

THE INVITATION

the invitation

SCRIPTURE & CLERGY EXCELLENCE

The work of the Task Force on Clergy Effectiveness began in the consideration of what it means for clergy to be effective in ministry. In the course of the conversation our thoughts turned to the difference between “effectiveness” and “excellence.” This led us to consider chapters 12 and 13 of 1 Corinthians. We would like to lead you into the same discovery that formed the foundation for our work. Take a few minutes to walk through this simple study and form your own conclusions about what “clergy excellence” means.

Effectiveness + LOVING = Excellence

BACKGROUND

Read: 1 Corinthians 1:1-10

To whom is this letter written? (1:2)

What is Paul’s purpose in writing this letter? (1:5-7)

What is the goal to which Paul calls his readers? (1:10)

Read: 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

What is the task of the saints?

EFFECTIVENESS

Read: 1 Corinthians 12

How is the Church empowered? (12:3)

How are gifts for ministry received? (12:4-11)

How are the many gifts given to the saints of the Church enlivened and brought together in unity? (12:13)

What has to happen for the Body of Christ to become its best? (12:26)

In light of chapter 12, what is your understanding of verse 31b?

EXCELLENCE

Read: 1 Corinthians 13

“If I do not have love”... The Greek word for “have” also translates as “to own or possess” or “to be closely joined to a person or thing.” Whose love are you owning? (13:1) Are you owning your own definition of love, or are you owning God’s Love?

What is the effect of our gifts if we are not closely joined to God? (13:1-3)

According to this chapter, what are the characteristics of love? (13:4-7)

What does it mean for love to:

- “bear” all things?
- “believe” all things?
- “hope” in all things?
- “endure” all things?

THE END RESULT

The final verses of chapter 13 become the capstone of what Paul is leading the Church to understand. They convey a sense of permanence and a sense of maturity United Methodists can claim as an aspect of what John Wesley meant when he spoke of “sanctifying grace.” Ultimately, we must understand this “more excellent way” is a call to use our spiritual gifts in a mature loving way. As we do so, we become servants who effectively reach out on behalf of God in making disciples for Jesus Christ.

Based on your study of Scripture, what are your conclusions about what excellence means for us as Christians?

Tell us by visiting www.ntcumc.org/clergyeffectiveness

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CLERGY EFFECTIVENESS

“And I will show you a more excellent way”



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Presented by:
The Clergy Effectiveness Team

“And I will show you a more excellent way”
1 Cor. 12:31

THE DIRECTION *the direction*

At the 2005 Annual Conference, Bishop Rhymes H. Moncure, Jr. expressed his desire for a Conference-wide initiative regarding Clergy Effectiveness. A Clergy Effectiveness Team was appointed and began meeting in the Fall of 2005. The group's goal was to develop a sustainable culture of growth related to every person serving under appointment, thus leading to increasing effectiveness and, ultimately, excellence. This culture of growth includes intentional development in the areas of:

- HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE
- WHOLENESS OF RELATIONSHIPS
- SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES FOR MINISTRY

To meet this goal, the Clergy Effectiveness Team recognized the importance of providing some form of assessment to pastors. In order to grow, it is imperative that pastors be able to identify their gifts and strengths in ministry and those areas which specifically need improvement.

THE GUIDE *the guide*

The Clergy Effectiveness Team discerned that the PRISM assessment tool developed for clergy by the National Association of Church Business Administrators (NACBA) was the best tool available to help clergy identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. The PRISM assessment is a 360-degree instrument which solicits feedback in a confidential manner from persons representing various aspects of a pastor's work. The specific material in the inventory is confidential and belongs solely to the pastor.

Based on the feedback received from the PRISM inventory, the pastor generates a development plan to further their growth in holiness of heart and life, wholeness of relationships, and skills and competencies for ministry. The District Superintendent serves as a support person for the pastor in this endeavor, seeks to help identify necessary resources, and provides accountability for the pastor in following through on his/her development plan.

In 2006-2007, a beta group of pastors tested the PRISM inventory. The 70 pastors, representing all six districts, completed the assessment and are currently in consultation with their District Superintendents regarding the development of a concrete plan for growth. This beta group continues to evaluate and suggest improvements to help us all move forward on this path.



THE PATH *the path*

The Clergy Effectiveness Team understood from its inception that it exists as a short-term group seeking to begin the process of enhancing clergy effectiveness. In extended conversations this past year regarding the sustainability of this Clergy Effectiveness Initiative, the Team now proposes the creation of a Committee on Clergy Effectiveness. The committee will be supported by and integrated into the Board of Ordained Ministry. Funding from the Board for this initiative will enable 75-80 additional clergy each year to experience this process of assessment and development. The Committee on Clergy Effectiveness seeks to guide ministers through their ministerial path after ordination.



THE DESTINATION *the destination*

The Clergy Effectiveness Team is excited about the possibilities for the present and future. The hope for the Clergy Effectiveness Ministry is to encourage increasing effectiveness and, ultimately, excellence. Through a helpful, confidential, and sustainable accountability program, clergy will continue to grow. By the end of 2008, there will be at least 140 clergy who have participated in receiving objective feedback and are intentionally responding to their calling to continually move toward excellence in ministry. By 2011, all persons under appointment will be a part of the ongoing culture of growth which increases effectiveness and leads to excellence.

The path toward effectiveness and excellence will occur with an adequate assessment tool administered to every person under appointment approximately every four years. Through accountability provided by the District Superintendents and significant resources for growth provided through the Annual Conference, The North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church can see our destination of being made “perfect in one.”

This it is to be a perfect [human being], to be ‘sanctified throughout;’ even to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God, ‘as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.’ In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to ‘show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.’ O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus ‘be made perfect in one!’

John Wesley

THE INVITATION *the invitation*

The clergy of the North Texas Conference are invited to consider the meaning of excellence in their respective ministries. The path toward excellence and effectiveness in ministry can be demonstrated in holiness of heart and life, wholeness of relationships, and competence in skills necessary for ministry. As part of the journey to excellence in ministry, the Clergy Effectiveness Team has developed a personal devotional guide. The Team invites all ministers to walk through the guide and examine and consider the meaning of excellence.

Please see the next page of this brochure for a guided walk toward the meaning of excellence.