



ADVANCING PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

CENTER FOR CLERGY EXCELLENCE, TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Advancing Pastoral Leadership is a ministry of the Texas Annual Conference through its Center for Clergy Excellence designed to develop the capacity for strategic congregational leadership by United Methodist pastors. Created out of a deep concern for the mission of the church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, the goal of the program is to assist emerging clergy leaders in developing their capacity for fruitful leadership. Over the course of five years, program participants will:

- engage in quarterly retreats for the first two years, followed by semi-annual gatherings for three years;
- complete a variety of assessments that will help provide a robust portrait of individual leadership gifts and challenges;
- study the tasks of leadership and build capacity for strategic and intentional leadership;
- with the help of the congregation, assess and improve their skills for preaching, cultivation of congregational generosity and engagement with the public square;
- enjoy the counsel and support of an executive coach;
- work with a clergy mentor who has a proven record of faithfulness and fruitfulness in ministry;
- cultivate strong peer relationships;
- develop a clear plan for ongoing learning and growth;
- and reflect theologically on the nature of personal and congregational leadership.

With this program, clergy who have 30 years of potential remaining service to the church have the opportunity to develop their capacity for leadership. No where else in the country do United Methodist clergy have an equivalent opportunity both to serve important missional appointments and be guided in an intentional, long-term process of leadership formation and development.

Expectations for Participation

Thanks to the generous support of Lilly Endowment, Inc., selected applicants will participate in the full program at a substantially reduced cost. Tuition costs cover program materials, accommodations and coaching and mentoring fees. All instructional costs and program administration are paid through grant funds. Tuition for the program is \$2,000 per year plus all travel expenses. Participants from the Texas Annual Conference will receive a 70% scholarship, reducing total tuition to \$3,000 plus travel expenses to be paid over the final three years of the program (\$1,000 per year for the final three years). Congregational and conference support for these expenses is encouraged and financial assistance will be available in cases of significant need. Because the program makes significant financial and other resource investment in its participants, *it is necessary for attendees to make the following commitments:*

- pledge to attend all sessions in their entirety for the full length of the program (five years);
- complete all assessments, reading and writing assignments, and coaching and mentoring conversations between sessions;
- maintain an openness to learning and feedback on leadership, preaching and the arts of ministry;
- engage their congregations in their learning and development;
- at the direction of the bishop, serve a missional placement in the annual conference that enhances the opportunity for development;
- and cover their responsibilities at home and to the congregation during program sessions.

Admissions Criteria

The Advancing Pastoral Leadership program is open to all United Methodist clergy who are elders in the South Central Jurisdiction, who have demonstrated excellence and fruitfulness in their ministry, and have at least 30 years of potential remaining service to the church. Cohorts of 15 – 20 leaders will begin the program each year and continue together throughout the five years of the program.

2011 Program Details

The next class of the Advancing Pastoral Excellence program will begin in fall 2011. Retreats for the first year of the program will be held at Camp Allen Conference and Retreat Center in Navasota, TX.

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| October 3 - 6, 2011 | Session I: Embracing God's Call to Leadership: Understanding Yourself as a Leader |
| January 9 – 12, 2012 | Session II: Leading Strategically: Guiding a Congregation through Mission and Vision |
| April 16 – 19, 2012 | Session III: Finding Courage to Lead: Managing Change and Resistance |
| July 23 - 26, 2012 | Session IV: Taking Responsibility: Developing a Learning Plan and Moving Forward |
| Nov. 2012 – Aug 2013 | Quarterly Retreats (Dates and Locations to be determined by the first session of the program) Session V: The Art of Communication: Preaching that Reaches Session VI: Second Session on Preaching and Worship Session VII: Ministry in the Public Square Session VIII: Stewardship and Growing a Culture of Generosity (Sessions V-VIII will require the engagement of a congregational committee to support program learning objectives) |
| January 2012 – December 2014 | Semi-annual Retreat (Dates, Location and topics to be determined by the group during its second year) |

To Apply

Potential participants must complete the attached application by June 15, 2011. Following review by an admissions committee, select applicants will be invited to an in-person interview in early August, in Houston, with final decisions announced by August 12.

Program Leadership

Participants in Advancing Pastoral Leadership will have the opportunity to learn from a variety of leading pastors and community leaders. To support and encourage significant development, each participant will be paired with an executive coach and will choose a clergy mentor. Reverend Janice Virtue, leadership consultant and educator, will serve as the program guide. Janice has 15 years of experience designing programs for learning and development for the church's clergy. A United Methodist elder, Janice is wholly committed to providing willing learners in this program with a variety of experiences designed to foster courageous leadership and wise management within a Christ-centered mission.

For More Information

Contact program guide Janice Virtue at janice.virtue@ymail.com or Jenna Arnold, program assistant, at (713) 521-9383 or jarnold@txcumc.org.