

The Characteristics of a Listening, Learning Spiritual Leader

A Listening, Learning Spiritual Leader is one who:

- is Christ-Centered
- is constantly listening, learning and growing in faith
- is a visionary leader
- possesses a pastoral heart
- values team/covenant relationships
- values tolerance, diversity and inclusiveness
- embraces change and takes risks
- communicates well

One who is Christ-Centered

- Understands God through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ
- Claims Jesus Christ as Savior and Redeemer
- Understands the Bible as God's revelation in the lives of people in their time
- Is emboldened by the power of the Holy Spirit

One who is constantly listening, learning and growing in faith

- Values and practices active listening at the deepest level to a broad cross-section of persons both inside and outside the congregation
- Committed to pursue an intentional life plan of learning, balanced between theoretical, practical and experiential disciplines
- Is self-reflective
- Lives by Grace
- Practices the spiritual disciplines of faith development

One who is a visionary leader

- Able to focus on the future
- Incorporates the needs and the longing of the people into a vision for ministry
- Able to clearly describe the vision
- Can inspire and equip people to participate in the vision for ministry

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One who possesses a pastoral heart

- Out of one's personal relationship of God's grace through Jesus Christ one is able to share this grace in a loving and compassionate way
- One who respects the spiritual journey of others
- One who listens carefully and kindly to all people

One who values team/covenant relationships

- Committed to the polity and theology of the United Methodist Church
- Committed to the covenant relationship with other spiritual leaders by participating in open itinerancy, shared leadership, and collegial relationship
- Is able to lead as well as be a team member
- Lone Rangers need not apply

One who values tolerance, diversity and inclusiveness

- Open to hearing different views than those held...
- Seeks to understand different cultural and theological perspectives
- Values the inclusion of persons of all ages and different races, genders or sexual orientation.
- One who shows restraint in judging others
- Respects the dignity and worth of all persons

One who embraces change and takes risks

- Longs for things as they can be rather than protecting what is
- Sees life as an adventure, undergirded by grace

One who communicates well

- Able to effectively tell the story of Christian faith and values
- Demonstrates effective public speaking
- Speaks theologically about current events and people's life experiences
"Where is God in this?"
- Conversant in the tools of modern communication and shows a willingness to utilize these tools in ministry