2. Explore UM understandings of leadership.
3. Examine how contexts differentiate leadership styles and needs.
4. Study how to differentiate the various roles of the pastor, as well as, privately evaluate our own leadership gifts.
5. Work with 1 or more lay leaders (of the student’s choosing) to develop an action plan for the ministry each student currently serves.
6. Study the church’s nature as foundational for the development statements, administrative decisions, and leadership styles.
7. Analyze actions strategies for planning, coordinating, directing, and evaluating ministries and programs.
8. Study conflict management and resolution strategies.
9. Cultivate an understanding of the dynamics involved in smaller membership churches and multiple-church charges.
10. Increase our understanding of UM structures and administrative procedures.

Books

The Bible

The Book of Discipline 2012

Crossing the Chasm, Geoffrey Moore and Regis McKenna, ISBN -- 978-0060517120


Pre-work

1. Select a biblical character and write a 500-700 word essay about what this character teaches you about leading others in faith. Address at least these questions: What does this character teach? Is the lesson a positive or negative example of leadership? How do you emulate those traits in your ministry?
2. Read The Method of our Mission. Write a 1-3 page double-spaced paper on what single trait or aspect of mission as presented therein draws you. Explain why you are attracted to this particular issue and how you see it affecting the community you currently serve.
3. Read Pursuing Pastoral Excellence.

Grades

30% - Pre-work

30% - In-Class participation

40% - Ministry Project
Course Schedule

July 20 – Introduction and overview of class. Biblical and UM statements/beliefs of leadership. Use of pre-work in class.

July 21 – “Excellence in Leadership”; BOD expectations and assessments

July 22 – The Method of our Mission

July 23 – Pursuing Pastoral Excellence

July 24 – Case Studies and application of previous days’ discussion

July 27 – In-class use of HBR article distributed in previous class.

July 28 – Application of principles from July 27

July 29 – Closing the Chasm

July 30 – Application of principles from July 29

Ministry Project

Each student will ask at least 1 lay member of his/her congregation(s) to join them in assessing the leadership style and needs of their congregation(s). They will together develop a plan to address the chief need that congregation(s) currently faces. Students serving a multi-point charge can either do this exercise for the entire charge, or, if they wish, select one of the churches in the charge and address its particular needs. Students not serving a local church can address the chief need of the ministry they serve. This project will involve assessment of congregational strengths and needs, personal leadership gifts/deficits, long-term strategic planning, tactical implementation of change theory, and over all biblical and spiritual principles. The project should be reported in a paper of 8-10 pages, due Thursday, July 30.

The project is to be completed following the expectations of the COS Conduct Covenant and the Honor Code, and following the COS Writing Guidelines. The lay person(s) assisting the student will be named and may be quoted or interviewed, subject to their consent, for the project.