

## Pastor as Teacher Workshop

**Goal** — This workshop is designed to give pastors and laity an opportunity to consider the role of the pastor as teacher. It is designed for 90 minutes.

**Objectives** — Activities in this workshop are designed to enable participants to:

1. Define the word teacher and list some of the qualities of a good teacher.
2. List several ways in which the Bible describes the role of teacher.
3. Discuss with others how church life might be different if pastors focused as much on teaching as they do on preaching.

**Preparation** — Before the session begins put the vows of ordination and installation of a minister from United Church of Christ *Book of Worship* on newsprint. The words from these services provide the background information for Pastor as Teacher.

### Ordination

From examination section:

“Will you be faithful in preaching and teaching the gospel, in administering the sacraments and rites of the church, and in exercising pastoral care and leadership?”

From prayer during laying on of hands:

“...Now bless and sanctify by your Holy Spirit your servant \_\_\_\_\_, whom, we, in your name and in obedience to your will, by prayer and with the laying on of hands, ordain to the ministry of the church, committing to him/her the authority to preach your word, administer the sacraments, and exercise the responsibilities of pastor and teacher....”

### Installation

From introduction:

“Installation confirms and celebrates the covenantal relationship among a local church, its pastor and teacher, and the UCC.”

From covenant section:

“Dear friends, \_\_\_\_\_ United Church of Christ has declared that, having gathered under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it has called \_\_\_\_\_ to minister in this place as pastor and teacher and that it now receives him/her as appointed by God for this ministry.”

### Community Building (10 minutes)

Invite participants to introduce themselves and each to briefly tell about a most memorable teaching moment.

### **Small Groups** (20 minutes)

Ask participants to form small groups of three to five persons. Ask each group to:

- Brainstorm what comes to your mind when you think of the word “teacher.”
- Think of the teacher you remember most — the qualities, characteristics that made that person (or what they taught) memorable or meaningful to you

### **Reports from Small Groups** (10 minutes)

Reconvene in a large group and ask each small group to report on their discussion. (Note to leader: This is to enable the group to get a profile of the meaning of teacher and qualities of a good teacher.)

### **Bible Study on Teacher** (30 minutes)

Divide into new small groups. Depending on total number in the workshop, 4-5 persons in a Bible study group is ideal. Ask each group to study one of the following texts (if you do not have four groups, omit one or more of the texts; if you have more than four groups, more than one group may study the same text):

James 3:1-13

II Timothy 1:1-14

I Timothy 4:1-16

Ephesians 4:11-12

In each small group ask participants to read the text and then discuss two questions:

- 1) What does this passage mean to you?
- 2) What does this passage say about teaching or teachers?

After 15 minutes, reconvene to share in the large group highlights of the study.

### **The Role of Teaching** (20 minutes)

Ask participants to discuss the following questions. Lay persons in the group should think about the pastor of their church for this exercise.

- If you (or your pastor) focused on teaching as much as preaching, how would that change ministry in your congregation?
- How would it change the pastor’s day?
- How would it change how pastors feel about themselves?

List the ways in which pastors might think of themselves as “teacher.” Name all the things you do that might qualify as “teaching.”

### **Suggestions for Closing**

Prayer (from *Listening to the Spirit*, by John E. Beigert, United Church Press, 1996, p. 32.)

O God, parent of Jesus the Great Teacher and our Parent; make us receptive to learning more about the one who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. But as we learn, make us aware that we also teach by what we say and what we do. May our worship inspire us to be more receptive learners about and more faithful teachers of the Christian faith. Amen

Hymn Suggestions:

*The New Century Hymnal*: #411 *Praise the Source of Faith and Learning*  
#287 *Come, Teach Us, Spirit of our God*

Thanks to Leah Matthews for this workshop design.