

A banner with a green and yellow background featuring a blurred image of grass. The text is centered and reads: DR. LAMAR E. SMITH CENTER FOR EVANGELISM & CHURCH GROWTH.

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I am convinced that leadership is a key component for an effective growing church, especially clergy leadership. When God wanted something to happen, often He would select and equip that leader; as He did with Moses to set the people free, Deborah to judge and lead her people and Paul to guide and direct a growing church.

A few thoughts on what I consider basic roles for effective pastors, senior pastors, clergy and lay leaders.

- Listen and connect to God: This is the basic criteria for a successful ministry. Do this daily and often.
- Resourcing oneself: We succeed by what we are learning, not by what we know. Seminars, books, blogs, mentors, coaches, groups, classes and conversations with successful pastoral and church leadership. Effective leaders must not stagnate.
- Relationship building: The ability to build positive relationships with lay leaders, influencers, members new and old, and community members. Building relationships must be a high priority.
- Cast the vision for the church: This is a partnership with the church, but the responsibility of the senior leader is church growth, evangelism, missions, outreach, discipleship and pastoral care. The most effective vision includes concrete goals, numbers, timelines and implementers.
- Leadership: Leaders who lead the church family, lead in the community and develop other leaders. Leading into and following through on the vision. Your best church leaders are only frustrated by ineffective leadership from the senior leader.
- Forming and shaping the life of the church: Every church has a culture for which the senior leader is responsible. What will this culture be as he or she builds upon a biblical, Wesleyan narrative? Preaching, team building, teaching and defining the goals and vision of the church are a big part.
- Interacting with the community: As a senior leader and leading the church, this can be in the form of outreach and mission but should translate into partnerships. Not only should the senior pastor lead in forming and shaping the culture of the church, but forming and shaping the community in which the church is.

The Reveal Survey, reflected in the book *Move*, written by Greg Hawkins and Cally Parkinson, states there are four things that create a successful church, makes disciples, grows and serves the community and serves the world well:

- The church keeps people moving. A static church defers to maintenance, and maintenance defers to decline.
- The church embeds the Bible in everything. The Bible is what unites, stabilizes, challenges and moves churches, and is the catalyst for effective, growing churches.
- The church creates ownership, and the church family owns the vision and the mission. The church family grows the church if they are passionate about the vision, otherwise the church will not grow.
- The church pastors need to be in partnership with the community. Interactivity and partnerships in the world are Evangelism 101 in 2017.