



American Baptist Churches USA

Church Renewal & Organizational Development

Sample Findings from the Pulpit and Pew Project

(Perceptions of the Laity)

Dr. C. Jeff Woods, October 2005

Expectations of clergy from the viewpoint of the laity... How do laity expect clergy in America to spend their time? (Respondents were asked to pick the top two)

1. Conducting Worship (66%)
2. Teaching (48%)
3. Visiting/Counseling (42%)
4. Praying for members (24%)
5. Administration (18%)
6. Providing Vision (13%)
7. Community Involvement (11%)
8. Training People (7%)
9. Converting Others (7%)

What do laity want in their next pastor? (Data drawn from interviews with pastoral search committees)

1. Good Preaching
 - Preaching that relates to life's concerns
 - Preaching that engages people on a personal level
2. Worship Leading
 - Style is important
 - Avoid previously bizarre behaviors
3. Strong Spiritual Leader
 - Was never well defined, but we'll know it when we see it
4. Commitment to the Parish
 - Desire a pastor to be "present" in the community...
 - But able to set limits
 - Expectations are the key
5. Good People Skills
 - Available, approachable, warm
 - Able to converse within the given culture
6. Gender, Race, Marriage
 - It is not in the top five, but search committees often prefer married male clergy in the ethnicity of the congregational majority
7. Age, Experience, Job tenures
 - Search committees also prefer young clergy with vast experience
8. Coach, Trainer
 - Laity want to be trained
9. Entrepreneurial, Innovative Leader
 - Laity recognize that congregational changes are needed
10. Transformational Leadership

- It actually made the list!