

Dynamite Meetings

*25 "Ready to Go" Plans
For Your Lay Pastoral
Care Ministry*

- Regularly scheduled or occasional meetings
- Day-long or half-day retreats
- Training events



Dr. Mel Steinbron
Lay Pastors Ministry, Inc.
Minneapolis, Minnesota

DYNAMITE IDEAS FOR LAY PASTORS MEETINGS

25 Complete Plans for your regular monthly or bi-monthly lay pastors meetings, equipping seminars, retreats, and other basic or ongoing training events. Most of the meetings ideas are easily adapted to lay ministries of all kinds.

THE PLANS ARE DESIGNED TO:

- Help lay pastors grow in their ministry skills and their personal lives.
- Deepen lay pastors understanding and commitment.
- Enable lay people to serve with greater confidence and competence.
- Lighten the preparation load for lay pastoral care ministry leaders.

YOU AND THOSE YOU LEAD WILL FIND THESE MEETINGS IDEAS:

- Interesting (You will all like them)
- Participative (Learning by involvement)
- Instructive (Understandable, complete, specific)
- Do-able (They are simple without being shallow)

These Dynamite Ideas come from the experience of a person who has been planning meetings for 20 years, the author of *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?* and *The Lay Driven Church*.

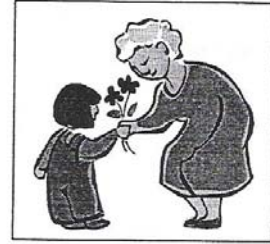
Dr. Mel Strinbron, Founder
Lay Pastors Ministry, Inc.

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SHOWING THAT YOU CARE



PURPOSE: To help lay pastors grasp how important caring acts are to the hurting person.

PREPARATION: Recruit three twosomes to dramatize three acts of caring for one who is sick:

- ACT #1 WRITING A NOTE
- ACT #2 MAKING A PHONE CALL
- ACT #3 MAKING A PERSONAL VISIT

Prepare copies of the questions below for each person.

INTRODUCTION: The following words were part of a Thank-You note written to a Lay Pastor by one of her people:

“When I was sick you showed that you care.
That meant more to me than anything else.”

Read (or have someone read) Col. 3:12 & 17.

The leader puts a focus on the “C” of PACE – Contact , by calling attention to the pastoring activity of the lay pastor who received the note. Ask: “What kind of contact(s) do you think the lay pastor made?” Allow time for response, writing their responses on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

- ACTION:**
1. Call on the twosomes to present their “dramas.” After each drama, ask, “How did they do?” (This question can be just for fun, getting comments about how well it was done or for the humor which some may see in their acting; or it can be serious, getting comments about how meaningful they think the contact was to the person. The leader can encourage both humor and seriousness.
 2. At the completion of all three skits, ask, “Which kind of contact do you think

the lay pastor made?” and “which kind of contact is the most effective?” Leader, be prepared to supplement the answers with your own thoughts, such as the importance of suiting the caring act to the special need of the person; or about using a variety of caring acts during an extended time of sickness.

Explain that the three kinds of contacts are applicable to a variety of crises: loss of job, death of a loved one, accident, law suit, house fire, etc.

3. Divide into groups of three to five for exchanging ideas on the following questions:
 - a. What kind of caring act(s) would you have done for the writer of the note?
 - b. What kind of caring acts have you done in the past year or two?
 - c. What does the note say about the value caring acts have for both the receiver and the giver?
 - d. What prompts a lay pastor to choose one kind of caring act over others?
Does the kind of act make any difference?
 - e. How can one be a genuinely caring person?
 - f. What kind of care have you received at a critical time and what did it mean to you?
4. Reassemble the group to debrief the experience by asking people to tell some of the high points of their group's exchange of ideas.
5. Conclude by reading Colossians 3:12 and 17, adding a few comments about being the caring people God has called lay pastors to be. The closing prayer will include an opportunity for each one to silently renew their commitment to care for God's people the way he wants them cared for.

WHAT IS GOD LOOKING FOR?

PURPOSE: To discover or rediscover the qualities God is looking for in lay pastors so they can renew their commitment to those qualities.



PREPARATION: Sift through the pages of your newspaper for ads of men in search of (ISO) women and women ISO men. Select two of each which are very specific in the description of themselves and very specific in listing the qualities of the person they are looking for.

Clip these and paste or type them onto a form which is provided below. Photocopy the form, one for each person. Provide pencils. (Or, you may prefer to use those already on the form.)

INTRODUCTION: Every newspaper has pages listing men ISO women and women ISO of men. One newspaper runs these ads under the title, Personal Line. God is ISO both men and women to serve him as lay pastors, willingly, eagerly and exemplary (I Peter 5:1-3).

As the one searching, God describes himself to prospective lay pastors (Romans 11:33-36, etc.), and he lists the qualities he is looking for in the prospect (I Peter 1:13-16, etc.).

God sought an Abraham, an Isaiah, a Jonah. Jesus sought his disciples. He cites the fact that the workers are few in proportion to the plentiful harvest, and instructs us to join him in the search by asking the Lord of the harvest to send more workers (Matthew 9:35-38).

Qualities for workers (shepherds/lay pastors), both negative and positive, are given in Ezekiel 34.

ACTION: After the leader (or someone from "outside") gives a teaching on this divine search, distribute the paper, GOD IN SEARCH OF (ISO) LAY PASTORS.

Have some fun with reading the ads out loud, perhaps including additional ones you have found to be interesting or humorous. Don't be surprised at some spontaneous comments, like the one volunteered by a man attending an equipping seminar: "Do you suppose that woman is still available?"

After this, ask them to take 10 minutes to individually fill in the blanks. Be sure to explain carefully what kind of content is to go in the blanks. They are to take these papers with them (filled in) to their group.

Next, divide into groups of four:

1. Ask them to pool their ideas of what kind of "Person" God is. (6 minutes)
2. Ask them to pool their ideas of what kind of person God is looking for. Then ask them to tell which qualities they believe they have and/or what qualities they see in others of their group of four. (15 minutes)
3. Have them exchange papers. One reads God's "ad" from the paper he now holds, making comments about it and asking for other comments. Each take a turn until all four have read and commented. (5 minutes)
4. Each one pray for one other, building the prayer from what has been shared or heard. Note: If, when one is prayed for, she is "hands off" for any other prayers, each one will have the benefit of being prayed for. (4 minutes)

Reassemble the total group. Debrief their experiences by asking a few people to read their "ad" and explain. The leader may choose to comment on some of them or ask the group for comments. Follow this with prayer built from the content of the "ads."

An example of one "ad" written at an equipping seminar: "I am demanding but generous, jealous but loving, judgmental but forgiving. Most of all I am loving. I am looking for someone who is not afraid of making a commitment. Looks and age are not important. A loving and caring heart is a necessity. Together we can change and excite the world."

GOD IN SEARCH OF (ISO) LAY PASTORS

The following ads were in a daily newspaper. A spin-off idea from the phenomenon of men advertising for women and women advertising for men is that God "advertises" in the Bible for lay pastors. He discloses his personal qualities, then reveals the qualities of the person he is looking for to join him in caring for his people. Jesus was looking for certain qualities when he was ISO disciples. He continues His search.

MEN

<p>CLEAN-CUT, good looks, All-American Guy, SWM, 33, 5'9", 175 lbs, athletic, fun-loving, normal, with huge heart and good values. Seeking SF, sweet, cute, trustworthy, under 5'7", over 21, slim-medium. ☎16407</p>	<p>EXCEPTIONALLY attractive, financially/emotionally stable DWM, 6'1", 180 lbs, blond/green, 40s, values humor, outdoors. Gentleman, one of the few left. Seeking SWF, 25-40, with morals, sense of humor. Friendship, possibly more. ☎16337</p>
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Qualities of the man/woman looking for a partner:

(Example: clean-cut, romantic)

WOMEN

<p>SLENDER, green-eyed blonde, affectionate, fun-loving, professional, SWF, 5'8", nice figure, romantic dinners, travel, humor, wonderful 7-year-old daughter, ISO kind, tall, fit, financially stable, professional, Christian Man, 45-51. ☎16224</p>	<p>SPARKLING eyes, spontaneous smile, SWF, 34, 5'6", 128 lbs, attractive, intelligent, optimistic, dependable. Enjoys outdoor activities. Seeking SWM, 32-42, n/s, who's caring, affectionate, intelligent, reliable, self-assured, genuine, honest and consistent. ☎16104</p>
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Qualities of the man/woman being sought:

(Example: sweet, Christian)

The qualities of the One looking for lay pastors – God:

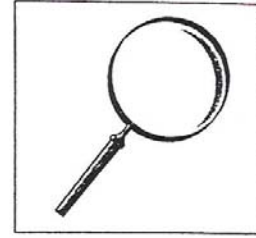
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The qualities of people God is ISO:

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Imagine you are God. In 40 words or less write an ad describing Yourself (God) and the qualities You are looking for in a partner to care for Your people.

A SPIRITUAL AUDIT



PURPOSE: To give lay pastors opportunity to “look inside,” affirm the good, improve the weak, and jettison the unacceptable.

PREPARATION: Photocopy Seven Questions for Self-Examination, one for each person.
Provide pencils.

INTRODUCTION: Jesus tested Philip with a question for the purpose of letting the disciple see what was inside himself – John 6:6.

Paul challenged the Corinthian Christians: “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves” – II Corinthians 13:5. The purpose for examining themselves was that they would “do what was right” – II Corinthians 13:7. Their spiritual audit, Paul wrote, was for the purpose of building them up, not tearing them down – II Corinthians 13:10.

ACTION: After the leader (or someone from “outside”) gives a teaching on self-examination, distribute copies of Seven Questions for Self-Examination to each person. Ask them to take 20 minutes to write their answers. The plan is to take one question at a time, reflect on it, write their thoughts about it, then move to the next question. Assure them that there are no “wrong answers.”

After 20 minutes, divide into groups of four to share their answers, exchange thoughts about them, field questions, and expand their answers when appropriate. Give them 20 minutes to do this. Ask them to take another five minutes to pray for one another, building their prayers out of what they heard during their time together.

Reassemble. Ask for volunteer comments on either the content of their answers, highlights of their discussion, actions to take as the result of this spiritual audit, or questions arising out of their time together. The leader will summarize the comments, etc., and give a concluding teaching on the life enrichment which will

come from their ongoing self-examination.

SEVEN QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

1. Have my most significant spiritual experiences been in the distant past? Do they have any connection with the present? _____

2. Does Christian faith shape my values, the ways I spend my time and money? Do I see appeals for time and money as intrusions or invitations? _____

3. Do I have regular occasions to party, to have fun, to laugh, to smile and to celebrate?

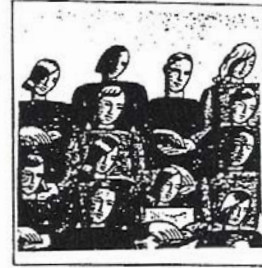
4. Do I expect others to serve me, or do I see myself as a servant? Am I invested in the spiritual growth of at least one other person? _____

5. Are the amounts of time and energy that I devote to dieting and fitness in proportion to the amounts of time that I allot for prayer, study and meditation? _____

6. Is faith an element of my most important relationships? Is faith essential some relationships and not at all to others? Have I talked about my faith with those who are closest to me?

7. Have I reflected on the meaning of my own death? Have I grieved an important loss? Am I able to place my ultimate trust in God? _____

TO YOUR MINISTRY FROM "THE LAY DRIVEN CHURCH"



You can create meetings out of selected sections from the book, *The Lay Driven Church*. The following three examples are designed for three separate meetings; and for you to use as models in creating your own meetings from other sections of the book.

MEETING #1 THREE GIFTS FOR YOU

Pages 153-155 Ask the people to read these pages in preparation for the meeting; and/or have someone teach the content of the pages, writing the three spiritual gifts on an overhead transparency or flipchart. Then distribute papers to each person on which the three gifts are listed. Ask them to write:

- a) Which of the three gifts they believe to be their strongest.
- b) Their inner promptings and outer actions which indicate the presence of all three gifts.
- c) Write what they can do in the next weeks to use these gifts in caring for their people. Ask them to be very specific and detailed.

After they have had time to ponder and write (10 to 15 minutes) have them assemble into groups of three, four, or five to interact (10 to 15 minutes) with what they wrote. Then bring them together to debrief their experiences by asking for volunteers to tell the best from their group experience.

MEETING #2 PREPARED TO P.A.C.E.

Pages 156 – 157 Ask the people to read these pages in preparation for the meeting; and/or have someone teach the content of the pages. Ask them to take 10 to 15 minutes to write the following:

- a) Draw a line. Write 1 at the left and 10 at the right. Put an "X" on the scale of 1 to 10 where they are in feeling equipped to be a lay pastor. (Demonstrate on a flip chart or overhead.)

- b) Write what they have done to further their equipping since they became a lay pastor.
- c) List what they want to do or plan to do in continuing their training.
- d) Write topics which those planning the meetings could use in helping lay pastors be better prepared to P.A.C.E. their people.

Do the same as with #1 above: groups and total group.

MEETING #3 WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

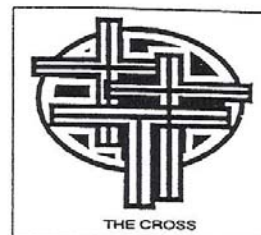
Pages 157 – 160 In addition to doing the same as in meeting #2, distribute photocopies of page 160.

- a) Write four thoughts you have after reading or hearing about the difference between a “volunteer” and a “minister.”
- b) Do you see Jesus as a “volunteer” or a “minister?” How do you see the leader(s) of your ministry? How do you see other Lay Pastors?
- c) Do you see yourself as a “volunteer” or a “minister” or a combination of both? List three reasons for your answer.

Do the same as above: groups and total group.

From both books, *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?* and *The Lay Driven Church*, take the thoughts/ideas/principles/procedures which fit your lay pastoral care ministry and use in a way similar to the three above. This will call forth your creativity and indicate your awareness of what will help your lay pastors develop expertise in their ministry and depth in their personal spirituality.

YOUR COAT OF ARMS



PURPOSE: To bond with one another as partners in pastoral care ministry by each one getting to know himself better and to be better acquainted with each other.

PREPARATION: Photocopy My Personal Coat of Arms, one copy for each person.

INTRODUCTION: Ask if they know what a Coat of Arms is? If they have one in their family or know of anyone who has one? Comment. You may wish to do some research, or ask one of the lay pastors to do it so as to expand your explanation of Coat of Arms.

The dictionary definition: "A design on a shield indicating ancestry and distinction. It is used as an emblem by a family, or city or an institution."

Tell them: "You have a Coat of Arms. Instead of heraldic beings decorating your shield, you have a personal history written with words."

Distribute the Coat of Arms Papers.

Ask them to take 15 minutes to write about themselves in each of the six divisions of the shield. After 15 minutes, divide into groups of four. Each person in each group is to tell about one division of their choice. The other members of the group are free to ask questions about that area of the person's life.

Each one has five minutes to tell his or her story and answer questions. If time permits, go around a second, third or fourth time. End by the group praying for each other regarding the personal history they shared. There should be many prayers of gratitude.

Reassemble to debrief their experiences in the group. Ask:

“How did you feel about telling your story?”

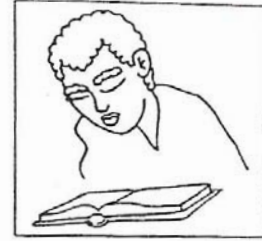
“How did it feel to hear another’s story?”

“What interesting thing did you learn about another person?”

Concluding statement: “Every life has a Coat of Arms. Every person in your “flock” has an interesting and important story to tell. It is part of your task to listen to and remember their Coat of Arms.”

<p>1</p> <p>MY PERSONAL COAT OF ARMS</p>	<p>2</p> <p>YOUR NAME _____</p>
<p>3</p> <p>What do you regard as your greatest personal achievement to date?</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Your family's greatest achievement?</p>
<p>5</p> <p>What is the one thing that other people can do to make you happy?</p>	<p>6</p> <p>What is one gift/ability/strength you possess?</p>
<p>What would you attempt to do, if guaranteed of success?</p>	<p>What three things would you like others to say of you?</p>

DO YOU KNOW YOU ARE A SURROGATE?



PURPOSE: To affirm the importance of lay pastoral care and call for a renewal of commitment.

PREPARATION: Photocopy a sufficient number for each person to have their own copy of Lay Pastors = Jesus' Surrogate with the lines left blank. Ask people to bring their Bibles to the meeting, or provide Bibles for them. Have a supply of pencils.

INTRODUCTION: You have been called a lot of names, but you probably have never been called a surrogate. Ask: "What is a surrogate?" Write their answers on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

Then, give the dictionary definition: 1. A deputy. 2. A substitute. Synonyms are: agent, backup, deputy, fill-in, pinch hitter, proxy, representative, stand-in.

Paul used the word ambassador instead of surrogate – II Corinthians 5:20. The word apostle has the ring of surrogate, for Jesus gave his authority to the eleven, empowering them to take his place in his absence – Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 6:30; Acts 1:1,2,8. ("my witnesses" equals "surrogates")

ACTIVITY: Divide into twosomes. Distribute the copies of Lay Pastor = Jesus' Surrogate with blanks to each person. Ask them to look up the scriptures and fill in the blanks the best they can. Allow 15 minutes for this.

Then reassemble the group to walk them through the paper, giving the correct words for the blanks. Give brief teachings on each paragraph as you complete it if you wish.

When you have completed the paper, divide into at least eight groups, each group taking a paragraph to exchange ideas about. (1., 2., 3., 4. are to be treated as four paragraphs, each one being a continuation of The people assigned. . . . He is calling

you to:) There should not be more than four in a group. Rather than making the groups larger, assign the same paragraphs to additional groups.

Ask the groups to exchange thoughts about their paragraph, using these prompters:

1. What do I understand this paragraph to mean?
2. What are the implications of this paragraph to me and my ministry?
3. How do I feel about being Jesus' surrogate?
4. Can I do something about recruiting more surrogates? See Matt. 9:35-37.

Reassemble. Debrief by asking for spontaneous sharing of their group's exchange of ideas. End with prayers built out of what people contributed or heard in their groups.

LAY PASTOR = JESUS' SURROGATE

Jesus sent his disciples out to minister to people, saying, "He who _____ you _____" – Matthew 10:1, 40.

Jesus, having said, "I am the good shepherd," said to Peter, "Take care of my sheep" – John 10:11; John 21:16. Peter in turn appealed to the elders (lay people) in the churches of five Roman provinces, "Be _____ of God's flock," until the _____ returns – I Peter 5:1-2, 4.

As a Lay Pastor, _____ are important to Jesus because he has chosen _____ to take his place in caring for his people – John 15:16; _____ ministry is significant because, as the father sent him, he now sends _____ – John 17:18.

The people assigned to you to PACE are _____ people – John 21:16. He is calling you to:

1. Seek the _____ one – Matthew 18:12-13. He promises great joy in the success of doing this.
2. Encourage, fellowship with and pray with God's _____, _____ and _____ people – Matthew 18:20. He promises to be with you when you are doing this.
3. Minister to God's _____ people – Matthew 25:34-40. In doing this you are doing it _____ (in place of) Jesus.
4. Grieve with God's _____ people – John 11:35. Your empathy emulates Jesus' crying with those who cry.

The surrogate is accountable to the primary person, _____ – Luke 10:17.

Reporting is a time of joy and godly pride for the surrogate who has faithfully _____ for Jesus – I Peter 5:4.

– MJS

EVER GET DISCOURAGED?

PURPOSE: To learn that discouragement is common to all who minister for the Lord, and what to do about it.



PREPARATION: 1. Photocopy For Lay Pastors In Doubting Castle, one for each person.
2. Enlist people to put on two skits.

TEACHING: Ask the people if they ever get discouraged. Assure them that they are not the only servants of the Lord to get discouraged.

Moses told the Israelites not to get discouraged – Deut. 1:19-21. BUT, they got so discouraged that they refused to enter the Promised Land – Deut. 1:26 ff.

Knowing that discouragement is the nemesis of his people, God told Joshua at least two times not to get discouraged – Joshua 1:9 and 8:1.

Having known discouragement (Ps. 6:2-3), David told Solomon not to be discouraged – I Chron. 28:20.

What inner states accompany discouragement? Rebellion, grumbling, fear and terror, as identified in the above Scriptures.

The antidote for discouragement is to believe the promise that God is with you and will not fail or forsake you. These, also, are identified in the Scriptures.

SKITS: Elijah's discouragement – I Kings 19:3-5. He said, "I've had enough." He gave up. Ask if they have ever felt like this; then ask, "Do you know what caused your discouragement?"

Jonah's discouragement – Jonah 4

1. He did not get the expected results from his ministry.
2. He was angry with God

3. He wanted to give up.

TEACHING: Paul counseled the Christians in Thessalonica to encourage one another – I Thes. 4:18; 5:11. This counsel infers that there was a need to lift people from discouragement; also, that discouragement was a common malady. We are going to literally do what Paul counseled, encourage one another.

ACTION: Distribute For Lay Pastors In Doubting Castle. Work your way through the paper slowly, asking for words which they think fill the blanks properly. After their attempts, blank by blank, give them the correct word.

When you have finished the paper, divide into groups of four to share thoughts on the following:

1. Tell whether you have been discouraged about your ministry. Without violating confidentiality, describe the condition that triggered the discouragement.
2. In light of the following facts about discouragement, are the people who create the discouraging condition responsible for your discouragement or are you?
 - a. That which discourages one person will challenge another.
 - b. The discouraged person is responsible for being discouraged. No one can make another be discouraged. A person is free to turn the discouragement into a challenge.
3. Tell about the feelings of terror, fear or fright which may have been part of your discouragement.
4. Tell if you agree with the antidote to discouragement: the promise of God to be with you and never fail or forsake you. Deut. 31:6; John 14:15-17
5. What is the relationship of the spiritual gift of encouragement (Romans 12:8) and my being discouraged?
6. How can we (or how do we) encourage one another? (I Thes. 5:11)

After exchanging their thoughts, ask them to:

1. Affirm one another in their ministry.
2. Pray for one another, building their prayers out of what they heard from one another.

Reassemble and debrief their group experience by giving some of them a chance to tell the highlights. Affirm them in their ministry, sing an appropriate song, close in prayer.

FOR LAY PASTORS IN DOUBTING CASTLE

“What a fool!” Christian said to his partner, Hopeful, as they languished in the prison of Doubting Castle. “I have the key, _____, here in my bosom.” He took hold of it, tried it in the lock and the door opened. Christian and Hopeful emerged from the dark into bright sunlight and continued on their way. (From *Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan)

Have you ever been imprisoned in Doubting Castle? In there you doubt . . .

- . . . that anything is _____ with your caring initiatives.
- . . . that _____ are the one to be doing this.
- . . . that you are _____ anything to your people.
- . . . that _____ called you to this ministry.
- . . . that this ministry is _____ to your church.
- . . . that you are making a _____ in your people's lives.
- . . . that you have the necessary _____ to care for God's people.

The darkness encloses you – you are not experiencing the _____ you once had by doing this ministry.

The dampness makes you shiver – you are afraid that your _____ is not accomplishing much.

The confinement gets to you – _____ are not sure that what _____ are doing warrants the effort _____ are putting into it.

You have the key called, “Promise,” with which you can escape this dismal place. Just use it! What promises do you have?

1. “I am sending _____.” John 20:21
2. “Surely I am with _____ always.” Matthew 28:20
3. “I chose _____ to go and bear fruit.” John 15:16
4. “The father will give _____ whatever you ask in my name.” John 15:16
5. “Whatever he does _____.” Psalm 1:3

Keep the key handy because you may be imprisoned in Doubting Castle again.

– MJS

FOR LAY PASTORS IN DOUBTING CASTLE

“What a fool!” Christian said to his partner, Hopeful, as they languished in the prison of Doubting Castle. “I have the key, PROMISE, here in my bosom.” He took hold of it, tried it in the lock and the door opened. Christian and Hopeful emerged from the dark into bright sunlight and continued on their way. (From *Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan)

Have you ever been imprisoned in Doubting Castle? In there you doubt . . .

- . . . that anything is HAPPENING with your caring initiatives.
- . . . that YOU are the one to be doing this.
- . . . that you are MEANING anything to your people.
- . . . that GOD called you to this ministry.
- . . . that this ministry is SIGNIFICANT to your church.
- . . . that you are making a DIFFERENCE in your people's lives.
- . . . that you have the necessary GIFTS to care for God's people.

The darkness encloses you – you are not experiencing the JOY you once had by doing this ministry.

The dampness makes you shiver – you are afraid that your CARING is not accomplishing much.

The confinement gets to you – YOU are not sure that what YOU are doing warrants the effort YOU are putting into it.

You have the key called, “Promise,” with which you can escape this dismal place. Just use it! What promises do you have?

1. “I am sending YOU.” John 20:21
2. “Surely I am with YOU always.” Matthew 28:20
3. “I chose YOU to go and bear fruit.” John 15:16
4. “The father will give YOU whatever you ask in my name.” John 15:16
5. “Whatever he does PROSPERS.” Psalm 1:3

Keep the key handy because you may be imprisoned in Doubting Castle again.

– MJS

A FRIENDLY AND PRODUCTIVE HOME VISIT



PURPOSE: To help lay pastors feel competent to make home visits and to introduce a visitation plan.

INTRODUCTION TEACHING: Two contacts each year should be home visits. If a home visit is not possible you may invite them to your home, meet at a café or some other designated place. (Be sure the reason a home visit is not possible is their reason, not your reason.)

Getting on their turf does wonders for the relationship. There is something almost sacramental about being in their home. Bonding takes place.

Interesting, pleasant, stimulating, nurturing, non-threatening conversation is the stuff a visit is made of. Such an enjoyable verbal exchange is mutually upbuilding. Leaving “a good taste in the mouth” generates a desire for another visit by both parties.

Each home visit should have a planned purpose and theme. The Spirit will lead you to establish the purpose and clarify the theme as you pray for each household.

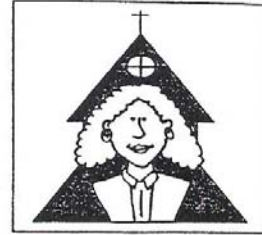
ACTIVITY: Tell the people they will now experience how easy it is to visit by selecting a partner with whom to carry on a conversation for the next half hour or so.

1. Each one choose a partner
2. The two are to work their way through these questions:
 - a. What church did you belong to while growing up?
 - b. Tell how your family was involved in church.
 - c. Describe your church – the building, the people, the minister, the activities, etc.

- d. What did you think of your minister?
 - e. What church songs did you like?
 - f. Did you like or identify with any particular Bible stories?
 - g. Did you have any special experiences when God seemed especially close?
 - h. Did you have any specific times when God seemed distant?
 - i. What significant losses have you had.
 - j. How would you describe your current experience of church?
 - k. What is God doing in your life now?
 - l. What life events have most impacted your life spiritually?
3. After 15 minutes, to encourage the people, ask, "Who wants to continue?" Then give them another 15 minutes.
 4. Reassemble to debrief their experiences. Ask:
 - a. "What did you like about your visit?"
 - b. "Did you find anything difficult about the visit?"
 - c. "What did you learn about visiting from your conversation?"
 5. Provide paper and pencils for each person. Ask them to list ideas for themes and purposes for their next home visits. They should tailor them for each household since each is unique. Some possible ideas: Place of employment, their families, vacations, experiences with prayer and Bible reading, last Sunday's sermon, hobbies, etc.

- ACTION:
1. Announce a period of time (one, two or three months) within which they are to make visits to all of their households. Give the date by which they are to complete the visits.
 2. At the meeting following the deadline date, debrief their experiences, identify what was learned and celebrate this part of their ministry.

WHO ARE YOU?



PURPOSE: To affirm lay pastors for the ministry they are doing by helping them see (1) who they are, (2) what they are doing and (3) whom they serve.

PREPARATION: Ask each lay pastor to bring three items to the meeting: a small mirror, a kitchen or shop tool, and a small towel. You may prefer to purchase small inexpensive mirrors (2-1/2" x 2") to give each person as a memento of the meeting. If so, ask them to bring only the other two items.

The meeting is divided into three sections, each starting with a teaching. You may prefer to make each section into a separate meeting. The advantage of three meetings is that the teacher will have more time for teaching, the people will have more time for idea exchanging and there will be more time to summarize and comment on the reports from the groups. Another possibility is to use all three sections for a one-day retreat.

After each teaching, divide into groups of four to six people to exchange ideas and insights with one another, asking them to use the following prompters:

1. What do I understand about what was just taught? Or, what do I not understand?
2. How do I see myself reflected in what was taught?
3. One new insight/idea/thought/question I have from the teaching.

FIRST SECTION: KNOW WHO YOU ARE

Hold your mirror in front of your face briefly as you introduce the subject. After the introduction, ask the people to hold their mirrors in front of them to study their own faces. Then ask them to silently tell themselves what they know about the person they see.

Teach the following points. At the conclusion of each point ask the lay pastors to look in the mirror and see if that's what they see. (Example: After the first point, "Do you see a Christian?")

1. You are a Christian. Acts 11:21, 26
2. You are a person who has been given spiritual gifts for doing ministry. Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:1-11; I Pet. 4:10
3. You are a person called by God to do ministry. "Chosen": John 15:16
4. You are a saint; one of "God's People." I Pet. 2:9-10 NIV; Eph. 4:11-12. This means you are not your own. I Cor. 6:19-20
5. You are a minister. A minister is different from volunteer. See pages 157-160 in *The Lay Driven Church*.

After the groups have had 15 to 30 minutes to exchange ideas, reassemble. Ask for spontaneous reporting of their group experience. Summarize and move to the next section. If you are making a series of three meetings out of the three topics, bring this meeting to a close with prayer, building the prayer out of what has been shared.

SECOND SECTION: KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING

Hold the tool you brought for all to see while you introduce the section. Tell what you use the tool for.

After introducing the topic, ask a few of the people to lift the tool they brought high so all can see, and tell what they use this tool for.

Teach the following points, occasionally asking the people to look at their tool.

1. You are serving your Lord, your church and the people you were assigned to
P A C E.
2. You are caring for God's people. Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2
3. You are ministering, as contrasted with "volunteering." See again pages 157-160 in *The Lay Driven Church*.
4. You are fulfilling God's plan for congregational care. Exodus 18:13-23; I Pet. 1-4

5. You are persevering. John 17:4; Heb. 10:35; 11:17; 12:1

After the teaching, do the same as in Section One.

THIRD SECTION: KNOW WHOM YOU SERVE

As you introduce the topic, hold your towel high for all to see. Refer to the fact that Jesus served with a towel – John 13:3-5.

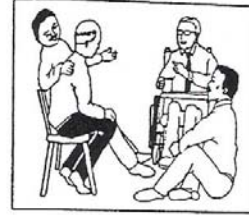
Teach the following points, occasionally asking them to look at their towel.

1. You are serving God. You are his servant and are accountable to him. How you are to serve him:
 - a. Willingly I Pet. 5:2
 - b. Eagerly I Pet 5:2; Rom. 12:11
 - c. Prayerfully Rom 12:12
 - d. Gladly Ps. 100:2 (RSV)
 - e. Faithfully I Pet. 4:10; I Cor. 4:2
 - f. Fruitfully John 15:1-8, 16
2. You are serving God's flock (his people) I Pet. 2:10; 5:1-4; I Cor. 12:7
3. You will receive awards from God for serving him and his people.
 - a. You will hear, "Well done." Matt. 25:14-30
 - b. You will have the joy of saying, "I have completed the work you gave me to do." John 17:4
 - c. You will receive "the crown of glory." I Pet. 5:4

After the teaching, do the same as in Section One.

It may be you will want to review and tie the three sections together.

THE PEOPLE POND



PURPOSE: To help lay pastors assess where “their people” are in the church, as an indication where they are in their spiritual journey.

PREPARATION: Photocopy the “People Pond,” one copy for each person.

INTRODUCTION: Jesus’ parable about the sower and the seed and his interpretation in Matt. 13:1-23, Paul’s observations about the members of the church in Corinth in I Corinthians 3:1-4, Hebrews 5:11-14, and Romans 14:1 and 15:1 indicate a difference in the spiritual maturity of believers. There are those who are strong; there are those who are weak; there are those who are stuck in between; and there are those who are in movement from weak to strong or from strong to weak.

Lay pastors need to know where their people are, not to judge them (Rom 14:13) but to pastor them. The shepherd did not judge the one wandering sheep, but, like a good lay pastor, he went out to it with love and compassion to bring it back (Matt. 18:12-13). (You may ask two people to create and present a mini-drama of the “lost sheep.”)

Lay pastors need to know where their people are in their participation in their church and where they are in their personal spiritual maturity is to be able to (1) Passionately pray for them, (2) Converse with purpose over a period of time, and (3) Effectively relate to them.

People are one of four types of members (fish in the people pond):

1. **HARD CORE MEMBERS** – Those who are at the very center of congregational life. They are involved in ministry, regular in worship and participate in many of the activities. They feel necessary to the church and play a vital role in it.

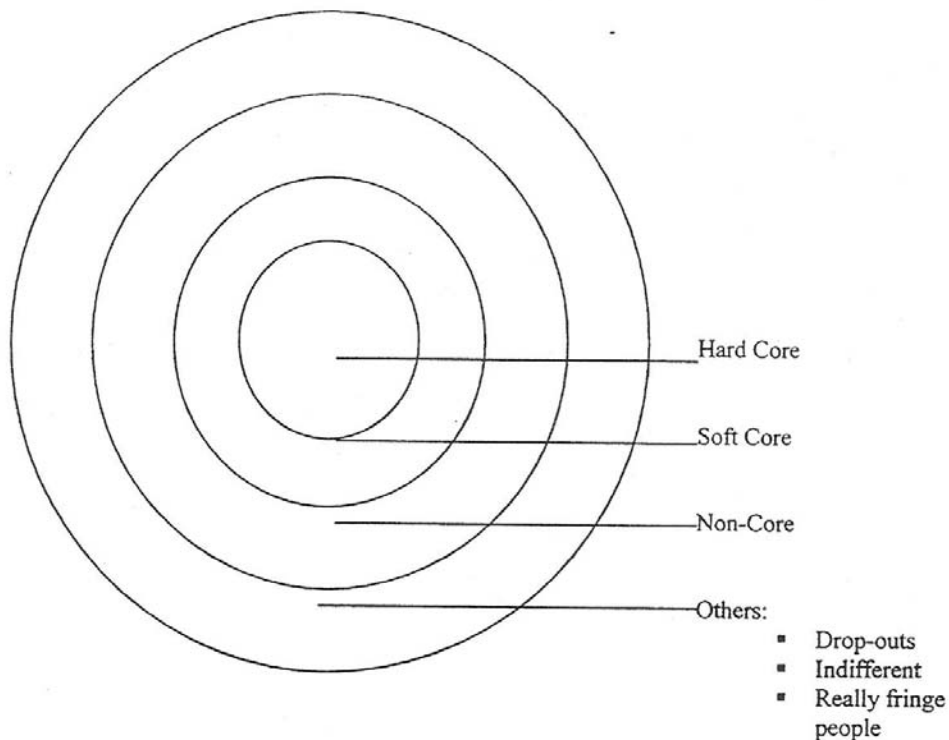
2. SOFT CORE MEMBERS – Those who are frequently at worship, do what they can, place the church near the bottom of their list of priorities, and help with tasks when it is convenient for them.
3. NON-CORE MEMBERS – Those who are rarely at worship, perhaps Christmas and Easter. They identify themselves as members of the congregation but do not feel they need to be a part of its mission and fellowship.
4. OTHERS – Those who have dropped out or who have no intention of becoming active in any way, but would feel hurt if dropped from the membership roll.

- ACTION:
1. On the “People Pond” write the initials of your people on their “ripple.”
 2. Divide into groups of three or four to exchange thoughts, concerns, insights and ideas, prompted by these three questions:
 - a. What do you think accounts for people being in their “ripple.” Why are you where you are?
 - b. What moves a person from one “ripple” to another, either from the outer toward the inner or from the inner toward the outer? (I Tim. 6:9-10, II Tim. 4:10)
 - c. How will knowing which “ripple” your people are in impact your praying and pastoring initiatives? Note: People in each “ripple” require a special approach. Exchange ideas and insights about (1) the unique characteristic of people in each “ripple,” (2) the distinctive openings for caring acts, and (3) the special initiatives with PACE to each one.
 3. Provide time for the people to pray for one another while still in their groups, restricting their prayers to the needs, concerns and challenges which emerged from their conversation.

4. Reassemble and debrief by asking for volunteers to tell the highlights of their experiences in the group.

A PEOPLE POND

Lay pastors, if you can locate your people on the "POND" you will be better able to pastor them. You will know how to (1) to Pray for them (2) Talk with them and (3) Relate to them.



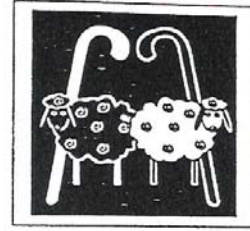
HARD CORE MEMBERS: Those individuals who are at the very center of congregational life. They are involved in ministry, regular in worship and participate in one or more of the fellowship or study groups. They feel necessary to the life of the church.

SOFT CORE MEMBERS: Those individuals who are frequently at worship, do what they can, get to some meetings if it is possible and help when convenient. They feel good about their involvement.

NON-CORE MEMBERS: Those individuals who attend worship rarely, perhaps at Christmas, Easter and special events. They identify themselves as members of the congregation, but do not feel they need to be a part of its mission and fellowship.

OTHERS: Those who have dropped out and have no intention of becoming active in any way, but would feel hurt if dropped from the membership roll or upset if there were no church.

TAKE CARE OF" MEANS WHAT?



PURPOSE: To clarify the meaning of, "Take care of my sheep," in lay pastors' minds so they will pastor with passion.

PREPARATION: Ask a few people to prepare a mini-drama of John 21:15-19.

INTRODUCTION: Specific words define the work. Example: When an umpire shouts, "Play ball," both players and spectators know what to do. The players are to begin the game and the spectators are to begin watching.

Many words, however, are general. Example: "Take care of my sheep." Hearing these words, lay pastors are faced with the task of figuring out what, specifically, is expected of them. Just what constitutes "care?"

Additional words are required if the Lord's work is to get done. Work-specific words which will move a person from the general to the particular. Example: Prayer, Availability, Contact. Now we have a clear understanding of what is expected. It is something we can do, and when we have done it, we know it has been done.

It is often necessary to go the Greek, the original language of the New Testament, to enlighten us, first, in understanding the general work and, second, in "getting handle" on the particular work to be done.

- ACTION:**
1. Call for the mini-drama of John 21:15-19.
 2. Give this teaching:
 - a. The following Greek words help us understand the meaning of "take care of":
 - bos'ko, which means "to feed." This is what a mother does

when nursing her baby. It is what a father does when making an airplane out of the child's spoon to get the child to open his mouth for the food. It is what a shepherd is doing when he leads his sheep to the green pasture.

It can also include the idea of overseeing and nourishing. Jesus' use of the word meant that Peter was to promote in every way the welfare of his people. By first calling his people lambs and then sheep, Jesus is suggesting that Peter take into account people's wide range of difference in maturity, personality and need when caring for them. ✓
The lay pastor's role definition is beginning to take on specificity.

- Poimai'no, which like bos'ko, means "to feed." It also means "to tend" and "to keep sheep." In some cases it includes ruling or governing. Other shades of meaning are "to furnish pastorage" and "to nourish." In summation, poimai'no means "to supply what the soul's needs require." The role definition is getting very clear! ✓

- b. Another Greek word moves our understanding of the pastoral work forward, poimane'. It means one who shepherds. A lay pastor is a poimane'. Again, P.A.C.E. defines the role of a lay pastor whose shepherding will be rewarded with a "crown of glory" when the Chief Shepherd appears (I Pet. 5:4).
- c. The role definition given by Peter in I Pet. 5:1-3, "The Magna Charta of the Lay Pastors Ministry," is the same as that given to him by Jesus: "Tend the flock of God that is your charge" (RSV), or "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care" (NIV).

3. Divide into groups of four to discuss the following:

- a. With Jesus' assignment to Peter in mind, thinking specifics, tell what "Feed my lambs" and "Take care of my sheep" means to you. Apply your understanding to your caring ministry.
 - b. Give examples of particular and specific ways you can creatively and lovingly shepherd your people. Don't forget their individual and unique personalities and needs.
 - c. These words may have raised questions for you. If so, tell them to your group so they can comment on them.
4. Reassemble and ask for volunteers to tell some of the highlights of their group interaction.

DOING THE BEST I CAN



PURPOSE: To focus on how lay pastors “feel” about their contacts and assess the quality of their contacts.

PREPARATION: Photocopy as directed below, one copy for each person.

INTRODUCTION: Give a teaching on the expectations God and your peers have of you, and the expectations you have of yourself as a ministering person. II Cor. 8:7; Phil 2:20-22; I Tim. 3:13; 4:6; II Pet. 1:5-9; 3:18 are all good sources for this teaching.

ACTION: 1. Distribute copies of the following to each person:

Cathy Gerring, Pro-golfer, one of the hottest in the LPGA in 1991 said this, “I would like to say when I walk away from the game that I’d played the best I could play, that I was competitive and that I didn’t give up.” (from “Compass Readings”, NWA magazine, June 1991)

This is an example of what Lay Pastors should be saying to themselves after making a contact: “I would like to say when I walk away or hang up after a contact that . . .

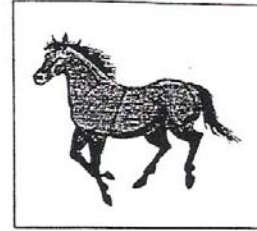
*. . . I did the best I could;
. . . I was loving;
. . . I will not give up.”*

Three questions emerge from this self talk:

- 1. How can I do the best I can and how can I know that I did the best I could?*
- 2. What does “loving” really mean? How can I know I was loving?*
- 3. What will keep me from giving up when the going is tough and what will keep me from sloughing off when there is no crisis to stimulate me?*

2. Ask everyone to read the copy out loud in unison. When the reading is finished, ask:
 - a. How many of you golf? What is your self-talk when you walk away from your game? What has been your greatest shot? Take time for their answers, comments and possible humor.
 - b. Who are the best golfers on the circuit today? Their answers will give a contemporary spin to the story about Cathy Gerring.
3. Divide into groups of four, five or six to exchange thoughts, ideas, frustrations, successes, etc. about the three questions on their papers.
4. Reassemble to debrief their group experience by asking for volunteers to report the highlights.
5. The leader may summarize the reports, briefly review some of the salient points of the teaching at the beginning, and conclude with prayer about whatever surfaced during the meeting.

WHAT KIND OF ANIMAL ARE YOU?



PURPOSE: To further the self-awareness of lay pastors so as to improve the way they relate to people

ACTION: 1. Ask your lay pastors to think of an animal whose characteristics describe the character of their ministry. Call to mind several animals (rabbit, squirrel, bear, snake, horse, etc.) and briefly suggest one or two obvious characteristics and the way that characteristic describes how one does ministry.

Example: Work horse – plodding along at a slow but steady pace. At times it appears that not much is being accomplished, but after a period of time it is evident that a lot of ground has been plowed. It takes the crack of a whip occasionally to keep going.

Provide five minutes for the lay pastors to reflect on their habits of ministry and of an animal whose characteristics match their habits. You may choose to provide paper and pencils for them to record thoughts to share later in a small group.

2. Divide into groups of two to six. Ask them to tell one another what animal they selected and why. Encourage them to ask questions, request clarification and/or offer affirming observations. Provide six minutes for twosomes. Increase the time proportionately for larger groups.

After their time together, provide a few minutes to pray for one another regarding what they disclosed while still in the group.

3. Reassemble. Debrief their experiences by asking a few to tell highlights of their group and what that person learned from the interaction.

ALTERNATIVE: Use by the Lay Pastors Ministry Leadership Group.

At one of their meetings, the Ministry Leadership Group could do the same, except they would select animals whose characteristics describe the ministry as a whole.

These four animals were selected to represent the lay pastors ministries of four churches as the leaders met to get acquainted and to learn from one another:

KOALA – Loving and cuddly. Somewhat quiet and hidden, but very much present.

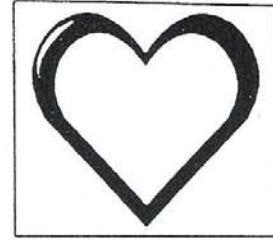
SQUIRREL – Focused on their goals while rapidly pursuing them.

CHAMELEON – Adapting to the culture rather than maintaining their unique contribution of being “love with skin on it.”

TURTLE – Very slow going, but making steady forward movement. Rate of speed does not determine success. Goal, direction and perseverance does.

After these similarities are recognized, they can move on to share insights as to the true nature of their ministry, whether they are satisfied with its character, and what initiatives they can launch to improve its integrity and effectiveness.

WHO'S IN YOUR HEART?



PURPOSE: To help lay pastors be aware of their feelings about the individual members of their “flocks” and how these feelings affect their ministry.

TIMING: This meeting is good for any season, but especially appropriate for the meeting prior to February 14, Valentine’s day.

PREPARATION: Photocopy the picture below, one copy for each person. Or, provide a sheet of paper on which each person can draw a heart-shaped design. If they draw their own, use an overhead projector to draw a heart on the screen, positioning the four “people” in and near the heart.

INTRODUCTION: Sing a few songs, secular or sacred, about love. Give a 10-minute talk or study on “The place your people occupy in your heart,” based on these Scriptures: Matt. 22:37-39; Luke 6:45; II Cor. 6:11-13; II Cor. 7:2-3; Col. 3:1-2. You may wish to select individuals to read and briefly comment on these scriptures. Then use Phil. 1:7-8 to transition to the purpose of the meeting.

ACTION: 1. Ask, “What caring words do you think of, starting with the ‘L’ of LOVE?” Write the words on a flip chart, chalk board or overhead as people call out their words.

After several words have been called out, move to ‘O,’ then ‘V,’ then to ‘E.’ You may wish to comment on some of the choices and add some of your own.

2. Distribute the photocopied picture (or blank papers if they are to draw the heart). Give them 15 minutes to call their people to mind, one by one, and quietly think of where each one is located in their heart.

They should use initials rather than names to locate their people on the papers. When they have located all of their people, ask them to quietly talk with God about

each person, where they are in their hearts and where they might prefer them to be. Ask them to be in touch with their feelings about each individual.

3. Divide into groups of four, five or six. Ask them to tell their thoughts and feelings about people in the four different locations – shallow, deep, borderline and distant. They should not use names or in any way reveal who these people are. **Respect confidentiality!**

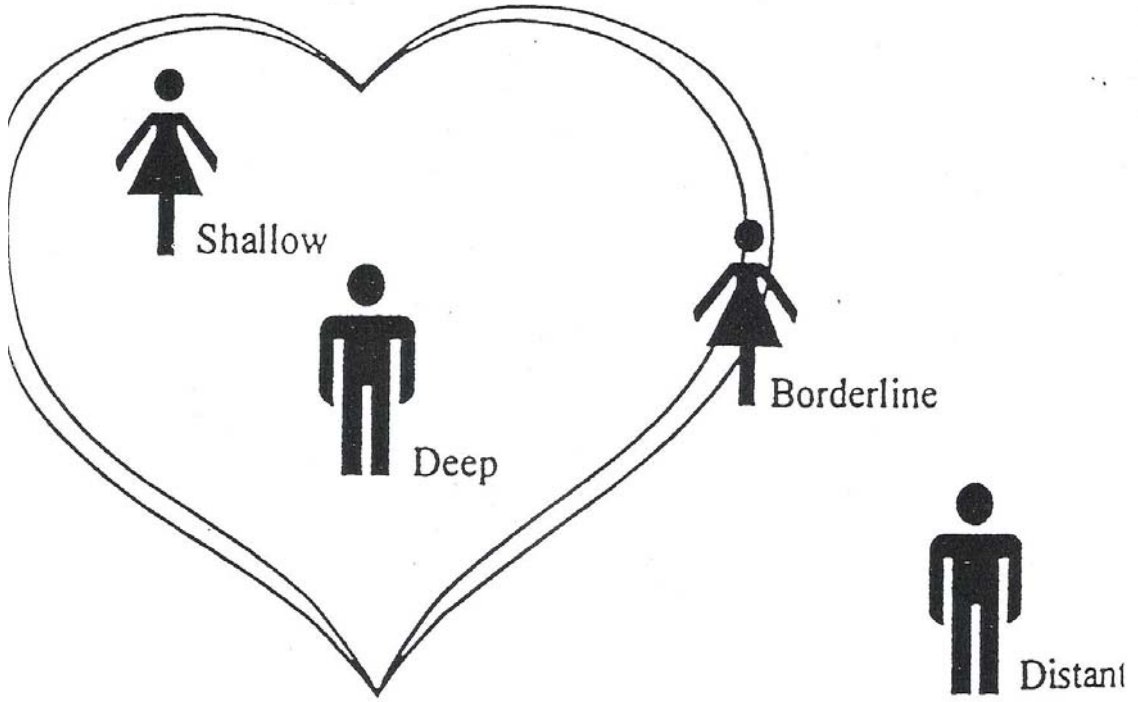
Ask them to include the following in their telling:

- a. Their pastoral initiatives toward those who are borderline and distant compared with their actions toward the shallow and deep.
- b. Who is responsible for some being borderline and distant and some being shallow or deep. Is the individual responsible or is the lay pastor.
- c. How they can equalize the treatment – the love, care, prayer, frequency of contact, etc. – and bring the borderline and distant people to the deep or shallow position in their hearts.

Give time for them to pray for one another, restricting their prayers to concerns emerging from their time together in the group.

4. Reassemble the total group. Debrief their experience by asking a few to share some of their findings about themselves and what they may do about those who are not deep in their hearts.

The leader should wrap it up by recalling some of the Scriptures and thoughts from the beginning moments. Form a circle to sing and pray prior to refreshments. Heart-shaped cookies or a heart-shaped cake would be in sync with the meeting.



PACE'EM

PURPOSE: To focus on the pastoring task long enough to clarify their role definition, underscore the importance of their ministry, and conjoin (in their spirits) God's call to them with their pastoral gifts.



PREPARATION: Ask eight lay pastors to prepare presentations on the four letters of the acronym, P.A.C.E., two on Prayer – one of the persons speaking about what they understand PRAYER to be (biblically, theologically and practically), the other on the use of prayer (how they pray for their people and why).

Two of the eight are to speak on AVAILABLE, one on what they understand availability to be; the other on their experience of being available.

Two speak on CONTACT and the other two on EXAMPLE, following the same pattern, one speaking on meaning and the other on use.

Make four giant letters, PACE, at least two feet high and one foot, six inches wide. Save these letters to use as decorations for the next several meetings.

INTRODUCTION: One national church leader paraphrased the sentence dealing with leadership in Romans 12:8, "If your gift is leadership, then for God's sake, lead!"

Borrowing his exuberant model, let's read the sentence dealing with encouragement this way, "If your gift is pastoring, then for God's sake, pastor!"

Pastoring is PACEing. The acronym P.A.C.E. defines the role of a lay pastor. It is our job description.

P – Pray for each one regularly.

A – Be available.

C – Contact each one on a regular basis.

E – Provide a Christian example.

- ACTION:
1. Ask four people to read the four tasks of a lay pastor from pages 64-66 of *Can The Pastor Do it Alone?* to the group, each one reading one section.
 2. Call to the front the eight people you asked to speak on the four tasks, forming a panel, seated before the group. Just prior to each couple's presentation, place the appropriate letter of the acronym on the wall behind the panel or in some other highly visible place.

After each one has spoken, ask for comments, questions, insights, and experiences from the group. After a reasonable amount of time, the leader summarizes and moves to the next presenter.

3. Following the eight presentations, the leader will add whatever seems appropriate, summarize, and lead the people in a time of renewal of their commitment to care for their people in these four ways.

ALTERNATIVE PLAN: Instead of asking eight people to make presentations, pages 171-174 of *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?* may be used. Either the leader, or people he asks, reads the points under each word (point by point), asking for comments, insights, questions, and their experiences with that particular task and the point just read.

Either the plan above or this alternative plan can be used for a series of four meetings or for a half-day or whole-day retreat. It is also an effective method of teaching the four pastoral tasks when equipping new lay pastors. Invite seasoned lay pastors to be the presenters.

A NIGHT FOR DRAMA



PURPOSE: To deepen commitment by clarifying what it means to be “called” and “commissioned” by the Lord.

PREPARATION: Two weeks prior to the meeting, assign the Scriptural pieces to the number of people needed to produce each drama in a simple form. Ask them to meet together to:

1. Study the Scriptural piece.
2. Discuss its meaning and its application to them.
3. Plan how they will dramatize it.

THE CALL Jesus calls Peter and Andrew to be evangelists. Matthew 4:18-20

THE HIGHLIGHTS

1. Jesus came to where they were. He did not wait for them to come and volunteer. He took the initiative.
2. Out of all the people who must have been at the sea that day, he singled out these two.
3. Peter and Andrew were in the process of casting a net into the water to catch the fish. This was their occupation, their financial support.
4. Jesus’ call was clear. It was demanding. They would have to leave their livelihood and family. They were free to accept the call or reject it.
5. Immediately (“at once”) they left their nets and followed him.

THE INTERPRETIVE GROUPS

1. Divide into groups of three to six.
2. Give a copy of the following questions to talk over. Tell them they will have 20 minutes, after which they will return to the large group to report their understandings

- a. What does this event tell me about Jesus' method of calling people?
 - b. Why did he single out these two from the scores of people at the seaside?
 - c. What was Peter's and Andrew's level of spiritual maturity at the time Jesus called them?
 - d. Why did these two leave their nets to answer the call? Is it possible that Jesus called other people who refused to respond?
 - e. How does this event apply to me; or, what does this event teach me?
 - f. What do I understand by the word, "call?"
 - g. Do I believe I was called by Jesus to do what I am doing for him? If so, tell about it.
3. Reassemble the total group for reports from the small groups of the best of their understandings. After a brief break, move to the second drama.

NOTE: An alternative to having both dramas for one meeting is to use the two dramas for two meetings. Doing this will provide time for the leader to give a teaching on "call" prior to this drama, and on "commission" prior to the second drama. It would also provide more time for the small groups, their reports, summarization by the leader and for prayer concerning the implications of the whole meeting for their ministries.

Since this model of meeting is one of the most effective means of communication, personal growth and teaching, you may want to produce many dramas of your own over a period of a year. There are people among your lay pastors who could create the dramas.

THE COMMISSION

Jesus commissions (assigns, appoints) Peter to tend his flock. John 21:15-22

THE HIGHLIGHTS

1. Jesus singles out Peter from the other disciples.

2. Jesus asks the same question three times.
3. Peter responded three times with the same answer.
4. Jesus repeated the assignment after each of Peter's responses.
5. Jesus' final assignment: "Follow me."
6. Peter's unwarranted concern about John's assignment.

THE INTERPRETIVE GROUPS

1. Divide into groups of three to six.
2. Give a copy of these questions. Tell them they will have 20 minutes, after which they will return to the large group to report their understandings.
 - a. Why did Jesus single out Peter from the other disciples?
 - b. If Jesus singled you out to ask the question, "Do you love me?" how would you respond? Remember, Jesus knows our hearts.
 - c. How important is Jesus' question, "Do you love me?" Why?
 - d. How does Jesus' commission to Peter help us understand Bonhoeffer's words: "When Christ calls a person, he calls him to come forth and die."
 - e. The commission, "Take care of my sheep," does not include any forms of care. What do you understand by the commission? Does our form of care – P A C E – fulfill the commission?
 - f. Why do you think Peter asked about John's assignment?
 - g. The New Testament does not record everything Jesus taught and did – John 21:25. Do you think Jesus followed Peter's commission by giving a specific assignment to each disciple, one by one?
 - h. Is there a difference between "call" and "commission?"
 - i. Discuss the statement, "People worth winning are worth caring for," (George Hunter) in light of Jesus following his first call to Peter to "fish" for people with his second call to take care of those who were "caught."
3. Reassemble the total group for reports from the small groups of the best of their understandings. After the leader's comments on the understandings, spend some time in praying about the implications for their ministries.

JOT A NOTE

PURPOSE: To learn the value of note-writing.

PREPARATION: Have a supply of used greeting cards, at least one for each person, and a pencil and paper for writing notes. Announcement about the meeting can take the form of a friendship card or colorful note paper.



INTRODUCTION: Give a teaching on the “C” of PACE – Contact. After describing the various forms of contact such as a home visit, an invitation to your home for coffee, meeting at a restaurant for lunch or coffee, phone call, greeting them after a worship service or other church event, faxing, e-mailing, visiting them at their place of employment, or other forms of contact you can think of, focus on note writing.

Cite the many “notes” (epistles) in the New Testament. Some are long epistles, some are quite brief. They are *not* models for the length of an ideal note, but they do model content: Personal greetings, warmth, love, longing to see them again, looking forward to being together, encouragement, etc.

In preparation for the meeting, the leader or a few of the lay pastors could study the New Testament “notes” for content and spirit, then share their findings at the meeting.

ACTION: Have enough used greeting cards to pass around to all present. Ask them to study the writings for two minutes. Then ask a few to share thoughts, feelings or spirit communicated through the writing.

Then ask a few to tell how much receiving notes from people has meant to them, or how much they would have been appreciated if they had received some at certain times.

Provide paper and pencil for each person to write notes to two different people, either members of their “flock,” people in attendance at the meeting, or hypothetical persons. Allow five minutes for this. Acknowledge that some people are “just not note writers,” but that it is a skill that can be learned to the glory of God.

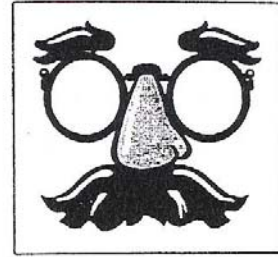
After they have written their notes, divide into groups of four to take turns reading one note for evaluative comments from the other three. If time permits, after each has read one note and the other three have spoken their evaluations, go around for the second time with the second note.

Gather together to debrief their experience in the groups, how they feel about writing notes, how good they are at it, and what they learned from the evaluation experience.

ASSIGNMENT: Write a note to each of their “flock,” and share the thoughts and feelings about doing this at the next meeting.

GUESS WHO YOU ARE

PURPOSE: To learn that we know ourselves best when we hear
God tell us who we are.



INTRODUCTION: Many people spend many years and many dollars to find out who they are:

people who were adopted

people who were separated early in life

people suffering from amnesia

people doing "family tree" research

They want to know:

their roots

their genetic make-up

their health history

their heritage

ACTION: After the leader introduces the subject, divide into groups of three to six to
share among themselves some of the following:

Some things about my birth.

What I remember about my childhood.

Some distinguishing things about my parents.

Memories of my home life as I was growing up.

The source and/or meaning of my name.

My earliest memories of church.

Reassemble the people for 15 minutes of teaching on “Who you are:”

You are a Christian. Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Pet. 4:16

You are a disciple of Jesus. John 8:31; 13:35; 15:8

You are spiritually gifted. Matt. 25:14-30; I Cor. 12:7-11

You are a minister. II Cor. 5:18; Eph. 4:12; I Pet. 4:10

Divide into the same groups to share thoughts and feelings about who they are.

Introduce this part of the meeting with this story:

A psychologist felt compelled to use his gift of evangelism in his private practice. He discovered a question which he could ask selected clients with comfort and confidence: “Is it okay for Jesus Christ to be in your life?”

After telling this story, ask the groups to paraphrase the psychologist’s question to stimulate their sharing:

Is it okay for Jesus to be my Lord?

Is it okay for me to be Jesus’ disciple?

Is it okay for God to make me a minister?

Is it okay to have gifts with which to minister?

Is it okay for God to hold me accountable for the use of my “talents?”

Reassemble to debrief their experience in the groups: what they learned about

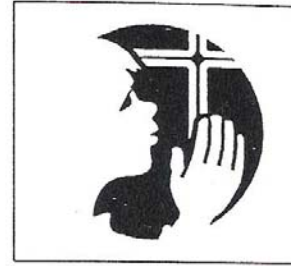
one another and about themselves, and how they feel about the “okay” items.

Form a circle for singing and prayers of recommitment. “They will know we are Christians by our love,” would be one appropriate song.

LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY

PURPOSE: Learn how to freshen up their praying for people.

PREPARATION: Photocopy *Lord, Teach Us To Pray*, one for each person:



INTRODUCTION: Give a 15-minute teaching on prayer, the “P” of P A C E. Then explain the plan for each lay pastor to write prayers and use them in praying for their people.

ACTION: Give each person a copy of the following:

Lord, Teach Us To Pray

It is not easy to pray. Many find it difficult to pray for people faithfully through the weeks, months and years without getting stale and losing enthusiasm. For this reason, prayer is often called “work.” It is also called a “discipline” because that is what it takes. Prayer is an essential piece of our caring ministry.

Can you believe this – prayer is the most important thing we can do! It’s number one in P A C E. Its primary location in the acronym symbolizes its primary act in your pastoring relationships.

So the disciples’ request, “Lord, teach us to pray,” is also our urgent request. We want to be faithful and we want to do it right.

Here is an exercise which will help generate a vibrant enthusiasm for praying as you regularly intercede for your people:

Over the next 30 days, write a prayer for each of your households, perhaps one per day or one per week until you have included all of your flock. This likely example may help:

“Lord, I love Fred and want to talk with you about him and his family. He has a tough job. I don’t know how I would hold out if I had to do that heavy work. Give him energy for his labor. Help him find interesting things about what has to be one of the world’s most monotonous jobs. Help him to deepen his relationships with the people who work around him. His life is such a good example to others. If those who work around him can get to know him, they might want to know his Lord.

“And his family, Lord, I pray for

“Then, his personal spiritual growth, Lord

“I just learned that he and Rose have been married 35 years”

And more and more and more.

When you contact Fred the next time, tell him you prayed for him about some of these things. Ask him, “What other things can I be praying about?”

Writing your prayer at least twice a year will keep your praying fresh, interesting and powerful. [end copy here]

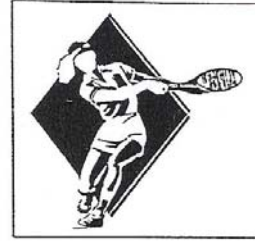
Ask eight people to each read a paragraph out loud to the group. Then break into groups of four to six people to share their thoughts about:

1. What they find difficult about praying regularly for specific persons over the months (and years).
2. The benefits and joys of praying for their people
3. Their experience in praying for their people.
4. Their thoughts/feelings about the 30-day plan of writing their prayers, telling their people what they have been praying, and asking for new entrees.

NOTE: Allow 25 minutes for their sharing; then another five minutes to pray for one another about their faithfulness to “P” of P A C E.

Next, assemble the people to share small group experiences. Invite questions about the 30-day plan. Explain plans for the next meeting when they will be asked to share their experiences about the 30 days.

SOMETIMES YOU ARE NUMBER ONE



PURPOSE: To impress upon lay pastors the need to take time for themselves as well as give themselves.

PREPARATION: Photocopy the two-page paper following this meeting plan titled, "Take Time For Yourself," one for each person.

INTRODUCTION: You can wear yourself out pastoring (PACEing) people. There are two prerequisites for continuing to give yourself over a period of time without burning out, cooling off, or backing out.

1. Love Jesus

"Do you love me?" was the question Jesus asked Peter before he assigned him his task, "Take care of my sheep." John 21:15-17

2. Take care of yourself

"Keep watch over yourselves," was the counsel Paul gave the elders of the Ephesian church before he added, "and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers." Acts 20:28

Loving Jesus and taking care of yourself are two indispensable ministry resources. Because you use these resources regularly, you need to renew them regularly or you will deplete them. Your effectiveness, joy and faithfulness in caring for people will

rise or fall in direct proportion to the measure of these two daily renewable resources.

If your ministry is to be all you want it to be, all your people need it to be, and all God expects it to be, you must make yourself “Number One” in your life regularly. The following plan will help you be “Number One” appropriately.

1. You are going to teach one another. Hebrews 5:12 observes, “. . . by this time you ought to be teachers.” You can do it!
2. Distribute copies of “Take Time For Yourself” to each person. Lead the group in a brief overview, calling their attention to the three main headings and the fact that the sub points are from God’s Word in I Peter.
3. Divide into groups of two, three or four people. Assign equal parts of the three main headings (I., II., III.,) to each group. Examples:

Group #1 -- Assign I. Who You Are

1. Chosen
2. Redeemed
3. A royal priest

Group #2 -- Assign I. Who You Are

4. A person
5. A gifted person
6. A minister

Group #3 -- (Continue assigning a portion to each group.)

NOTE: Assign fewer or more parts according to the number of groups. Where there are more than eight or ten groups, rather than enlarging the group size, assign the identical parts to more than one group.

4. Give these instructions:
 - a. Tell them again that they will be teaching one another as they share their understandings and insights.
 - b. Their discussion is to have two focuses:
 - 1) MY UNDERSTANDING OF THIS SCRIPTURE IS . . .
 - 2) THIS SCRIPTURE IS BELIEVABLE AND DO-ABLE BECAUSE . . .
 - c. They are to work only on one point at a time. When they feel ready, they are to move to the next point. Give 30 minutes to complete their assigned parts.
 - d. Appoint a recorder to report the understandings they agree on to the whole group when they reassemble.
 - e. At a given signal they are to cease their sharing and summarize their finding for reporting back. They will have 10 minutes to summarize.
 - f. At the 10-minute point, give a signal to begin praying for each other according to what they heard from one another during their time together.
5. Reassemble the whole group to hear from the reports. The leader summarizes the reports and commends them for their work. Ask, "Do you feel well taught?"
6. Give five minutes for each person to write three commitments from the teachings to take home, pray about, and work on implementing during the following 30 and/or 60 days.

NOTE: You may wish to ask them to be prepared to share their experience

in praying about and implementing their commitments with the same group at the next meeting. Some groups may wish to plan to meet for coffee, breakfast, etc. some time prior to the next meeting, perhaps midway between the meetings.

This meeting may be used over a period of time, as much as a full year, by taking one section or a part of a section each meeting. People do need to P A C E themselves if they are to P A C E others productively. Two good resource publications are How To Prevent Lay Leader Burnout, by Roy Oswald (The Alban Institute, Bethesda, MD); and Caring Without Wearing, by Carol Travilla, Navpress, Colorado Springs, CO

TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

If you are to continue your ministry without . . .

. . . burning out,

. . . cooling off, or

. . . backing out . . .

you need to give attention to yourself. Jesus often took time to be by himself, away from his disciples and the people to whom he ministered. Matthew tells how he went to the mountainside and was there alone (Matt. 14:23). He took time for himself. If we are wise we will follow his example.

Be number one regularly. Take time for yourself, find out . . .

. . . who you are,

. . . what you are to be, and

. . . what you are to do.

Find out from Peter's first letter to the scattered Christians in Asia Minor . . . and to the Christians of today.

I. WHO YOU ARE

1. Chosen by God I Peter 1:2, 2:3 (all of the following scriptures are in I Peter)
2. Redeemed 1:18 ("Born again" 1:3, 23)
3. A royal priest 2:5, 9
4. A person who belongs to God 2:5, 9

5. A gifted person 4:10
6. A minister 4:10; 5:2

It WHAT YOU ARE TO BE

1. Prepared for action 1:13 (For an example, see 3:15)
2. Self-controlled 1:13; 4:7; 5:8
3. Holy 1:15-16; 2:5, 9
4. An example 5:3
5. Humble 5:6
6. Alert 5:8

It WHAT YOU ARE TO DO

1. Praise God 1:3
2. Love Jesus and believe in him 1:8
3. Prepare yourself for action 1:13
4. Set your hope on Jesus' return 1:13
5. Love one another 1:22, 4:8
6. Rid yourself of . . . 2:1, 11
7. Crave "spiritual milk" 2:2
8. In your heart, set apart Christ as Lord 3:15
9. Use your gift to serve others 4:10
10. Commit and continue 4:19
11. Shepherd God's flock 5:2
12. Humble yourself 5:6
13. Cast your anxiety on God 5:7

14. Resist the devil 5:8, 9

15. Stand firm in the faith 5:9

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

From *The Lay Driven Church* (p. 58) for personal reflection, prayer and adaptation:

The world really doesn't need more busy people, maybe not even more intelligent people. It needs "deep people", people who know what they need:

SOLITUDE, if they are going to find out who they are;

SILENCE, if their words are to mean anything;

REFLECTION, if their action is to have any significance;

CONTEMPLATION, if they are to see the world as it really is;

PRAYER, if they are going to be conscious of God, if they are to "know God and enjoy God forever."

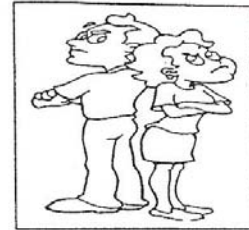
RUNNING ON EMPTY

Danger of burnout is only one of two reasons to be number one periodically. The other – and it is vitally imperative – you need to be always bringing something into the lives of your people which they do not already have. Unless you order your life in such a way that gives priority to your own spiritual nourishment, you will not last long.

You will soon be running on empty. You will be an empty "wineskin," "a noisy gong or clanging cymbal." We who pastor others must drink at the well of "Living Water" daily if we want to be a refreshing presence to those we shepherd. Jesus said it this way: "Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me;" and, "without me you can do nothing."
(John 15:4-5)

FOUR CLASSIC CHALLENGES

A Series of 4 Problem-Solving Meetings



PURPOSE: To teach lay pastors how to deal with rejection, indifference, the variety of relationships, and their up and down feelings about their ministry.

INTRODUCTION: Everybody likes a challenge! The Lay Pastors Ministry provides all the challenge we need. Some lay pastors are threatened by the same situations which challenge others. Some are discouraged and some nearly give up because of rejection, reluctance or indifference. Some can use help in relationship-building.

The cliché, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going,” is a simple way to understand II Timothy 1:7, “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (cowardliness, cringing fear,) but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” Hebrews 12:1 counsels us to throw off everything that hinders [ministry] so we can persevere.

This series of four meetings will enable lay pastors to overcome the discouragements, meet the challenges and persevere:

1. Pastoral care of those who resist? (Dealing with rejection and ministering to those who resist.)
2. Pastoral care of those who are indifferent. (Caring for people who are reluctant to accept me fully.)
3. Pastoral care takes place in a relationship. (The nature of interpersonal relationships and how to build them.)
4. Pastoral care requires vision and passion. (How to keep the vision bright and passion for ministry burning.)

Nearly every lay pastor has to deal with these four tough issues:

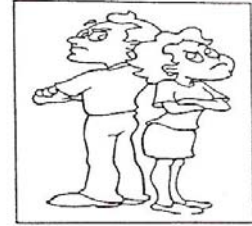
REJECTION

INDIFFERENCE

RELATIONSHIPS

MOTIVATION

CLASSIC CHALLENGE #1 -- PASTORAL CARE OF THOSE WHO RESIST
"What can I do with those who resist?"



INTRODUCTION: Acknowledge that some people are not open to having a lay pastor. They let you know this either by telling you, or, never finding it convenient for you to contact them. You may want to hear from one or two of your lay pastors who have experienced rejection by someone in their flock. If so, arrangements must be made prior to the meeting and confidentiality must be respected.

RAMA: The following skit can be done by two lay pastors.

Sally Pastor: (Self talk) "I'm going to try Mike and Marge Jones again. If I fail this time I don't know what I'll do." (Dials phone)

Marge Jones: (Cheerfully) "Hello"

P: "Hello Mrs. Jones. This is Sally Brown again, your lay pastor. I'm glad to be talking with you again. How have you been doing?"

MJ: (voice dropped) "Oh, hello, I am really quite busy right now. Could I call you back in a week or two?"

Two months later:

P: (Self talk) "I just hate to try calling the Joneses again. But here it goes." (Slowly dials phone)

MJ: (Cheerfully) "Hello. This is Marge Jones."

P: "Hello Marge. This is your lay pastor, Sally Brown again. I am hoping to have a chance to meet with you so we can get acquainted. Would it work out for some evening next week, Wednesday or Thursday?"

MJ: "I'm sorry. That doesn't work for me. Let me call you in a week or two. Have a nice day." (Hangs up)

BRAINSTORMING: (All comments, suggestions and answers are accepted without comment or criticism in a brainstorming session.) Ask: Why do people resist? Write their responses on a chalk board, overhead or flip chart. Let the group discuss the responses, reducing the list to those they can reach agreement on. Then ask, "How can we respond to this resistance?" Write their responses and follow the same process.

TEACHING: Have someone read pages 128-130 from *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?*

(Difficulties Numbers One and Two) Since all of the preceding creates a “teachable moment,” you can equip them with the following teaching.

CARING FOR THOSE WHO RESIST

1. IDENTIFY THEM. You are not able to be accepted either into their homes or their hearts.

They are:

1. Always “busy”
2. Aloof
3. Their lives seem to be full
4. They don’t have time for you
5. They don’t seem to need your care

After several attempts, perhaps stretching over several months or a few years, it becomes clear to you that they are not open to your caring initiatives.

II. WHO DO YOU BLAME?

A. Them? It *may be* them:

- 1) they do not need a lay pastor;
- 2) they are unfriendly, closed, uncooperative personalities;
- 3) they are out of touch with God and therefore avoid anyone from the church.

B. You? It may be you:

- 1) inexperienced;
- 2) poor personality match;
- 3) don’t pray enough;
- 4) not sufficiently gifted.

C. The Ministry? It may be the ministry:

- 1) the lay pastors ministry is not for everyone;
- 2) lay people just cannot pastor some people.

D. None of the above!

Here are two alternatives:

1. The nature of pastoral care is that some people are not receptive now, and may not be for some time or ever. However, someone from the church needs to be concerned about them, love them, reach out to them, pray for them and in general be responsible for their pastoral care. God calls people through whom he can love and care for them regardless of their response.

NOTE: Lay pastors must look at resisters like loving parents look at resisting children. Since the children members of the family the parents are to be patient, persistent and loving parents.

2. A lay pastor can do a lot of pastoring without ever seeing a person. PACE is the way:

P – There is nothing they can do to prohibit your praying for them. The limitation is you, not them.

A – Your availability is made known by the letter sent to them from the church at the beginning and your attempts to contact them. They know that you care and that you are available.

C – Cards at holidays, birthdays and just friendship cards or letters, along with occasional sensitive phone calls are significant contacts.

E – by PACEing them, you are an example of one who loves the church, God and people; one who is committed to Jesus Christ and to ministry.

III. CLASSIC EXAMPLES

- A. One occurrence in a prominent church is a classical example of a positive relationship ending an extended time of negative resistance. The resisting person met a crisis and immediately opened her life up to the lay pastor. The resisting person's words about her lay pastor, in reflection, were: "I guess she decided to back off." It is important to see the difference between *backing off* and *backing out*. Respect, sensitivity and love called her to back off, not out! It was during an infrequent phone call that the resisting person said, "I need you." The lay pastor, who had been praying and available and making infrequent contacts, was able to walk through a very difficult time with the former resister and be of great help and encouragement.

- B. There are many stories of lay pastors who, by being faithful in praying and contacting, broke through the resistance into a serendipitous relationship.

NOTE: Occasionally it may be a wise choice to disconnect a lay pastor from a household. This should be done only with a great caution, much prayer and in consultation with the leader(s).

IV. A POSITIVE MIND-SET IS NEEDED

A. The old mind-set:

1. "They don't want me."
2. "I'm no good at this."
3. "They don't need a lay pastor."
4. "This will never work."
5. "They need someone who can get through to them."
6. "The Lay Pastors Ministry should take only those people who want a lay pastor."
7. "I'm ready to give up on them."

B. The new mind-set:

1. "They haven't accepted me *yet*."
2. "God wants someone to love them, pray for them, care about them, and try to reach out to them. I'll be that person, tough as it is. With his help I'll be faithful in pastoring them."

C. Perseverance is the mainspring of caring for those who resist.

- "So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to *persevere* so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. Hebrews 10:35
- "By faith he (Moses) left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he *persevered* because he saw him who is invisible." Hebrews 11:27
- "...let us run with *perseverance* the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus....." Hebrews 12:1-2
- "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove *faithful*." I Corinthians 4:2

- “Well done, good and *faithful* servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.” Matthew 25:23

PRAYER: Either form small prayer groups where lay pastors can share their experience with people who resist (respecting confidentiality!), or remain together as a large group to pray (1) for people who are resisting, and (2) wisdom, guidance and love in meeting the challenge to pastorally care for them.

CLASSIC CHALLENGE #2 – PASTORAL CARE OF THOSE WHO ARE INDIFFERENT

“Why some people hold me at arm’s length.”

INTRODUCTION: You have made your contacts but the relationship has never gotten beyond a polite, cordial or cool reception. You began to wonder if you are the fault, if you are doing something wrong or if you are the right person to be caring for this household. Arrange for one or two of your lay pastors to share their experience with cool and aloof people. You will want to make this arrangement a week prior to the meeting. Be sure they respect confidentiality.



DRAMA: The following skit can be done by two lay pastors.

Scene: The lay pastor has made contacts. It’s not that she or he has been rejected; just held at arm’s length. The relationship has never gone anywhere. The initial First Visit was made two years ago, another home visit since, and regular contacts by phone or mail have been made.

Lay Pastor: (Self talk) It’s time to get in touch with Millie Robertson again. I really wonder if this is doing any good. I wish I knew what she thinks of me. She’s nice to me, but she has never gotten beyond just being nice. I would like to know what is going on in her spiritual life. Well, I’ll give it another try. (dials phone)

Millie Robertson: Hello

Lay Pastor: Hello. How glad I am to be talking with you again. It’s been some time since we last talked.

MR: O, Jenny Jarvis. Yes. . .now I remember you. You’re the one from the church. It’s so good of you to call.

LP: I’m calling just to find out how life is treating you and to tell you, that as your lay pastor, I pray for you nearly every day. Could I ask how things are going for you?

MR: Quite well, thank you. It is so good to know that you are praying for me.

LP: Praying for you and the other people in my pastoring group is a joy for me. I love praying for other people; it lifts me above my own selfish interests and helps ease some of my problems. Are there are specific requests you have for me to pray about?

MR: None that I can think of at the moment. Isn’t it a beautiful day. I just love weather like this. It makes me feel so good. George and I are going to the lake this weekend.

FULL GROUP PARTICIPATION: Brainstorm (1) observations, (2) opinions about reasons for the polite reluctance and (3) solutions. Write the comments on a chalk board or overhead transparency.

TEACHING: From *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?* pages 135-136 and/or *Monograph by Mel* – *People Who Resist*. Some major points may be:

1. Know that this is the nature of caring for people. A certain number will not be open to a close relationship. They have all the people they can take at the center of their lives. A certain number are not close to anyone, and unless their personality dramatically changes they never will be. Know that in all probability the aloofness is not because of you.
2. Take a look at yourself to see if there are some changes you can make to help warm the relationship. Examine your feelings about them. Are you accepting them unconditionally? Love (agape) is not conditional. It flows regardless of the other person's response. Pastoral love is something far beyond mutually shared "warm fuzzies." It is the kind of love God has for all people long before they open themselves to a warm relationship with him.
3. Are you praying faithfully for them and relationship? If you find it hard to pray for them because of their coolness, you may need to confess this to the Lord and move on to passionately and faithfully pray for them. Your commitment to the "P" of PACE was not to pray for them "if." It was to pray for them, period.
4. In your spirit, accept them where they are. God has. Thank him for their degree of acceptance. It is better than rejection.
5. Study the following *Relationship Spectrum* for insights and resolutions.

The Pastoring Relationship Spectrum and What To Do About It

The satisfaction, intensity, and mutuality of a pastoral relationship will vary with individuals in a flock. Love (agape) will be a steady constant from the lay pastor regardless of the response. The minimal guarantee we must make to people is that they will be loved and respected always, under every circumstance.

Resistant *Distant* *Guarded* *Formal* *Congenial* *Friendly* *Warm* *Affectionate* *Loving*

ICY BLUE

FIERY RED

Myths about the left half of the above spectrum.

1. They don't want *me*.
2. They don't need a lay pastor
3. I don't know how to relate to them
4. If I only knew what to do, I could win them over to me.
5. I am a failure.

Truths about the left half of the above spectrum.

1. Some people do not want a lay pastor.
2. Some people do not know they need a lay pastor.
3. Some people have a quite adequate support system.
4. Some people are slow to accept a new relationship.
5. Some people will never be open to a new relationship.

Resolution of the negative impact and realities.

1. Know that everyone needs pastoring.
2. Know that God has called you to pastor.
3. Know the degree of acceptance and adapt to it.
4. Know that in most cases relationships progressively deepen or decline. Be prepared to adapt to the change.
5. In the plan of God and the plan of the Lay Pastors Ministry, *you* are the one to initiate love, prayer, availability, and example. You are *not* to be a "dust shaker" (Matthew 10:14). You are called to be faithful (I Corinthians 4:2). You are to demonstrate agape – loving people and desiring the best for them no matter what the response.

PRIVATE TIME: Ask each participant to write what she or he can do with God's help to accept the reluctance of certain people and lovingly care about them.

SMALL GROUPS: Divide into groups of four or five to share their experiences with people who hold them at arms length. Be sure to respect confidentiality. After the allotted time of sharing, pray

for one another, each praying for only one other of the group. This makes it possible for each person to be meaningfully prayed for.

CLOSING REMARKS: Perseverance is the mainspring of pastorally caring for people.

- “You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.” Hebrews 10:35
- “Moses . . . persevered because he saw him who is invisible.” Hebrews 11:17
- “Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” I Corinthians 4:2
- “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.” Matthew 25:23

NOTE: It is not people’s response that determines how much you care for them, it is how you respond to their response.

CLASSIC CHALLENGE #3 – PASTORAL CARE TAKES PLACE IN A RELATIONSHIP

“It’s all in the relationship.”



INTRODUCTORY TEACHING: Do not just contact people, build relationships. *Pastoring takes place in a relationship!* Too many of us think lay people cannot be authentic pastors because they do not have the training, knowledge, experience or designated role. Pastoral care does not hinge on these. It hinges on the capacity of the person to create a genuine relationship. People are surprised to learn that many credentialed pastors have the capacity for preaching, teaching, counseling, mobilizing and administration but do not seem to have the capacity (or time, energy or inclination) to build the kind of relationships lay people can build. Alastair Campbell wrote:

Pastoral care is a relationship founded upon the integrity of the individual. Such a relationship does not depend primarily upon the acquisition of knowledge or the development of skill. Rather, it depends upon a caring attitude toward others which comes from our own experience of pain, fear, and loss, and our own release from their deadening grip.

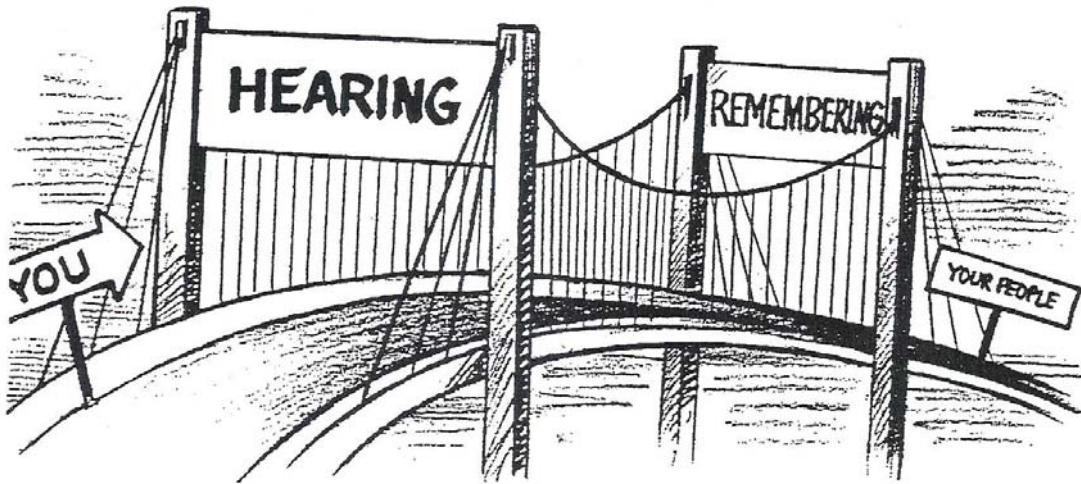
(Quoted from page 33 in *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?*)

Your relationship tells your people that you really are in a serious and deep way; and it assures them of your availability and reliability. It cannot be expected that every relationship will be equally warm or fast in forming. Even though some people resist your pastoring initiatives, accept you slowly or with some reluctance, your side of the relationship can always be accepting, warm, loving, helpful, dependable and respectful. (See the “Pastoring Relationship Spectrum,” in Classic Challenge #2.)

SMALL GROUPS OR TOTAL GROUP: Ask them to tell their story about someone extending care to them, and tell something about the person who cared. If this is done in the large total group, you may wish to pre-plan the telling by recruiting three or four people for this a few days before the meeting. In debriefing the story-telling, help the group to discover that in most cases the care came from people with whom they already had a relationship. This demonstrates from their real-life

experiences that care takes place in a relationship. The lesson from this discovery is that lay pastors need to get beyond “making contacts.” They must build relationships.

TEACHING: “Your Pastoral Care Bridge”



The bridge connecting you to your people is supported by two piers – *hearing* and *remembering*. Just as the two piers in the diagram are structures which support the weight of the bridge, hearing and remembering support the weight of the pastoral-care bridge connecting you to your people.

Regarding *hearing*, Carl F. George wrote: “The key to the architecture of care is the activity called listening. People don’t feel cared for until someone has heard them. Person A develops loyalty to Person B in direct proportion of how well Person B gives attention to what Person A is communicating or trying to say.”

Regarding one special way of *remembering* – visiting – Kenon Callahan wrote: “A visit is a sign of hope and promise. As you visit, you share the good news. People take hope. They discover life has promise. They know someone cares – deeply – for them.”

Let’s each of us ask, “How well am I *hearing* my people and, how well am I *remembering* them?” Let’s listen carefully to how we answer to ourselves for we are also answering to God who has called us to this great privilege of caring for a segment of his people.

Hearing and *remembering* go along way in building the relationship.

SMALL GROUPS OR TOTAL GROUP: Use the same grouping as before. Read the following quotations one by one, taking time in between to share their (1) comments and (2) applications before moving to the next one. Both sharings are essential to a good learning experience. The quotations are from an article in *Psychology Today*, March/April, 1994, by Susan Johnson, Ed.D.

“As the child is connected to the parent, to be connected with another person is the only security we ever have in life. In that sense we never grow up.”

“Attachment theory states that our primary motivation in life is to be connected with other people—because it is the only security we ever have. Maintaining closeness is a bona fide survival need.”

“The bond between two people hinges on two things – their accessibility and responsiveness to each other. The notion that the tie between two people is created through accessibility and responsiveness is an outgrowth of attachment theory.”

“Western psychology and psychiatry have often labeled feelings of dependency as pathologic. But, we are social beings not constituted for physiological and emotional isolation. The cost of social isolation is physical and psychological breakdown. Under such conditions, we simply deteriorate.”

“Attachment theory tells us that the basic security in life is contact with other people. We need to be held, to be emotionally connected.”

TEACHING: Effective pastoring can only happen in an authentic relationship. There are five requirements for building a relationship:

1. PRAY

- Personally, by name
- Regularly, like daily
- Specifically, with details

2. SENSITIVITY

- Empathic
- Respectful
- Self Awareness

3. FOCUS

- On them
- On their agenda
- Listen

4. SERVE

- Give yourself
- Be alert to conditions and needs
- Help

5. PRAY (First and last because of the importance of prayer)

- If done personally, regularly and specifically, there is no relational building effort more important.

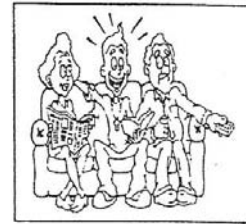
SMALL GROUPS OR TOTAL GROUP: (Preferably small groups.) Tell among themselves (1) what impressed them in the teaching and sharing, (2) what they heard that is new to them, and (3) what they intend to do with what they learned. Ask them to pray for one another about relationships.

CONCLUSION: Form into a circle for singing and closing prayer. Then, ask them to hug at least three people before they go for the refreshments.

CLASSIC CHALLENGE #4 -- PASTORAL CARE REQUIRES VISION AND PASSION

“What I can do when my enthusiasm takes a dive.”

A VERY BRIEF MINI-DRAMA DEPICTING WHAT HAPPENS TO ENTHUSIASM:



Scene One

Narrator: “A lay pastor is newly commissioned, and ready to make the first contacts. With a smile on her face and excitement in her voice she says to herself:”

Lay Pastor: “I can hardly wait to get started! I’ll call all of my people right now to see when we can arrange a visit.” The lay pastor goes to the phone, sits down to make the call and gives a short prayer before dialing. After the prayer the lay pastor dials, “Hello Helen, I’m so glad to get you. I’ve just become your lay pastor., etc.”

Scene Two

Narrator: A year has passed. It’s already past the time the lay pastor should have contacted her people.

Lay Pastor: “Oh, darn, another week has gone by and I still haven’t even thought about getting in touch with my people. Oh well, another day won’t hurt.”

Narrator: “Another week has passed. The lay pastor has gotten a notice that his or her report for last month is overdue.”

Lay Pastor: (Self talk with a downcast countenance and a very slow pace, completely lacking enthusiasm) “Now what will I do? I don’t know what has happened; I just don’t seem to have the zip for doing this ministry I used to have. I know I shouldn’t feel this way...but I do. It’s been so long since I’ve even prayed for my people, let alone contact them. I wonder what they think of me by now. Maybe I’d better quit.”

Narrator: “What happened? What should this lay pastor do? What should the Ministry Coordinator do? It’s obvious that the initial excitement and enthusiasm has declined. The poor soul. The guilt, frustration and feelings of failure must be depressing.

TEACHING: Many ventures in our lives start out with a bang but begin to wane over time. Some familiar examples are: starting school, marriage, opening a business, a new automobile, beginning a new job.

The need for motivation is a legitimate human need. Think back to the time you became a lay pastor. What were your feelings, thoughts, and commitment at that time? Try to recall what they have been between now and then. Focus on what you are doing, how you are doing it, and how you are feeling about it right now. Let's close our eyes for one minute to get in touch with how we are at the moment.

(Pause)

The Scriptures assume our need for motivation and speaks to it: Romans 12:11; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 10:25; II Thessalonians 3:13 and Luke 9:62. (You can have five people each prepare to read and share their understandings relative to motivation at this point.)

How was Moses able to persevere? Hebrews 11:27 tells us: "He saw him who was invisible." What is the key to our persevering? Hebrews 12:12 tells us: "Fix your eyes on Jesus."

A lay pastor's enthusiasm, commitment and ministry energy will fluctuate. When one's ardor wanes, he or she should not be surprised. This is a part of what it means to be a human being doing God's work. Both lay pastors and those who lead the ministry need to do what they can to keep enthusiasm high, vision bright, and commitment current. God calls us to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18); to "never tire of doing what is right" (II Thes. 3:13); to "persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what has promised" (Heb. 10:25).

Ideas on motivation are found in the *Monograph By Mel* titled "Motivating Lay Pastors," available from Lay Pastors Ministry, Inc., such as (1) the difference between the use of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; (2) the fact that it takes one kind of motivation to bring a person into the ministry and another to stay with it; and (3) the nature of motivation is that it must be fueled regularly and renewed frequently, just like body energy.

SURVEY RESULTS: At an equipping seminar people were asked, "What do I need to keep me in the ministry?" The responses fell into eight categories. A few of them are given here:

1. RESPONSE

“Some positive feedback that my contacts are important in some way.”

“I need to experience a bonding of my life with theirs.”

“I need to get response from people; not necessarily positive.”

2. SUPPORT

“I will need support and encouragement from other lay pastors.

“I would like a superior to make an assessment of the work I do.”

3. CALL

“I need to know that I am in God’s will, doing his work.”

“A feeling that I am where God wants me to be.”

4. SIGNIFICANCE

“I need to feel that I am doing something worthwhile, that I am making a difference.”

“A feeling of contributing.”

5. HEALTH AND TIME

“Good health so that I have the time to give to it.”

“Finding time to effectively do my ministry.”

6. FURTHER EQUIPPING

“Continued training as needed.”

“Continuing to grow.”

7. COMMITMENT

“A willing spirit.”

“A commitment to the Lord and dependence on the Holy Spirit.”

8. ADMINISTRATION

“No busy-work or unnecessary administrivia.”

These quotes can be copied and distributed to be read by individuals, taking time for people to comment.

GROUP SHARING: Before dividing into groups, ask people to write their thoughts about the following:

1. Two things I have learned in my lay pastoring experience.
2. Two reasons why I am still a lay pastor.
3. What makes it difficult to be a lay pastor, and how I am dealing with them.
4. What will keep me at it.

After they have finished writing, move into small groups to share and discuss topic by topic. Conclude the time together by each one praying for one other of the group with specifics heard as they shared and discussed.

Debrief in total group.

CONCLUSION: Form a circle, join hands for a closing song and prayer. After the prayer ask them not to leave before hugging at least three people.

SUBJECTS FOR ONGOING EQUIPPING

Because of the nature and depth of these subjects, it will usually be necessary to engage professionals from the community or members of your church staff. Several of the subjects warrant a series of meetings or a four-hour, all-day or over-night retreat.

LISTENING.

HOSPITAL AND IN-HOME SICK VISITS

DEALING WITH DEATH AND GRIEF

ESTABLISHING AND RESPECTING BOUNDARIES

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

AVOIDING BURNOUT

WHEN AND HOW TO REFER A PERSON TO A PROFESSIONAL

MANAGING CONFLICT

MANAGING TIME

THE NATURE OF A CRISIS

UNDERSTANDING BOOMERS, BUSTERS, GENERATION X, ETC.

UNDERSTANDING AGING AND THE AGED

DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS

PRAYING FOR HEALING

GUIDING A PERSON TO A PERSONAL DECISION FOR CHRIST

MANAGING CRITICISMS OF YOUR CHURCH OR PASTOR

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF LAY PASTORAL CARE

MYERS-BRIGGS PERSONALITY TYPE INDICATOR