

JUST A “LAY LEADER”

Reclaiming the Call and Vocation of
Elders and Deacons

Vijay Aggarwal
Megan D. Acedo

Outline for our time together

- Introductions
- Why am I a lay leader?
 - My story of lay leadership
 - The initial call
 - Current calling
- What it means to be a lay leader
- Why do we keep doing it?
- Questions that brought you to this workshop

Introductions:

- Name
- Church
- Role
- Why you're here
 - What you hope to learn

Why am I a lay leader?

- My faith journey
- My personal journey
- Leadership happens when you least expect it
- My initial call was easy
- It's the ongoing commitment that needs God's grace
- The gift that keeps on giving

Why am I a lay leader?

- My call story began as a young adult
 - Youth group leadership
 - General Assembly - 2003
- Ordained as an elder at 20 to serve the national church
- Call to theological training – but not pastoral ministry!
- Call to ministry outside the walls of the church.

Lay leadership in the PC(USA)

- It is a calling
 - “God does not call the qualified, God qualifies the called”
Joan Gray
- PC(USA) is not a Democracy, but a Republic
- We are a counter balance to Pastoral leadership
- The Book of Order defines our authority and structure
 - One person’s structure is another’s barrier
- We have a co-equal responsibility
- Lay leaders are spiritual leaders
- *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit*
 - 1 Corinthians 12:4
- Lay leaders often have a life time or multigenerational affiliation

Why am I still a lay leader?

- The blessings received from service
- Personal growth
- Commitment to our denomination
- The challenges we face
 - Just because the mall is empty, it doesn't mean no one is shopping
 - Consumerism in our religious practice
 - Adapting to today while staying true to God
- The resources we have
 - Committed leaders
 - The connectional church
 - The opportunity to put our faith into practice

Why am I still a lay leader?

- Continued call to session and presbytery service
- Commitment to our denomination
 - Identity
 - Faith formation
 - Call to justice and enacting God's preferential option for the poor
- The connectional church

Q & A

- What is something you heard that surprised you?
- Is there a responsibility that you didn't expect?
- What do you understand about your role?
- Where do you feel unsure about your role?
- How have you felt the Holy Spirit in your deliberations as a lay leader?
- How do you perceive the role and/or function of Elders/Session/Deacons/Pastoral staff?
- As an Elder or Deacon, how do you see yourself as a spiritual leader?