

CLERGY EFFECTIVENESS

Faithful, Effective, Fruitful Clergy: A Working Definition

(revised 11-28-07)

Out of shared commitment to enhancing clergy effectiveness in and beyond the local churches throughout the WPA Annual Conference, the *Believe Again! Clergy Study Team* offers the following definition and explanation of our understanding of clergy effectiveness. All references are to paragraphs in *The Book of Discipline 2004*. Clergy leadership and effectiveness encompass all aspects of a clergyperson's life and can be demonstrated by integrity of heart and life; wholeness in building and maintaining relationships; and competence in skills necessary for ministry. Such effective clergy leadership will produce the fruits of Christian ministry: disciples of Jesus Christ transforming the world. For the purpose of this document, 'clergy' is defined according to Paragraph 140.

Paragraph 304 of the 2004 United Methodist Book of Discipline describes 'Qualities for Ordination' in the following way:

Those whom the Church ordains shall be conscious of God's call to ordained ministry, and their call shall be acknowledged and authenticated by the Church. God's call has many manifestations and the Church cannot structure a single test of authenticity. Nevertheless, the experience of the Church and the needs of its ministry require certain qualities of faith, life and practice from those who seek ordination as deacons and elders. In order that those persons who present themselves as candidates for ordained ministry are truly called of God, the Church expects persons seeking ordination to...

The paragraph then lists several qualifications and in 304.5 states that these requirements are 'minimum requirements only.' Therefore, we, the *Believe Again! Clergy Study Team* Propose this 'Working Definition of Clergy Effectiveness.'

NOTE: As the candidacy process for persons seeking ordination and those desiring to be licensed as local pastors is identical, persons serving as licensed local pastors are expected to demonstrate these same qualities of faith, life, and practice as those who are ordained with the exception for part-time local pastors of the commitment to give themselves completely to ordained ministry (304.1.c)

I. Integrity of Heart and Life

Persons who are seeking ordination or licensing or who are ordained or serving as local pastors will:

1. Have and demonstrate personal faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be committed to Christ as Savior and Lord (304.1.a), accept that Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation through faith in God through Jesus Christ (304.1.h) and live in such a manner that the love of God is incarnate in their daily activities.
2. Nurture and cultivate spiritual disciplines and patterns of holiness and follow these to promote personal spiritual formation. (304.1.b)
3. Acknowledge and regularly reaffirm a call by God to give themselves completely to ordained ministry following Jesus' pattern of love and service. (304.1.c)

4. Make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life (304.2) including but not limited to:
 - a) living balanced lives which demonstrate an appropriate work ethic regarding time and attention spent in work for the congregation or agency where appointed as well as appropriate time for family, recreation and self care.
 - b) making holistic lifestyle choices and exercising responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity. (304.2)
 - c) being honest and forthright in all verbal and written communications (304.1.g)
 - d) demonstrating the highest integrity in financial matters both within and outside congregational or agency life (304.1.g)
5. Be self reflective regarding all aspects of spiritual formation, ministry and personal life.
6. Will be involved in an ongoing process of personal development, spiritual formation and continuing education in consultation with the SPRC, District Superintendent and other ministry setting supervisors (351).

II Wholeness of Relationships

Clergy with the UMC exercise their ministry within covenant relationships with God, other ordained clergy, members of the congregation or agency to which they are appointed, spouse, family and friends (303.3). Effective clergy demonstrate skills necessary to create and maintain healthy and nurturing relationships in all aspects of life.

Effective Clergy Will:

1. Exercise leadership in such a way that ministry becomes the work of the entire congregation or agency and gifts for ministry among the laity are recognized and nurtured. (220, 303.4, 328)
2. Live in covenant with the ordained ministers of the UMC (304.1.j), holding themselves accountable to a group of peers for growth in discipleship and the exercise of ministry. It is expected that this group will meet regularly and deal with issues relevant to spiritual formation and growth in ministry.
3. Meet regularly with PPRC and participate openly and honestly with PPRC in the process of evaluation (350.1) and respond appropriately when either praise or criticism is offered. In appointments to extension ministry, clergy will engage in appropriate supervisory sessions with those to whom the clergy person is accountable.
4. Participate in annual performance review with SPRC and district superintendent. In appointments to extension ministry, yearly inventory documents will be provided by the district superintendent and will be completed by the clergyperson.
5. Exercise their ministry under appropriate supervision of the UMC through the office of the bishop and district superintendent. (421)

6. Demonstrate integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness (304.2). Set boundaries so both single and married persons ensure that relationships are nurtured appropriately and do not become a detriment to ministry and that ministry does not have detrimental effects on relationships. Clergypersons will see that their families also are nurtured appropriately.
7. Seek out needed help when any relationship is strained or broken
8. Set appropriate boundaries in contacts with persons so that issues of sexual misconduct or harassment are never in question (2702.1.j & k)
9. Demonstrate sensitivity to issues of “race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or economic status” (162)

III Competence in Skills Necessary for Ministry

Faithful, effective, fruitful clergy working in the church demonstrate gifts for ministry that allow them to make disciples of Jesus Christ, oversee ministries appropriate to their appointment and connect with those beyond the local church.

A. Skills necessary for pastoral ministry (elders, local pastors)

Responsibilities and duties of Elders and Licensed Pastors

The responsibilities of elders and licensed pastors are derived from the authority given in ordination. Elders have a four-fold ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order and Service within the connection and thus serve in the church and the world. Local pastors share with the elders the responsibilities and duties of a pastor for this four-fold ministry. (340)

Effective pastors demonstrate skill and giftedness far beyond minimum expectations in fulfilling the duties and responsibilities as found in Paragraph 340 in the 2004 Book of Discipline (see attached).

From among these, we emphasize that, clergy will demonstrate skill in:

1. The servant leadership of guiding, supporting, training, and equipping laity for ministry in the world
2. Proclamation of the Word through preaching and teaching, demonstrating ability to think theologically and articulate the Wesleyan tradition
3. Pastoral care in times of illness, crisis, or death; keeping confidentiality
4. Leadership in the planning of and participation in worship and sacramental authority in accordance with disciplinary requirements
5. Prophetic leadership that calls the congregation to mission beyond its walls and justice in society
6. Administrative leadership in implementing the vision and purpose of the congregation, time management, supervision and management of staff and volunteers, and financial oversight
7. The use of current technology to enhance aspects of church programming and congregational life

8. Communicating what it means to be a United Methodist in the 21st century, and in leading a congregation in a United Methodist manner
9. Maintaining the connection between the local church, district, annual conference and the specialized ministries of the UMC that exist beyond the local church

B. Skills necessary for ministry beyond the local church

Deacons are persons called by God, authorized by the Church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word and Service to both the community and the congregation in a ministry that connects the two. Deacons exemplify Christian discipleship and create opportunities for others to enter into discipleship. In the world, the deacon seeks to express a ministry of compassion and justice, assisting laypersons as they claim their own ministry. In the congregation, the ministry of the deacon is to teach and to form disciples, and to lead worship together with other ordained and lay persons. (329.1)

1. Leadership in accordance with the requirements of the specialized ministry setting including guiding, supporting, training, and equipping laity for ministry in the world
2. Proclamation of the Word through preaching and teaching, demonstrating ability to think theologically and articulate the Wesleyan tradition
3. Pastoral care in times of illness, crisis, or death; keeping confidentiality
4. Prophetic leadership that calls the congregation to mission beyond its walls and justice in society
5. Administrative leadership in implementing the vision and purpose of the congregation, time management, supervision and management of staff and volunteers, and financial oversight
6. The use of current technology to enhance ministry
7. Maintaining the connection between the local church, district, annual conference and the specialized ministries of the UMC that exist beyond the local church. This may include participation in worship (including weddings and funerals), sacramental assistance, and leadership in accordance with the guidelines of ordination and mission activities.

IV FRUITFULNESS: The results of faithful clergy effectively doing ministry

The function of a local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is to help people to accept and confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and to live their daily lives in light of their relationship to God (202)

The local church shall be organized so that it can pursue its primary task and mission in the context of its own community - reaching out and receiving with joy all who will respond; encouraging people in their relationship with God and inviting them to commitment to God's love in Jesus Christ; providing opportunities for them to seek strengthening and growth in spiritual formation; and supporting them to live lovingly and justly in the power of the Holy Spirit as faithful disciples. (243)

Faithful and effective clergy lead the laity in ministry. Such ministry demonstrates a local church which is guided by the Holy Spirit, fulfills its primary task and produces fruit which includes:

1. Clearly articulated mission and vision to guide all the activities in the congregation

2. Visitors participating in worship knowing that the church has ‘made space for them’
3. Worship visitors returning as a result of ‘radical hospitality’
4. Persons newly professing their faith in Jesus Christ and/or seeking baptism
5. Parents bringing their children for baptism and re-affirming their commitment to Christ
6. Diversity (age, race, socio-economic status, family make-up, etc.) in the worshipping community and ministry life of the congregation
7. A genuine celebration of ‘the catholic spirit’ (see John Wesley’s sermon, “On a Catholic Spirit”) and deepened understanding of our Wesleyan theological heritage
8. Church members renewing and revitalizing their commitment to God’s love in Jesus Christ as evidenced by
 - Healing of inner-church conflicts, reconciliation among members
 - A renewed spirit of peace and joy in worship
 - Shared leadership among the laity in all aspects of church life
 - Passion for reaching out to the ‘unchurched’ and those often deemed culturally unacceptable
 - More consistent attendance in worship and participation in Bible studies, etc.
9. Church members building relationships with persons in the community manifest in
 - restored standing of the church as a vital part of the community
 - new people participating in church ministries and being introduced to the gospel
 - discernment of the needs of people in the community and development of ministries that meets those needs
 - transformed lives as the needs of the people in the community being holistically met
10. Increasing number of children and youth participating in Christian education and other gospel-centered programs/ ministries
11. Increasing number of laity participating in training/ formation events including Lay Ministry School.
12. Persons being called into ordained, licensed and certified lay ministry
13. More youth and young adults serving in leadership positions in all aspects of church life
14. Increasing numbers of adults committed to small groups that nurture spiritual formation
15. Financial stability in the church as commitment to and trust in God is lived out in giving and tithing as modeled by the pastor
16. Enthusiastic support of the broader mission of the United Methodist Church, its global mission including full payment of mission share.

17. New ministries developed by empowered laity according to their gifts
18. Ministry done in collaboration with other United Methodist churches and ecumenically in the community
19. All activities, programs and events building on and supporting the vision of the gospel and the mission of the United Methodist Church

Duties and Responsibilities of Elders and Licensed Pastors
Paragraph 340, *The Book of Discipline 2004*

1. Word and ecclesial acts:

- a) To preach the Word of God, lead in worship, read and teach the Scriptures, and engage the people in study and witness.
 - (1) To ensure faithful transmission of the Christian faith.
 - (2) To lead people in discipleship and evangelistic outreach that others might come to know Christ and to follow him.
- b) To counsel persons with personal, ethical, or spiritual struggles.
- c) To perform the ecclesial acts of marriage and burial.
 - (1) To perform the marriage ceremony after due counsel with the parties involved and in accordance with the laws of the state and the rules of The United Methodist Church. The decision to perform the ceremony shall be the right and responsibility of the pastor.
 - (2) To conduct funeral and memorial services and provide care and grief counseling.
- d) To visit in the homes of the church and the community, especially among the sick, aged, imprisoned, and others in need.
- e) To maintain all confidences inviolate, including confessional confidences except in the cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, or in cases where mandatory reporting is required by civil law.

2. Sacrament:

- a) To administer the sacraments of baptism and the Supper of the Lord according to Christ's ordinance.
 - (1) To prepare the parents and sponsors before baptizing infants or children, and instruct them concerning the significance of baptism and their responsibilities for the Christian training of the baptized child.
 - (2) To encourage reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant and renewal of baptismal vows at different stages of life.
 - (3) To encourage people baptized in infancy or early childhood to make their profession of faith, after instruction, so that they might become professing members of the church.
 - (4) To explain the meaning of the Lord's Supper and to encourage regular participation as a means of grace to grow in faith and holiness.
 - (5) To select and train deacons and lay members to serve the consecrated communion elements.
- b) To encourage the private and congregational use of the other means of grace.

3. Order:

- a) To be the administrative officer of the local church and to assure that the organizational concerns of the congregation are adequately provided for.
 - (1) To give pastoral support, guidance, and training to the lay leadership, equipping them to fulfill the ministry to which they are called.
 - (2) To give oversight to the educational program of the church and encourage the use of United Methodist literature and media.
- To be responsible for organizational faithfulness, goal setting, planning and evaluation.
- (4) To search out and counsel men and women for the ministry of deacons, elders, local pastors and other church related ministries.

b) To administer the temporal affairs of the church in their appointment, the annual conference, and the general church.

(1) To administer the provisions of the *Discipline*.

(2) To give an account of their pastoral ministries to the charge and annual conference according to the prescribed forms.

(3) To provide leadership for the funding ministry of the congregation.

(4) To promote faithful, financial stewardship and to encourage giving as a spiritual discipline.

(5) To lead the congregation in the fulfillment of its mission through full and faithful payment of all apportioned ministerial support, administrative, and benevolent funds.

(6) To care for all church records and local church financial obligations, and certify the accuracy of all financial, membership, and any other reports submitted by the local church to the annual conference for use in apportioning costs back to the church.

c) To participate in denominational and conference programs and training opportunities.

(1) To seek out opportunities for cooperative ministries with other United Methodist pastors and churches.

(2) To be willing to assume supervisory responsibilities within the connection.

d) To lead the congregation in racial and ethnic inclusiveness.

b

4. Service:

a) To embody the teachings of Jesus in servant ministries and servant leadership.

b) To give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for discipleship in the world.

c) To build the body of Christ as a caring and giving community, extending the ministry of Christ to the world.

d) To participate in community, ecumenical and inter-religious concerns and to encourage the people to become so involved and to pray for the unity of the Christian community.