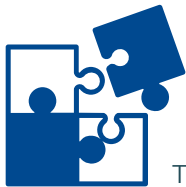




THE VINE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CATAWBA CLERGY NETWORK

THE 4 R'S



By Shannon Axtell Martin, Director, Catawba Clergy Network

There are many theories on and approaches to thriving, and many elements that contribute to people becoming healthy, whole individuals. It can be puzzling to sort through them all. Some of these theories include trying to get us to buy the next best thing that will be the key to our thriving. Some pedal quick fixes and one size fits all answers. But does pursuing thriving and practicing self-care ever feel like another item on your to do list? Another thing to fit into your already full life? If so, we can relate.

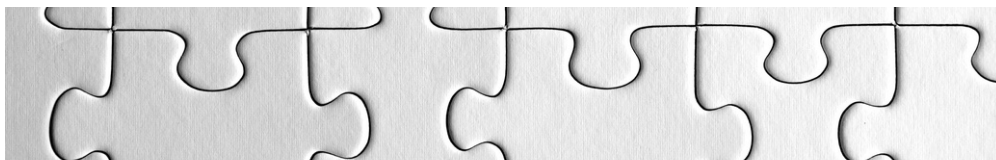
We hope that thriving can become a foundation that the rest of our lives build upon and grow from, rather than something that we add on top of everything else, like icing on a cake. We do not have all the answers on how to do that, but we hope that we can focus on 4 pieces that contribute to completing the puzzle of thriving- rest, resources, reflection, and relationships. We believe we need one another to thrive, and we need space for these 4 R's. We are working to create this sort of space at our Catawba Clergy Days gathering this year. We have changed the schedule and are adding some new elements, along with intentional time for the 4 R's. We hope that you will join us for a time of being together, learning together, and reflecting together.

The next page has more details about our keynote speaker, and full workshop, session, and speaker information will be available on our website soon. For now here are some highlights:

We will explore strategies to care for ourselves and others in times of grief, learn about grant writing and hear from a Catawba alumna ministering with those who are incarcerated while advocating for criminal justice reform, and think about how God is calling us in our lives and ministry. We are setting aside time to reflect, rest, and grow in our relationships with God and one another, and we are looking forward to gathering together. Registration is available at www.catawba.edu/clergydays.

Check in will begin at 9am on October 20th. Beginning at 9:30 optional sessions will begin, including a time for COPs to gather in person (additional time will be available for COPs after dinner on Thursday if they so choose). Opening worship and our keynote address will begin at 11am. We will conclude our time together after lunch on Friday, October 21st. Lodging and transportation costs will be covered by the Catawba Clergy Network.

Here's to thriving, together!



CATAWBA CLERGY DAYS

REST, RESOURCES, RELATIONSHIPS, & REFLECTION



Brave Leadership For Such a Time as This: Leading with Authenticity and Courage

We've all been through so much in the last several years-- covid, pivots to online church, a politically divisive climate, greater awareness about racial injustice and so much more. It can feel so overwhelming to know how to both address pertinent social issues and stay grounded as a leader in our calling to love both neighbor and ourselves.

It's a question that is never fully addressed in seminary: how much do you share of your own life with your congregations as a pastoral leader? Pastors often are expected to be super humans in their ongoing care and availability of presence to those in their care. We are asked to give and give and expect little in return, getting our needs for care and community met elsewhere. But is this possible or sustainable?

Rev. Elizabeth Hagan, author of *Brave Church: Tackling Tough Topics Together* and a veteran local church pastor, believes that there is a way for you to thrive in ministry by bravely sharing your life among the people you are called to serve. She believes that your voice is needed to speak out in brave ways that will both nourish your soul and those around you. She wants to put tools in your hands now to help you make the most life-giving choices in your ministry setting.

Rev. Elizabeth Hagan, has served congregations in leadership roles over the last 15 years most recently becoming the Senior Minister of First Christian Church, Athens, GA, the first woman in the congregation's 146 year history. Her most recent book explores how the church can have open conversations about some of the most pressing issues of our time including racism, sexuality and mental health in *Brave Church: Tackling Tough Topics Together*. Though first ordained as an American Baptist, Hagan has served United Methodist, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian (USA), and Disciples of Christ congregations in various pastoral roles. She is a graduate of Samford University (2002) and Duke Divinity School (2006). She is also the author of *Birthered: Finding Grace Through Infertility* and *Seeing a Different World: An Advent Devotional*. She is the Executive Director of Our Courageous Kids, foundation serving young adults who grew up in international orphanages with educational and mental health support. But one of her happiest roles is as mother to two young children, Amelia and Andrew and two Kenyan based young adults, Sherlyne and Daniel. You can read more about her at elizabethhagan.com

CLERGY THRIVING GRANT CORNER

REST, RESOURCES, RELATIONSHIPS, & REFLECTION

Interested in learning more about writing grants? We will have a session at Catawba Clergy Days on general grant writing skills along with information about specific grant opportunities available to members of the Catawba Clergy Network. Sign up to attend at www.catawba.edu/clergydays

UPCOMING EVENTS:

CATAWBA CLERGY NETWORK

Catawba Clergy Days

SAVE THE DATE:
OCTOBER 20 - 21, 2022



**Discover Youth Theology Institute Fall Retreat
Black Lake Retreat Center**

October 28-30

If you have interested 6th, 7th, 8th, or 9th graders please email discover@catawba.edu

Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

By Betty Morton, Consultant, Catawba Clergy Network



If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
(1 Corinthians 13: 1-7 NIV)

If someone asked you to name the most important traits of a pastor or spiritual leader that can help you and your church thrive, what would you say? The ability to preach like Paul? Faith like Abraham? Love like Jesus? All these qualities are important, but we know that the greatest of these is love. As a spiritual leader, how do you model love so that it is not just a lofty concept but love with its feet on the ground. What does love with feet on the ground look like for you?

In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul describes love as patient, kind, not proud or self-seeking, not easily angered, protective, trusting, hopeful and more. In leadership language, love looks a lot like “emotional intelligence.” And leaders need emotional intelligence to both survive and thrive in these challenging times.

Studies have shown that effective leaders have a high degree of emotional intelligence (EQ) -- the ability to recognize, manage, and use emotions in positive ways to communicate effectively, empathize with others, relieve stress, overcome challenges and defuse conflicts.

Leaders with a high level of EQ are:

- Keenly aware of what is going on inside them, particularly during difficult conversations and stressful challenges
- Empathetic listeners and truly inclusive and collaborative
- Positive, calm and not easily angered
- Other-focused not just self-focused
- Effective at navigating through conflict rather than avoiding it

Those that lack EQ are:

- Not self-aware and blind to how others view them
 - Unwilling to listen and meaningfully include others
 - Over-reactive, argumentative and defensive of their positions
 - Protective and promotive of self but not others
 - Likely to avoid directly addressing conflicts and likely to blame others rather than own and acknowledge their contribution to problems
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EQ balances self-awareness with other-awareness. Those with high EQ are self-aware; genuinely caring; and able to communicate with patience and kindness, even when challenged. And when people around them feel seen, appreciated, respected and included, they feel loved. When you show EQ as a leader, you build trust. And when people trust you, they will cooperate with you, rather than sabotage your efforts. They will work with you to find common ground and win/win solutions. They will care for you and lift you up.

With so many demands, so much stress, so many conflicts, and so many people challenging church leaders, many pastors are leaving church. A 2021-2022 study by the Barna Group, a researcher on faith and culture, reveals that 42% of full-time ministers have considered quitting within the last year.

How are your church relationships? Might they be better? Church is all about building loving relationships to promote human wellbeing, and church leaders need high EQ to build and sustain healthy relationships in church community – and everywhere. EQ is what distinguishes high-performing leaders, and low EQ is a primary reason leaders fail. Strengthening your EQ and relationships can be critical to your survival.

Do you demonstrate high EQ? Are you self-aware? Actually, 95% of people think they are self-aware, but only 10-15% actually are (T Eurich, Insight; see Sargent-Kossoff article). The good news is that you can strengthen your self-awareness and EQ. Practice these steps, especially in emotionally-charged situations, to enhance your EQ:

1. Pause and check in with yourself to get clear about what you are feeling, not just what you're thinking. Breathe.
2. Practice empathy. Before speaking or acting, listen to others, consider their points of view and how they might feel. Listen sincerely and observe body language.
3. Risk being honest with yourself about how you feel and authentic with others. And allow others to be real with you – without judgment.
4. Respond positively with words and behavior you can be proud of. Express yourself with tact and kindness. Don't walk away having said things you regret or regretting things you did not say.
5. Seek feedback. Check in at the end of the conversation or meeting to see if you were loving and if you communicated well. Ask a few questions like, "Have I understood what you're saying?" "Did we accomplish what you hoped?" "Is there anything else you need?" "Are we okay?"

Whether at church or at home, we need EQ to be loving and effective in relationships. EQ beings with self-knowledge and is strengthened by feedback. So, practice checking in on yourself and naming your feelings. Don't tamp them down. Let them open you up to new insights and growth possibilities. Let them lead you deeper into love. Let them help you thrive.

Here are a few resources that will provide you more information about EQ and how to strengthen your self-awareness and relationships.

References:

"Pastors Share Top Reasons They've Considered Quitting Ministry in the Last Year; article in Leaders and Pastors, April 27, 2022; <https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-quitting-ministry/>

"Emotional Intelligence for Effective Ministry; Ministry International Journal for Pastors; <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2020/03/Emotional-intelligence-for-effective-ministry>

"Improving Emotional Intelligence (EQ); Help Guide; <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/emotional-intelligence-eq.htm>

Staying Aware of Emotions; Institute for Social and Emotional Intelligence; April 28, 2022; Amy Sargent-Kossoff; <https://www.isei.com/blog/staying-aware-of-emotions>

"Emotional Intelligence in Leadership: Learning to be More Aware"; Mind Tools; https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_45.htm