**Local Pastor Mentoring Groups**

Mentor groups will be gathered across District lines to continue the cohort groups from Licensing School. Mentors, nominated by DCOM’s and the BOM, will be assigned and trained by Clergy Excellence. Resources—online videos, articles, etc.—will be offered as suggestions for how to discuss these topics, as well as suggested outlines for mentor group meeting logistics (covenant development, confidentiality, etc.).

Groups meet quarterly for at least 90 minutes on a schedule and at a location that suits the group. Their annual report to the DCOM to document when and where they met is due April 1 to the Mentor Coordinator, copied to Clergy Excellence. (Nonparticipation will be noted by DCOM and BOM and may affect renewal of license.) Interim communication and mutual support is encouraged.

Year 1

Summer 1: Connecting with Your Community: Starting on the Right Foot

Fall 1: Wesleyan Theology and Sacraments in Action

Winter 1: Boundaries in a Leadership Role

Spring 1: Reaching New People

Year 2

Summer 2: Church Finances and Stewardship

Fall 2: Disciple-Forming Systems

Winter 2: Preaching

Spring 2: Polity, church structure and leading meetings

Year 3

Summer 3: Developing Lay Leadership

Fall 3: Communicating Vision through Worship and Programs

Winter 3: Conflict Resolution/Handling Difficult People

Spring 3: Being a Lifelong Learner (and celebration of the group’s time together)

Year 4, 5 and beyond (until educations are complete):

Regionally organized groups meet 2-3 times per year and in-between as needed with mentors. Individuals follow through on personal mentoring and development goals and gather for self-awakening questions, etc.

**LOCAL PASTOR GROUP MENTORING**

**Year 1, Session 1: Connecting with Your Community**

*Suggested resources/ideas for the learning portion of your group mentoring meeting. Select what seems useful for your group’s contexts and experiences, and email materials in advance to help the group be prepared for thoughtful discussion and participation.*

* Share best practices around Mission InSite reports for learning about your community. Contact the Center for Congregational Excellence to obtain these resources, already paid-for through Conference funds, and/or learn more at <https://vaumc.org/missioninsite>
* Invite a local barber, police officer, mayor, city worker, teacher, and/or coffee shop barista to come and have a panel conversation to practice learning about the community and how you as a pastor, or the church as a whole can connect.
* Discuss: Fostering Conversations that Connect, by Lovett Weems. <https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/fostering-conversations-that-connect/>
* Discuss: Top 50 List – 50 Ways to Take Church to the Community

<https://www.churchleadership.com/50-ways/50-ways-to-take-church-to-the-community/>

* Discuss (and/or practice, in advance at home, or together as a group) prayer-walking one’s church neighborhood. There are many resources available to guide the practice.

Short article from Texas: <https://www.txcumc.org/newsdetail/437689>

* Utilize portions of this video of an interview with Father Gregory Boyle in which he talks about he engaged gang members in California in his ministry. This would take some effort and you would have to be prepared to lead a discussion that makes connections, but it’s very inspiring.

<http://www.onbeing.org/blog/jesuit-priest-takes-la-gang-members-and-provides-jobs-and-hope-homeboy-industries/4766>

**LOCAL PASTOR GROUP MENTORING**

**Year 1, Session 2: Wesleyan Theology and Sacraments**

*Suggested resources/ideas for the learning portion of your group mentoring meeting. Select what seems useful for your group’s contexts and experiences, and email materials in advance to help the group be prepared for thoughtful discussion and participation.*

Local pastors will have a varied background on formal learning about Wesleyan theology and the sacraments. They will have received an overview at Licensing School. Depending on whether they have participated in Lay Servant Ministry training, the Walk to Emmaus, Disciple Bible Study, or where they are in Course of Study/seminary, they may have more or less formal education about these topics.

**Wesleyan Theology**

* + *Being Methodist in the Bible Belt* by Belton Joyner is a straightforward look at how Wesleyan theology compares and contrasts with common “evangelical” theology that is prominent in the South. It gives language and illustration for leaders to use in helping laypeople understand the differences and what it means to be distinctively Wesleyan. Many of the local pastors have or had Belton Joyner (author) during Course of Study. The leader could read the book and use it to lead discussion.
  + Living Our Beliefs: The United Methodist Way, by Kenneth L. Carder. (Discipleship Resources, revised edition 2009) All of the Licensing School students have been advised to purchase this book as a theological “quick resource”. If mentors need a free copy, please contact the Center for Clergy Excellence.
  + *The 2016 Book of Discipline*, Part III, ¶102 offers a great overview of distinctive heritage, Wesleyan emphases, and an understanding of grace, and would be a resource everyone’s churches could use for study.
  + Focus on Grace – Prevenient Grace, Justifying Grace, Sanctifying Grace, and Christian Perfection

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/our-wesleyan-heritage>

* + Select hymns from the UM Hymnal to discuss UM understandings of grace—perhaps especially using the “Grace” section found on p. 942 in the UMH as a place to get started.
  + Select Wesley Bros comics that might relate to particular theological questions ([www.wesleybros.com](http://www.wesleybros.com)) Review “The Kingdom of God is Like…” comic strip that Rev. Charlie Baber used at Licensing School for exploring UM understandings of God’s grace: <http://www.wesleybros.com/wesbros/the-kingdom-of-god-is-like/>

**Sacraments**

* + *This Holy Mystery* is the UM understanding of Holy Communion and available for free download at <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/this-holy-mystery-a-united-methodist-understanding-of-holy-communion1>
  + *By Water and the Spirit* is the UM understanding of Baptism and available for free download at <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/by-water-and-the-spirit-full-text>
  + A newer resource on the *Meaning of Holy Communion* is available for free download at <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/the-meaning-of-holy-communion>
  + A 3 minute video clip and article give an overview of baptism in the UM tradition

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/renewing-waters-how-united-methodists-understand-baptism>

* + A 3 minute video and article to give an overview of Holy Communion in the UM tradition.

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/an-open-table-how-united-methodists-understand-communion>

* + Have everyone in the group bring their Book of Worship/hymnal and a bulletin where they led Holy Communion and/or presided over a baptism. Review the liturgy, order, responses, to discuss what our common understandings are about the sacraments, what they mean and how the body participates/responds.

Discuss: How can one be creative while remaining clear about UM sacramental practice and theology? How can one “move” a congregation toward a deeper UM understanding of the sacraments?

<http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/this-is-your-baptismal-liturgy>

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/communion-questions-and-answers>

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/communion1>

* + What not to do <http://umcworship.blogspot.com/2015/09/three-communion-practices-to-quit-doing.html>

**LOCAL PASTOR GROUP MENTORING**

**Year 1, Session 3: Boundaries in a Leadership Role**

*Suggested resources/ideas for the learning portion of your group mentoring meeting. Select what seems useful for your group’s contexts and experiences, and email materials in advance to help the group be prepared for thoughtful discussion and participation.*

Leaders have the challenge of developing meaningful relationships while also establishing healthy boundaries. Leaders have to take care of themselves while also taking care of many others. A conversation about how to establish and keep boundaries will be a helpful resource to new and established clergy. There are many ways a conversation go could in talking about boundaries. Here are some possible focus points if you want to share out of your own experience:

* Maintaining confidentiality
* Establishing Boundaries with time, communication, social media
* Finding support through collegiality and peer groups
* Ways to prevent inappropriate settings and relationships
* Safe Sanctuary practices
* Honoring Sabbath

**Podcasts**

* + Brene Brown, “Compassion Does Not Exist Without Boundaries” http://www.mindbrooks.com/florilegia-prose/1036/
* There are several that would be relevant at [www.MichaelHyatt.com](http://www.MichaelHyatt.com). Click on ‘podcast’ and then search Boundaries. There are sessions that include protecting your marriage, time management and priorities, and one on boundaries in general, but you would need to select and preview to make sure the topic was relevant to your group.

**Websites**

* General boundaries online quiz to spark discussion about tendencies toward people-pleasing (or not!) <http://www.boundariesbooks.com/boundaries-quiz/>
* *Does Everyone in the Church Need to Know Everything* article by Bishop Robert Schnase, <https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/does-everyone-in-a-church-need-to-know-everything/>

**Books** – you could read the book and reflect on it with the group. If you need funding support for books for the group, please contact Clergy Excellence in advance.

*Saying No to Saying Yes: Everyday Boundaries and Pastoral Excellence* by David Olsen and Nancy Devor

<http://www.amazon.com/Saying-Say-Yes-Boundaries-Excellence/dp/1566997283/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1449612010&sr=8-1&keywords=saying+no+to+saying+yes>

*Bounce: Living the Resilient Life* by Robert J. Wicks

<http://www.amazon.com/Bounce-Resilient-Robert-J-Wicks/dp/0195367685/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1449612092&sr=8-1&keywords=bounce+by+wicks>

*Safe Sanctuaries in a Virtual World* by Joy Thornburg Melton and Michelle L. Foster gives ideas for conversation about boundaries related to social media use.

<https://www.cokesbury.com/product/9780881776300/safe-sanctuaries-in-a-virtual-world/?rank=0&txtSearchQuery=safe%20sanctuaries%20in%20a%20virtual%20world>

*Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No to Take Control of Your Life* by Henry Could and John Townsend. There is a workbook that also goes with the book. You might read the book and utilize some of the materials in the workbook for conversation.

<http://www.amazon.com/Boundaries-When-Take-Control-Your/dp/0310247454/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1450376380&sr=8-1&keywords=boundaries>

**LOCAL PASTOR GROUP MENTORING**

**Year 1, Session 4: New Places for New People**

*Suggested resources/ideas for the learning portion of your group mentoring meeting. Select what seems useful for your group’s contexts and experiences, and email materials in advance to help the group be prepared for thoughtful discussion and participation.*

* Missional Engagement Resources from our neighbors in Western North Carolina at [www.LEADwncc.org](http://www.LEADwncc.org)
  + Theology Pub (Julie Wilburn Peeler) [www.centralumc.org/theologypub](http://www.centralumc.org/theologypub)
  + Common Ground (Noel Sweezy) <http://www.fumcstan.com/CommonGround>
  + Community Carnival (Morris Brown) ( <http://wnccumc.org/community-carnival-at-mission-first-in-redsville/>
  + Assurance Connections Campus (Danny Meyer) <http://www.assuranceumc.org/#/connections-campus>
* Lewis Center for Church Leadership
* 50 Ways To Welcome New People <https://www.churchleadership.com/50-ways/50-ways-to-welcome-new-people/>
* “Dream Big to Reach New People” podcast with Olu Brown <https://www.churchleadership.com/podcast/episode-13-dream-big-to-reach-new-people-featuring-olu-brown/>

Article only: <https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/reaching-people-who-dont-look-or-act-like-church-people/>

* Invite a minister that has been successful in stretching the church to reach new people for Christ to lead discussion about how it was done and what the most significant obstacles were. What does she/he wish had been different about the process?
* Read and share information from a book or invite someone else to do so. If you need funding support for books for the group, please contact Clergy Excellence in advance.
  + *Reaching People Under 40 While Keeping People Over 60: Being Church for All Generations* by Edward H. Hammett
* Website Resources
  + New Places for New People – one of the four focuses of the UMC <http://www.umc.org/topics/four-areas-of-focus-growing-vital-churches>
  + Ministry Matters <http://www.ministrymatters.com/reach/>
  + UMCom <http://www.umcom.org/learn/5-websitesapps-that-are-new-places-for-new-people>
* Discuss/Chart: What are the most significant resources for reaching new people that are in existing church communities? (That are specifically in –your- church?) What are the most significant obstacles in existing church communities? (What about in –your- church?)