

## Ministry Competencies: Definitions and Recommended Readings

Prepared by Dr. Robert Cornwall, Chair, Michigan COM

1. **Biblical Knowledge:** Be rooted and grounded in scripture and able to interpret and apply the scriptures in ways that are appropriate to original and contemporary contexts.

- Anderson, Bernhard. *Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, Augsburg, 2006.
- Borg, Marcus J. *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time: Taking the Bible Seriously but Not Literally*. Harper One, 2015.
- Boring, Eugene and Fred Craddock. *The People's New Testament Commentary*. WJK Press, 2004.
- Clark-Soles, Jaime. *Engaging the Word: The New Testament and the Christian Believer*. WJK Press, 2010.
- Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth*. Zondervan, 2014.
- Hamilton, Adam. *Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today*. Harper One, 2014.
- Pregeant, Russell. *Reading the Bible for All the Wrong Reasons*. Fortress, 2011.

2. **Church Administration and Planning:** Be able to practice the principles of good administration, planning and implementing short--- and long---range goals to enhance Congregational life in collaboration with teams and committees.

- Bass, Diana Butler. *Christianity for the Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church Is Transforming the Faith*. Harper One, 2006.
- Fletcher, Ruth A. *Thrive: Spiritual Habits of Transforming Congregations*. Energion Publications, 2015.
- Hadaway, C. Kirk. *Behold, I Do a New Thing: Transforming Communities of Faith*. Pilgrim Press, 2001.
- Higdon, Ronald L. *In Changing Times: A Guide for Reflection and Conversation (Guides to Practical Ministry)*. Energion Publications, 2015.
- Marler, Penny Long, et al. *So Much Better: How Thousands of Pastors Help Each Other Thrive*. Chalice Press, 2013.
- Merritt, Carol Howard. *Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation*. (Alban). Rowman and Littlefield, 2012.
- Mosser, David. *Transitions: Leading Churches through Change*. WJK Press, 2011.

3. **Communication:** Be an effective communicator and be able to facilitate effective communication within and on behalf of the church.
  - Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Scripture & Discernment: Decision Making in the Church*. Abingdon, 1996.
  - Sanders, Cody and Angela Yarber. *Microaggressions in Ministry*. WJK Press, 2015.
  - Smith, C. Christopher. *The Virtue of Dialogue: Conversation as a Hopeful Practice of Church Communities*. Patheos Press, 2012.
  
4. **Cross Cultural and Anti-Racism Experience:** Be sensitive to the different manifestations of racism and prejudice in the culture and be committed to confronting and overcoming them.
  - Harvey, Paul and Edward J. Blum. *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America*. University of North Carolina Press, 2012.
  - Hobgood, William Chris. *Born Apart, Becoming One: Disciples Defeating Racism*. Chalice Press, 2009.
  - Jha, Sandhya. *Pre-Post-Racial America: Spiritual Stories from the Front Lines*. Chalice Press, 2015.
  - Kim, Grace Ji-Sun Kim. *Embracing the Other: The Transformative Spirit of Love*. Eerdmans, 2015.
  - Wallis, James. *America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America*. Brazos Press, 2016.
  
5. **Ecumenism:** Exhibit a commitment to working with other Christians and denominations and with other faiths in programs of common witness and service, and to articulating the vision of the ecumenical and global church as a starting place for mission.
  - Niebuhr, Gustav. *Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America*, Viking, 2008.
  - Nugent, John. Editor. *Radical Ecumenicity: Pursuing Unity and Continuity after John Howard Yoder*. ACU Press, 2010.
  - Patel, Eboo. *Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America*. Beacon Press, 2012.
  - Watkins, Keith. *The American Church that Might Have Been: A History of the Consultation on Church Union*. Pickwick Publications, 2014.
  
6. **Education and Leader Development:** Know the foundations of Christian education and the principles of leader development. Show competency in teaching children, youth, and adults, including lay leaders and staff.
  - Baker, Dori. Editor. *Greenhouses of Hope: Congregations Growing Young Leaders Who Will Change the World*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2010.

- Cornwall, Robert D. *Out of the Office: A Theology of Ministry*. Energion, 2017.
  - Hamm, Richard. *Recreating the Church: Leadership for the Postmodern Age*. Chalice Press, 2007.
  - Nouwen, Henri. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. Crossroad, 2002.
  - Ray, David R. *The Indispensable Guide for Smaller Churches*. Pilgrim Press, 2002.
  - Warner, Sharon. *Unlocking the Message of the Bible: Guide to Biblical Interpretation*. Chalice Press, 2008.
7. **Ethics:** Be able to help parishioners think critically about the relationship of their faith to issues of justice, ethics and morality
- Farley, Margaret A. *A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics*. Continuum, 2006.
  - Gushee, David. *The Sacredness of Human Life: Why an Ancient Biblical Vision Is Key to the World's Future*. Eerdmans, 2012.
  - Smedes, Lewis. *Mere Morality: What God Expects from Ordinary People*. Eerdmans, 1982.
  - Stassen, Glen. *A Thicker Jesus: Incarnational Discipleship in a Secular Age*. WJK Press, 2013.
  - Wirzba, Norman. *From Nature to Creation: A Christian Vision for Understanding and Loving Our World*. Baker Academic, 2015.
8. **Evangelism:** Be able to motivate Congregational members to share their faith through word and action.
- Hammett, Edward. *Reaching People Under 40 While Keeping People Over 60: Being Church for All Generations*. Chalice Press, 2007.
  - Keifert, Patrick. *Welcoming the Stranger: A Public Theology of Worship and Evangelism*. Augsburg Press, 1992.
  - Nelson, Gary V. *Borderland Churches: A Congregation's Introduction to Missional Living*. Chalice Press, 2009.
  - Reese, Martha Grace. *Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism*. Chalice Press, 2007.
  - Rouse, Richard and Craig Van Gelder. *A Field Guide for the Missional Congregation: Embarking on a Journey of Transformation*. Augsburg Fortress, 2008.
  - Sparks, Paul, et al. *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*. IVP, 2014.
9. **Mission of the Church in the World:** Be able to understand and articulate the centrality of the call to mission given by Jesus Christ and the prophets. Be able to empower congregations to engage in mission from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

- Barber, William II and Barbara Zelter. *Forward Together: A Moral Message for the Nation*. Chalice Press, 2014.
- Eck, Diana. *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. Harper One, 2001.
- Jipp, Joshua W. *Saved by Faith and Hospitality*. Eerdmans, 2017.
- Gench, Roger J. *Theology from the Trenches: Reflections on Urban Ministry*, WJK Press, 2014.
- Gopp, Amy and Brandon Gilvin. Editors. *Help and Hope: Disaster Preparedness and Response Tools for Congregations*. Chalice Press, 2014.
- Salvatierra, Alexia & Peter Heltzel. *Faith-Rooted Organizing: Mobilizing the Church in Service to the World*. IVP, 2014.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Flourishing: Why We Need Religion in a Globalized World*. Yale University Press, 2016.
- Yong, Amos. *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor*. Orbis Press, 2008.

**10. Pastoral Care:** Be able to engage other persons with empathy and assess situations and relationships with the compassion of Christ, with sensitivity to culture and context. Be able to convey the healing power of God to those who suffer.

- Cahalan, Kathleen. *Introducing the Practice of Ministry*. Liturgical Press, 2010.
- DeGroat, Chuck. *Toughest People to Love: How to Understand, Lead, and Love the Difficult People in Your Life -- Including Yourself*. Eerdmans, 2014.
- Doehring, Carrie. *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach*. Revised Edition. WJK Press, 2015.
- Hunsinger, Deborah Van Deusen. *Bearing the Unbearable*. Eerdmans, 2015.
- Long, Thomas G. and Thomas Lynch. *The Good Funeral: Death, Grief, and the Community of Care*. WJK Press, 2013.
- Nouwen, Henri. *The Wounded Healer*. Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1994
- Thompson, Deanna. *Hoping for More: Having Cancer, Talking Faith, and Accepting Grace*. Cascade, 2012.
- Westberg, Granger. *Good Grief: A Constructive Approach to the Problem of Loss*. Augsburg Press, 1997.

**11. Proclamation of the Word:** Know the practice and theory of Christian preaching. Be able to proclaim the Word of God, share the Good News of Jesus Christ, and help Congregational members apply their faith to daily life.

- Allen, Ronald J. *Preaching: Essential Guide*. Abingdon Press, 2002.
- Allen, Ronald J. *Sermon Treks: Trailways to Creative Preaching*. Abingdon Press, 2013.
- Brosend, William. *The Preaching of Jesus: Gospel Proclamation, Then and Now*. WJK Press, 2010.

- Brueggemann, Walter. *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipating Word*. Fortress Press, 2011.
- Craddock, Fred. *Preaching*. Abingdon Press, 1985.
- Lose, David J. *Preaching at the Crossroads: How the World —and Our Preaching— Is Changing*. Fortress Press, 2013.
- Moss III, Otis. *Blue Note Preaching in a Post-Soul World*, WJK Press, 2015.

**12. Spiritual Development:** Establish and maintain spiritual disciplines that lead to personal growth and help others develop a rich spiritual life.

- Bass, Diana Butler. *Christianity after Religion: The End of Church and the New Spiritual Awakening*. Harper One, 2012.
- Cornwall, Robert D. *Unfettered Spirit: Spiritual Gifts for the New Great Awakening*, Energion Publications, 2013.
- Epperly, Bruce G. and Katherine Gould Epperly. *Tending to the Holy: The Practice of the Presence of God in Ministry*. Alban, 2009.
- Groff, Kent Ira. *Clergy Table Talk: Eavesdropping on Ministry Issues in the 21st Century (Academy of Parish Clergy Conversations in Ministry, #1)*. Energion, 2012.
- Thompson, Marjorie. *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*. WJK Press, 2014.

**13. Stewardship:** Be able to develop and encourage healthy stewards who recognize and share generously God’s abundant gifts for all creation.

- Christopher, J. Cliff. *Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate A New Vision for Financial Stewardship*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008.
- Hall, Douglas John. *The Steward: A Biblical Symbol Come of Age*. Revised Edition. Eerdmans, 1990
- Kindle, Steve. *Stewardship: God's Way of Recreating the Earth (Topical Line Drives Volume 18)*. Energion Publications, 2015.
- Powell, Mark Allan. *Giving to God: The Bible’s Good News about Living a Generous Life*. Eerdmans, 2006.
- Smith, Christian and Michael Emerson. *Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don’t Give Away More Money*. Oxford: University Press, 2008.

**14. Theology:** Be able to articulate a coherent view of God’s nature and activity in relation to the Christian tradition, to critically engage human situations from a perspective of faith, and to help persons recognize theological issues in their daily lives.

- Allen, Ronald J. *A Faith of Your Own: Naming What You Really Believe*. WJK Press, 2010.
- Allen, Ronald J. *Thinking Theologically*. Fortress Press, 2008.

- Clayton, Philip. *Transforming Christian Theology for Church and Society*. Fortress Press, 2010.
- Cone, James. *God of the Oppressed*. Orbis, 1997.
- Johnson, Elizabeth A. *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*. Herder & Herder, 2002.
- Jones, Joe R. *A Grammar of Christian Faith: Systematic Explorations in Christian Life and Doctrine*. 2 Volumes. Rowman and Littlefield, 2002.
- Williamson, Clark M. *Way of Blessing, Way of Life: A Christian Theology*. Chalice Press, 1999.
- Wright, N.T. *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. Harper One, 2006.

**15. Understanding of Heritage:** Have knowledge of and appreciation for the history and thought of Christianity and of the history, structure, practices, and ethos of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

- Bass, Diana Butler, *People's History of Christianity*. Harper One, 2009.
- Boring, M. Eugene. *Disciples and the Bible: A History of Disciples Biblical Interpretation in North America*. Chalice Press, 1997.
- Cornwall, Robert D. *Freedom in Covenant*. Wipf and Stock, 2015.
- Gonzalez, Justo. *The Story of Christianity* (2 Volumes). Harper One, 2010.
- Hetzel, Peter Goodwin. Editor. *Chalice Introduction to Disciples Theology*. Chalice Press, 2008.
- Jha, Sandhya. *Room at the Table: Struggle for Unity and Equality in Disciples History*. Chalice Press, 2013.
- Kinnamon, Michael and Jan Linn. *Disciples: Reclaiming Our Identity, Reforming Our Practice*. Chalice Press, 2009.
- Mullin, Robert Bruce. *A Short World History of Christianity*. Revised Edition. WJK Press, 2014.
- Toulouse, Mark. *Joined in Discipleship: The Shaping of Contemporary Disciples Identity*. Chalice Press, 1992.
- Watkins, Sharon, *Whole: A Call to Unity in Our Fragmented World*. Chalice Press, 2014.
- Williams, Newell, et al. *The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History*. Chalice Press. 2013.

**16. Worship:** Know the purpose and elements of Christian worship. Have the ability to plan and lead meaningful worship by working with the worship team, musicians, and Congregational members.

- Duck, Ruth C. *Worship for the Whole People of God: Vital Worship for the 21st Century*. WJK Press, 2013.
- Long, Kimberly Bracken, *Worshiping Body: The Art of Leading Worship*. WJK Press, 2009.

- Meyers, Ruth. *Missional Worship, Worshipful Mission: Gathering as God's People, Going Out in God's Name*. Eerdmans, 2014.
- Watkins, Keith. Editor. *Baptism and Belonging: A Resource for Christian Worship*. Chalice Press, 1991.
- Watkins, Keith. *Celebrate with Thanksgiving: Patterns of Prayer at the Communion Table*. Chalice Press, 1991.
- Watkins, Keith. *The Great Thanksgiving: The Eucharistic Norm of Christian Worship*. Chalice Press, 1995.
- Watkins, Keith. Editor. *Thankful Praise: A Resource for Christian Worship*. Chalice Press, 1987.
- Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *The God We Worship: An Exploration of Liturgical Theology*. Eerdmans, 2015.
- Zimmerman, Joyce Ann. *Worship with Gladness: Understanding Worship from the Heart*. Eerdmans, 2014.