

Standards for Clergy Leadership In the Virginia Conference

The following standards provide a vision of what is needed in terms of clergy leadership in the biblical and Wesleyan tradition in the Virginia Conference. Effectiveness in ministry includes “being”, “knowing” and “doing” characteristics. While not exhaustive, this list expresses the priorities of the conference at this time. This document is meant to provide the basis for conversation and feedback in assessment and evaluation of clergy. The list will be reviewed every quadrennium by the Cabinet, the Board of Laity, and the Board of Ordained Ministry.

A clergy leader in the biblical and Wesleyan tradition is a servant leader who:

- Shows evidence of a deep faith in Christ, is earnestly seeking to perfect his/her call in Christ, and is aware of the responsibilities incurred in this call.
- Reads, understands, and applies the biblical word in his/her ministry context.
- Is loyal to the Body of Christ that has affirmed and confirmed the call to ministry and lives as a person who has taken sacred vows of covenantal relationship.
- Understands the foundation and development of major theological thought of the Christian faith and the significance of this development for current situations.
- Is always in the process of developing a deeper biblical spirituality and practices spiritual disciplines.
- Practices self-care (as in the Virginia Conference Self-Care Covenant).
- Accepts, respects, and supports the doctrines, mission, polity, and liturgy of the United Methodist Church.
- Demonstrates a passion for mission and ministry, being a servant not a career builder.
- Is a prophetic leader and witness in both the church and community to which appointed.
- Lives out the highest ethical ideals of the Christian life (see ¶102-104, 160-166, *2000 Book of Discipline*), being a person of integrity, compassion, and courage.
- Demonstrates an awareness of call, spiritual gifts, talents, abilities, and areas for growth.
- Is committed to lifelong learning and the continual development of skills for ministry.
- Seeks to be a faithful steward of prayers, presence, gifts, and service.
- Believes all people are created less than God as finite human beings, and thus expects that self and others will make mistakes, is flexible and quick to forgive, and displays a genuine sense of humor.
- Is trustworthy and practices confidentiality.
- Fully participates in the Virginia Conference assessment and evaluation processes.
- Partners with laity to make disciples of Jesus Christ; will train and empower laity to produce tangible fruits of love of God and love of neighbor.
- Has the ability to “focus” ministry in terms of vision and implementation.
- Is aware of changing needs and can lead others through group decision-making to meet these needs.
- And in all things, models and embraces inclusiveness.

We envision churches where all God’s people are welcomed at table, nurtured and transformed to be Christ to others in the world.” (Vision Statement adopted by the 2001 Session of the Virginia Annual Conference)