

Caring for the Called Worker

Passionate Believers Conference

South Wisconsin District LCMS

Rev. John C Wille

Rev. Hal Senkbeil

God blesses His Church

Ephesians 4:11-12 [Christ] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ

St. Paul:

We have this treasure in jars of clay...

2 Corinthians 4:7

There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

1 Kings 19:9-10

Expectations

- Churchgoers expect their pastor to juggle an average of 16 major tasks
- Pastors who work fewer than 50 hours a week are 35 percent more likely to be terminated.
- 50 percent of all congregations in the United States are either plateauing or declining
- Two-thirds of pastors reported that their congregation experienced a conflict during the past two years; more than 20 percent of those were significant enough that members left the congregation

tenure

The typical pastor has his greatest ministry impact at a church in years 5 through 14 of his pastorate; unfortunately, the average pastor lasts only five years at a church.

family stress

- 13% of active pastors are divorced.
- 23% have been fired or pressured to resign at least once in their careers.
- 25% don't know where to turn when they have a family or personal conflict or issue.
- 25% of pastors' wives see their husband's work schedule as a source of conflict.
- 21 percent spend time with hobbies or physical task

burnout

- 33% felt burned out within their first five years of ministry.
- 33% say that being in ministry is an outright hazard to their family.
- 40% of pastors and 47% of spouses are suffering from burnout, frantic schedules, and/or unrealistic expectations.
- 45% of pastors' wives say the greatest danger to them and their family is physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual burnout

loneliness

45% of pastors say that they've experienced depression or burnout to the extent that they needed to take a leave of absence from ministry.

70% of pastors say that they do not have a single close friend.

52% of pastors say they and their spouses believe that being in pastoral ministry is hazardous to their family's well-being and health.

56% of pastors' wives say that they have no close friends.

helplessness

- 57% would leave the pastorate if they had somewhere else to go or some other vocation they could do.
- 70% don't have any close friends.
- 75% report severe stress causing anguish, worry, bewilderment, anger, depression, fear, and alienation.
- 80% of pastors say they have insufficient time with their spouse.

the pressure cooker

- 80% believe that pastoral ministry affects their families negatively.
- 90% feel unqualified or poorly prepared for ministry.
- 90% work more than 50 hours a week.
- 94% feel under pressure to have a perfect family.

compassion fatigue

- 70% said the only time they spend studying the Word is when they are preparing their sermons
- **“Spiritual burnout** felt when pastors neglect their own spiritual lives while trying to pour into the lives of others. Many pastors do not have anybody pouring into their lives and do not seek the life and strength of God for spiritual refreshment. If you don’t desire to encounter God through prayer or Scripture reading, you may be suffering from spiritual burnout!”

leadership resources, October 2013

Across America in various denominations

1,500 pastors leave their ministries each month due to burnout, conflict, or moral failure.

SWD

- In the recent past two pastors have resigned due to Sixth Commandment issues.
- Two others resigned who had been under ecclesial discipline.
- At least 50% of district president's time is spent in conflict resolution.

Pastors

- Pastors are a necessity for the Lutheran parish. Augsburg V and XIV
- Pastors are a blessing for the church.
- Pastors are less than perfect. “Clay Jars”
- Pastors want the best for their family and the congregation they serve.

Pastors are human beings

- Pastors have emotional needs.
- Pastors have spiritual needs.
- Pastors have psychological needs.
- Pastors have physical needs
- Pastors have families to support.
- Pastors are sinners.

Pastoral support

Salary... “worth his salt”

In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:14

Circuit Winkels

5.1 Visitation Circuits

5.1.1 A circuit is a network of congregations that “walks together” for mutual care, support, advice, study, ecclesiastical encouragement, service, coordination, resources, and counsel—all for the sake of greater congregational participation in God’s mission.

5.1.2 Districts shall establish circuits according to geographical criteria.

Doxology

“The Center provides a safe environment for clergy to reflect on their own spiritual and emotional health and assists them to review and enhance their professional competencies and skills as servants of Christ and stewards of God's sacred mysteries. DOXOLOGY strengthens pastors so they can more faithfully pastor others.”

Web: <http://www.doxology.us>

Grace Place

The goal of Grace Place Lutheran Wellness Ministries is to offer preventative wellness skills, attitudes and resources to our Lutheran professional church workers and their families, so they can carry forth the Gospel message of salvation in Christ, and live and serve His people abundantly in body, mind and spirit. Grace Place is a *wellness* program, keeping our church workers *healthy*. <http://graceplacewellness.org>

Shepherd's Canyon Retreat

"Our vision is innovative, as it is not the outcome of a resolution made during a convention, nor a mandate of a synodical office. It is not driven by a synod, district, or commission on ministerial health. This vision is the creative outcome of the personal journeys of Christian leaders – both clergy and lay people – who have experienced God's healing through the caring of others and desire other shepherds to know that healing."

<http://shepherdscanyonretreat.com>

Continuing Education

God's people caring for their pastor

What can you do?

What can we do together?

God's people caring for the pastor's family

- **your pastor needs your prayers.**
- **your pastor needs the opportunity to share how they are *really* doing**
- **your pastor needs rest, times of refreshing.**
- **your pastor needs friends**

A healthy pastor and a healthy church are closely related

- **encourage your pastor to be healthy because it will lead to a healthy church.**
 - **Physical**
 - **Emotional**
 - **Psychological**
 - **Spiritual**

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

1 Corinthians 12:24-27

God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, 25 that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

John 13:34-35

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”