



Six Things a Congregation Can Do to Encourage a Culture of Call

1. Have the congregation's ordained leaders **tell the stories of their calls** to ministry in a public venue (i.e., the pulpit).
2. Highlight **ordained ministers who grew up in or came out of the congregation**. Raise the consciousness of the congregation regarding its history of cultivating pastoral leaders.
3. **Open up leadership roles** at all levels and in all endeavors in the church to high school, college and young adult members. Use these roles as means of identifying gifts and empowering lives for ministry. Keep in mind that to succeed in this young people need coaching and support when they are stretching themselves into new roles.
4. Do not refrain from **speaking to individual young men and women about their particular gifts for ministry** and about the possibility that God may be calling them to serve the church in word and sacrament. God may use you to spark a sense of call in a young person, but do not worry that your words will carry the weight (or pressure) of divine prophecy. Speak in terms of possibilities, not inevitabilities.
5. Ask those who work with young people to add "the call to ministry of word and sacrament" to the possible expressions of **response to powerful faith experiences** at summer camps, on mission trips and retreats and during other sacred experiences. For example, in confirmation classes say to the group, "It is possible that one or two of you may sense a call to become a pastor."
6. Begin setting aside an annual contribution by the congregation in **support of seminary education**. This lays the foundation for participation in the fellowship component of the Congregation-based Recruitment project and it raises the congregation's consciousness in regard to its responsibility to nurture the next generation of leaders for the Church.