



PARAGRAPHS FOR PARTNERS

2024 – Issue #1



From the Executive Minister
Rev. Dr. James Kelsey

The Least of These and Our Ministries The Parable of the Sheep & the Goats: Matthew 25:31-46

I have never been truly hungry or thirsty. I have never been an unwelcomed stranger in a strange land, nor have I been without proper clothing. When sick, I have always had people to care for me and health insurance to fund the treatment I needed. I have never been imprisoned and forgotten in my captivity.

I suspect many of us have not had these experiences. And few of us in our daily living interact with people who have experienced these challenges. If you are in contact with folks like this, you are in the right places.

In this parable in Matthew 25, Jesus assumes that the sheep, those who receive the blessing of God and will inherit the kingdom God is preparing, have had direct contact with the hungry and the thirsty, with the unwelcomed stranger and those without proper clothing, with the sick and the prisoner.

In a way, the privileged lives most of us live and our lack of contact with those at the margins of society can be a hindrance to living out the mission of Jesus and receiving the blessings of God.

I am not sentimentalizing or glorifying poverty and exclusion, want of basic necessities, and lack of healthcare. These are a failure of our society. Jesus knew, however, that these conditions would exist. He does not condone them; he simply acknowledges our inevitable failure to care for our fellow human beings, our refusal to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

When we imagine marginalized and excluded and impoverished people as a group, the Bible says we should care, but if we have no real experience of them or personal connection to them, then our appreciation of and engagement with God's ministry in the world is diminished.

Jesus said "the Kingdom of God is among you" (Luke 17:21) to some Pharisees who were wondering when the kingdom would come. Pharisees in the Gospels are not known for rubbing elbows with the marginalized and forgotten of their day. Jesus, on the other hand, spent a lot of time among those folks. In him the kingdom of God was loose in the world. The Pharisees were missing this because they were hanging out with the wrong people.

How would the ministry of our churches be invigorated, how would our own lives be enhanced, if we sought out the people that are forgotten and devalued in our world? Might we find Christ in a fresh and more immediate way?

The Kingdom of God is Spirit, but it manifests itself in caring for others, in particular, for those who are often denied the material things and attention their dignity as human beings demands. We will find the presence of Jesus in *those* people, in *their* places.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote:

Why did Christ heal the sick and suffering if he didn't consider such external conditions important? Why is the Kingdom of God equated with the deaf hear, the blind see?..And where do we get the incredible presumption to spiritualize these things that Christ saw and did very concretely? We must end this audacious, sanctimonious spiritualization of the gospel. Take it as it is, or hate it honestly.

Jesus is clear in his parable. If we wish to participate fully in the movement of the Kingdom of God among us, we must go to and move among the hungry and the thirsty, the unwelcomed foreigner and those without proper clothing, the incarcerated and the sick. In our day these categories may shift. We must look to those among us who are forgotten, unwelcomed, discriminated against, and denied what they need to live secure and healthy lives—whoever they might be in our day.

It is there where we will find the living presence of Christ. And isn't that whom we seek?

Blessings,
Jim Kelsey

CELEBRATIONS & CONCERNS: Roslyn “Dawn” Kohler, wife of Pastor William Kohler, FBC Owego (Broome-Tioga Association) died 10/14/23 * Amos Marsh, Pastor of Central BC Salt Point (Mid-Hudson/Union Association) died 12/3/23 * Mary Lou Graves (Certified Lay Pastor, Adirondack Association) died 6/2/23 * Jimmy Miller, husband of Rev. Carole Miller (Retired, Capital Area Association), died 12/30/23 * Rev. Robert Pierce (retired, Capital Area Association) died 11/7/23



ABCNYS reminds member churches to pray for one another, especially in times of pastoral transition. If your congregation wishes to invite ABCNYS to provide support to your church's search committee needs, please contact Rev. Jim Kelsey (315/863-7336, jkelsey@abc-nys.org).



LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Francis Cochran from McGrawville BC to Retirement 12/31/23
Gary George from Adams Village BC to Retirement 12/31/23
Denise Logan from United Ch of Marion 12/10/23
Andrew Johnson from Second BC Edmeston 11/14/23
Rodney Kennedy from Emmanuel-Friedens Ch 11/30/23
Ray Merritt to Interim, Sennett Fed Ch 12/1/23
Ivan Crossno from Cheektowaga Comm BC to Retirement 12/31/23
Linda Even from United Ch Fayetteville to Retirement 12/31/23
Daniel Ferritto from Chinese Christian Ch Albany 7/1/23
Barbara Jackson to Pastor, Westport Fed Ch 12/1 /23
Dennis Stack from Ischua Union Ch 12/31/23
Calvin Densmore from FBC Andover to Retirement
Ed Moore to Interim, Busti Fed Ch
Cedric Broughton to Interim, First United Ch Fulton 1/14/24
Carolyn Peeler from Macedonia BC Buffalo

THE 2024 EDITION OF THE NEW YORK BAPTIST ANNUAL WILL BE PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY. If you wish to receive a printed copy you must request it – complimentary for a church/pastor - others at a cost of \$6 per copy. Please use the form below (postal mailed to ABCNYS, 3218 James St., Syracuse NY 13206) or contact the Region office to request a printed copy of the 2024 Annual (315.863.7148, mschwarz@abc-nys.org). Thank you!

I would like to receive a printed copy of the 2024 New York Baptist Annual.

Name/Church _____

Address _____

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 19, 2024	-- ABCNYS Office Closed
February 25, 2024	-- Living Waters Association Spring Meeting
March 29, 2024	-- ABCNYS Office Closed
April 26-28, 2024	-- ABW Ministries & AB Girls NYS Annual Convention @ Corning Radisson Hotel, Corning
May 5, 2024	-- WEGO Association Spring Meeting
May 27, 2024	-- ABCNYS Office Closed
July 4, 2024	-- ABCNYS Office Closed
September 2, 2024	-- ABCNYS Office Closed
October 11&12, 2023	-- ABCNYS Biennial @ Tabernacle BC Utica

SAVE THE DATE!

The Biennial gathering of American Baptist Churches of New York State will be held this year on October 11th and 12th. Our host church is Tabernacle Baptist Church in Utica, NY. The planning committee is working diligently to provide a time of worship, fellowship, and service, as well as conducting the business of the Region. Please plan now to be a part of this wonderful gathering of our brothers and sisters from across the state.

See you this fall in Utica!

Leon Runner
Chairperson, Biennial Planning Committee

Dear fellow pastors and educators, and other interested folk!

ABCNYS Ministers Council is the place for you for fellowship with other pastors, for endearing friendships, and for wonderful events like the two very interesting ones listed below for 2024.



Mark these dates down now. There is **always reduced fees for members of Ministers Council.**

- 1.) **Ministers Enhancement Day:** “STRENGTHEN YOUR MINISTRY AND LIFE THROUGH COACHING,” led by MC member and life coach Jim Stone.
Where: Bethany Baptist Church, Syracuse,
When: Monday, April 15th, 9: 30 to 3:00 PM. See enclosed flyer and registration form.

- 2.) **Retreat** at Notre Dame Retreat Center in Canandaigua, from Sunday, September 22nd to Tuesday the 24th , with the Rev. Jim Stone
TOPIC: “Abiding in the Vine: Growing Good Fruit,” based on John 15. This is something you do not want to miss.
Details soon.

Blessed New Year and hope to hear from you soon.

Patricia Ludwig, ABCNYS Ministers Council President and Membership Manager
butterflypreacher@juno.com 716-433-0976 (h) or 716-266-5770 (c)

MINISTERS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP FORM FOR 2024

When you join (or renew), you belong to **both** the state and the national group!

Dues are only \$75.00, with \$50.00 staying with our chapter and \$25.00 going to national MC.

Join now and avoid the rush!

Checks made out to *ABCNYS Ministers Council*. Fill out the following and mail to treasurer: Rev. Cedric Broughton, 706 N. George, Street, Rome, NY 13440 (deadline is March 15th.)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY and ZIP _____

CHURCH and POSITION _____

PHONES (CH) _____

(H/CELL) _____

E Mail _____



The two-year theme for American Baptist Women's Ministries is "Be Strong, Be Courageous" based on Joshua 1:9.

The AB Women's Ministries New York State convention committee asked "How?" If you attend a church in this day and time, you'll find overcommitted and exhausted women trying their best to follow Jesus. So, how can we be strong and courageous without any energy to give more? We are so busy watering others that we don't take time to water ourselves. How are you watering yourself? How are you being refreshed and energized to be strong and courageous?

The committee decided it was time to take time for us! Unless we rejuvenate we will never be able to be strong and/or courageous.

Our theme for this year's 75th Anniversary celebration is: "Rejuvenate to Be Strong and Courageous". We have built time for reflection, relaxation and restoration into the normally busy weekend as we celebrate together our oneness in Christ. We are praying the AB women and ABGirls of New York State will take some time for themselves as we join together to become stronger and more courageous than they have felt for too long.

Our Bible study leader will be Melissa Esmeral from Metro NY. Our keynote speaker, Marie Monville, has a wonderful testimony of how God has worked to make her strong and courageous. Sunday worship message will be given by Rev. Cheryl Frank from Rochester/Genesee Region. We know you will be blessed by their time with us.

Save the date postcards have been mailed to many of our faithful women, but if you can't find yours the dates are: **April 26-28, 2024, at the Radisson Hotel in Corning, New York.**

Watch our webpage for the registration information. (abwm-nys.org) You will be able to register online or print off the registration form to mail to the registrar.

May God's blessings fill your New Year. See you in April. Don't forget – April showers bring May flowers. Come and be watered and refreshed.

Janese Knight and Lillian Cabral
Co-chairs of the 2024 Convention Committee, AB Women's Ministries NYS



Ministers Enhancement Day

*Thrive in Ministry & Life
Through Coaching*

April 15, 2024

Bethany Baptist Church

149 Beattie Street, Syracuse, NY 13224

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Registration at 9:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Jim Stone



Rev. Dr. Jim Stone is a Life and Leadership Coach with a passion for guiding, equipping, and encouraging pastors and leaders so that they can grow and thrive through abiding in Christ and being aligned with their God-given design, values and purpose.

Jim has served as a pastor in full-time and bi-vocational positions in churches ranging from small town to inner-city, including interracial and international congregations.

He was the Director of Mental Health of the Syracuse Rescue Mission and served as a chaplain in local hospitals, a youth detention center, and a psychiatric center. Jim has a M. Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and a D. Min. in Marriage & Family Ministry from Eastern Baptist (Palmer) Theological Seminary.

Jim's vision is for every pastor and leader to have the support of a coach *and* be equipped to lead and serve with a coaching mindset and approach. Coaching enables pastors, leaders and the people they serve to grow and flourish leading to deep, lasting impact in their lives, communities and the world.

Overview of Training Day Schedule:

- Introduction to coaching and coaching process.
- Benefits of and opportunities for being coached.
- Ways coaching fits in and enhances pastoral ministry.
- Training in basic coaching process and tools.
- Opportunities for further coach training

The cost of this event includes lunch:

\$65.00 – Ministers Council Member

\$85.00 – Non-Member

Please mail in the Registration form by April 5, 2024

Ministers Enhancement Day

Thrive in Ministry & Life Through Coaching

April 15, 2024

Bethany Baptist Church

149 Beattie Street, Syracuse, NY 13224

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Registration at 9:30 a.m

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

State/Zip _____

Minister Council Member YES NO

Member - \$65.00

Non-Member - \$85.00

Please Make Check Payable to: ABC/NYS Ministers Council

Mail to: Rev. Cedric A Broughton, 706 N. George St.. Rome, NY 13440



ABCNYS LAY STUDY PROGRAM SPRING COURSES 2024

Check out this link: <https://www.abc-nys.org/lay-study-program.html>

MINISTRY THROUGH THE SMALL CHURCH– STARTING APRIL 3, 2024

When: Wednesday evenings 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. – Online via Zoom.

Instructor: Rev. Steve Reynolds has served as a pastor within the American Baptist Churches for over 32 years and is currently a certified church consultant specializing in working with small churches. He received his MDiv from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in 1981. He is married and has two grown daughters, along with several grandchildren. consultingpastor@gmail.com

Textbook: Indispensable Guide for Smaller Churches by David Ray. Pilgrim Press. 2003.

WORSHIP – STARTING APRIL 1, 2024

When: Monday evenings 7:00 – 9:00 pm. - Online via Zoom.
(April 1st through June 17, no class on April 22 or May 27)

Instructor: Loueda (Lou) Bleiler has served in various worship settings including American Baptist, Episcopal, and Lutheran churches. She is the Minister of Music for the Odessa Baptist Church in Odessa, NY. As a music educator, she has taught at every level from pre-school through college. In 2023 she completed the Liberty University Doctor of Worship Studies program and is pleased to be sharing that experience with students in this course. lbleiler@gmail.com

Textbook: The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services by Constance Cherry. 2nd edition. (2021. Baker Academic.)

To Register: <https://www.abc-nys.org/lay-study-program.html>

Fees: The tuition is \$110 per course. For family members living in the same house, the course fee is \$110 for the first person and \$60 for each subsequent person. Students may audit a course, without credit, for \$60. The cost of the textbooks for each course is in addition to the tuition.

Questions: Rev. Leon Oaks-Lee (315.637.0023, leon.oakslee@gmail.com)



AN UPDATE ON REGION STAFF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the ABCNYS BOARD OF MISSION JANUARY 2024

Change is an inevitable part of life, whether one is a person or an organization. American Baptist Churches of NYS is a living organization founded August 29, 1807, changing, adapting, and responding to the world around it. Staff transitions have always been a part of that cycle of life.

Mary Schwarz began with the Region August 28, 1980, fresh out of Eastern College—now Eastern University. She has faithfully, competently, and energetically served our family of churches for 44 years. At the end of August 2024 Mary will retire to pursue the next chapter of life God has for her.

Things will feel different with her departure, but God will care for our Region and carry us into the future.

We have another retirement on the more distant horizon. Jim Kelsey began as Executive Minister in August of 2012. He has set a target retirement date of May 2025. There will be sufficient time between Mary's retirement and Jim's retirement to maintain stability of operations and ministry within our Region.

ABCNYS Board of Mission Executive Committee

Lecia Rodriguez	Claudia Little
Leon Runner	Pat Ludwig
Jim Harriff	Ken McKenzie
Bruce Aikin	William Stoklosa



Vick and Pathfinder Camp and Conference Ministries

Changes are happening with our camping ministries, and that is good!

CAMP VICK

Major repairs to the water system have been completed, and we are excited to be able to host Family Camping again in 2024. There has been some interest expressed in the caretaker position, but no one has been hired yet. Plans are in place to prepare and furnish the house as living space for the caretaker and as potential space for retreat groups. In the spring, the playground will be upgraded, and new recreational opportunities will be added. Come spend a weekend, or a week, at Camp Vick!

PATHFINDER

The Department of Health has approved the water system repairs needed at Pathfinder, so our volunteers will be able to complete them in the spring. We will enlist professional help to upgrade the septic system to operate fully as it was designed. There are numerous other carpentry and plumbing repairs to be done to maintain Pathfinder as a welcoming place. Watch for invitations to work weekends and join the crew.

PROGRAMS (at Pathfinder)

- Children's camp weeks will explore the theme, T.E.A.M: Together Everyone Achieves More, developed on the verse, "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." Ecclesiastes 4:12b.
- For those living or vacationing in the Cooperstown area, Pathfinder will be providing a Christian day camp experience July 7-August 30. Weekly sessions are only \$250, including lunch. Please spread the word about this camp.
- Have you ever wished that you could participate in all the fun that kids have at camp? New this year will be two intergenerational camp sessions, called Community Camp, with programming and activities for all ages. These are scheduled for July 7-9, and August 19-22. Regular family camping opportunities will still be available on the Fourth of July and Labor Day.
- And of course, there is the Spring Youth Retreat (May 17-19 at Pathfinder) – save the date

Would your church or group like to plan your own camp program? You can rent Pathfinder for a week (July 28-August 2) or for a few days. Our staff will provide waterfront activities, and meals if you wish.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

- "Let it Flow" is a volunteer fundraising campaign to support the numerous water needs at both sites. Emphasis in 2024 is to replace the bathrooms in Conklin Lodge. The goal is \$20,000 and we have raised more than 25% so far. Watch for ways to be involved.
- Be a volunteer! Do you like to cook? Are you a spiritual leader? Do you have medical skills? Could you mentor children as a cabin counselor? Spend a week at Pathfinder!
- Do you have maintenance skills? Plumbing or carpentry? Are you handy with a rake or a mop? Join a work day at either site!
- Do you know anyone who would like to work on staff this summer, especially lifeguards? Please encourage them to apply at Pathfinder.

Please follow the website, vpccministries.org for updates and complete schedules. Or contact me at vpccministries@gmail.com. I love to talk about our camps!

Above all else, please pray God's blessings for our Christian camping ministries.

Marilyn Malone
VPCCMinistries, Interim CEO

AMERICAN BAPTIST
MISSION SUPPORT

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES
OF NEW YORK STATE
THROUGH DECEMBER 2023 & 2022

	United Mission	Annual Offerings	Institutions, Specifics & Targeted	Total ABMS
Received 2023	136,805	180,787	155,229	472,821
Received 2022	152,620	185,307	127,516	465,443
\$ Ahead (Behind)	(15,815)	(4,520)	27,713	7,378
% Ahead (Behind)	(10.36)	(2.44)	21.73	1.59

GROWTH POINTS

With Gary L. McIntosh, D.Min., Ph.D.

What is Your Limfac?

The military is fond of abbreviations. They have a term for a situation, element, or factor that is holding a person or organization back — *limfac* — i.e., limiting factor.

People and organizations have *limfacs*. What *limfacs* are holding your church back from growth?

The following are some of the major *limfacs* found in non-growing churches (listed in no particular order).

Which ones can you see in your own church?

Limfac #1: Ingrown Perspective

Some churches think only about themselves. Their rationale is that the church is for believers, therefore, it shouldn't be expected that unchurched people would attend. All of the programs, plans, and goals are based on what the people already in church desire. Little to no thought is given to how to prepared for, welcome, and keep new people.

Limfac #2: Non-growth Excuses

Commonly heard in churches lacking growth are statements like, “No one’s interested in attending church anymore.” Or, “People don’t want to listen to the Word of God any longer.” Or, “We may not be growing, but we’re faithful.” There are lots of excuses for non-growth, but no good ones.

Limfac #3: Inadequate Location

A church’s physical location has a great deal to do with its growth potential. While some churches in a poor location grow, a good location provides more opportunity for growth. The old statement among real estate sales people is true: It’s all about Location, Location, Location.

Limfac #4: Limited Space

Lack of space is a key *limfac* for many churches. The three main areas of concern are parking, seating, and childcare.

Parking — A growing church needs a minimum of 1 parking space per 2 people of all ages.

Seating — A growing church needs a worship space that is 30-40% larger than it thinks it needs. On normal Sundays worship seating fills up to only 70% capacity. Thus, a church of 150 worshipers needs a seating capacity of 215 seats.

Childcare — A growing church needs childcare space adequate for 25% to 50% of adult attendance. This, of course, depends on the age makeup of the congregation. But, a church of 250 adults will need childcare space for 60-125 children birth through high school.

Essential Key: The three areas of parking, seating, and childcare must be in balance. They work together for growth or against growth. People must be able to park or they can't come into the building. But once in the building they must be able to sit and children must have a place to reside. Anyone of these three factors can be a *limfac*.

Limfac #5: Acreage

As a general rule, churches grow to match the acreage on which their church sits. Most churches grow to a ratio of 100 people to each acre of

land the church facilities occupy. Thus, a church with 1.5 acres of land grows to 150 people and a church with five acres of land grows to 500 people, etc.

Limfac #6: Paucity of Prayer

Churches grow that pray for growth. A church may teach about prayer, preach about prayer, and talk about prayer. But, how many people are praying? The minimum rule is a growing church needs 10% of it's people praying for growth, praying for newcomers, praying for salvations. Thus a church of 100 needs at least 10 people interceding for growth.

Limfac #7: Absence of Evangelism

A growing church focuses 10% of its total financial budget toward outreach and evangelism in it's own community. The money goes to training, advertising, and events to draw non-believers to hear the gospel of salvation.

Which of these do you see in your church? Pick one or two and begin to eliminate the *limfacs* this year.



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GROWTH POINTS

With Gary L. McIntosh, D.Min., Ph.D.

Turning a Church Around: An Ignored Aspect

Everyone knows local churches are struggling. Worship attendance is down, volunteers are difficult to find, and leaders are worn out.

It's clear! Revitalization, even resurrection, is needed. Turnaround is a watchword for today.

Scripture doesn't use the word "turnaround." Biblical writers speak of repentance rather than turnaround.

The Hebrew word for repentance (*shub*) means "To turn or return." It is used in one of the best known passages of Scripture — 2 Chronicles 7:14:

"If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn (*shub*) from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

While we tend to quote this passage when talking about the necessity of a nation turning back to God, there is an

application to local churches that is often missed or ignored.

Hebrew scholar, Walter C Kaiser, says, "The Hebrew word 'to turn or repent' is pronounced *shuv*. And in every one of the 118 instances where the word occurs with a religious significance, God was trying to give His people a *shove* in the right direction" (*Quest for Renewal*, page 103).

In "Clean Out the Sludge: A Theology of Turnaround," Gordon MacDonald writes, "Maybe this is where real turnarounds have to start: with leaders and people bowed low, in silence, listening to Jesus" (*Leadership*, Fall 2005).

It's a sobering thought to think of a church needing to repent. Churches do good, right? Churches assist the poor, right? Churches help society, right?

I'm certain many (perhaps most) church leaders shudder to consider the church they lead has corporately sinned. But, it's a necessary place to start when seeking to turn a church around.

Serious Questions

Consider the following questions that might point to a need for repentance by your church.

1. Has the church lived a selfish existence focused primarily on itself with no outreach to the lost in the community around it?
2. Does the church have an unteachable and unresponsive attitude to missional ministry?
3. Has the church experienced one or more splits in the past that are unreconciled?
4. Did the church fire a pastor (or pastors) without cause in the past?
5. Does the church have a spirit of bitterness, anger, or resentment?

Of course, there are other signs that point to a need for turnaround in a local church. These, however, are typical ones found in numerous declining or plateaued churches.

If you answered yes to any of these questions, your church needs a turnaround.

Try These Ideas

First, gather your church board or leaders together for a day or weekend of prayer.

Second, ask each person to spend thirty minutes reflecting on their own walk with Christ, admitting and confessing any known sin in their own life (1 John 1:9).

Third, ask the leaders to name any spiritual barriers that might be holding your church back from being all that God wants it to be. Write their ideas on a board so all can see them.

Fourth, take the items you list and pray for them one at a time, confessing the church's complicity, and asking God's forgiveness (Nehemiah 1:4-10).

Fifth, make amends or reconciliation with others as possible.

These steps will help you "clean out the sludge," as Macdonald suggests. And, it will get you on the path to turning around your church.



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GROWTH POINTS

With Gary L. McIntosh, D.Min., Ph.D.

Get More Done This Year!

January engenders dreams of “getting more done this year.” Not a bad idea, of course. But, how does one get more done?

Peter F. Drucker, who spent over sixty years studying effective executives, found leaders don’t start with their tasks or with their plans. Instead, they start with their time.

Three Step Process

Drucker discovered those who manage their time well follow a three-step process.

Step #1: Record Time.

Most leaders tend to guess where their time is spent. Since most leaders are well educated, they trust their memories to recall where time was well-used

and mis-used. The problem comes when a leader’s memory of their time usage is compared against real time use records. In almost every case, a leader’s memory is wrong.

Most leaders recall their use of time as they aspired it to be, rather than how it actually was.

Thus, the first step in managing one’s time is to find out where time really goes. And, the best way to do that is to record actual time use for a full week twice a year, i.e. one week every six months. Every six months is crucial, since leaders all drift into wasting time on trivia.

The way you log your time usage doesn’t matter, but it’s important to do it in real time, i.e., when time is spent, and not from memory later on.

Step #2: Manage Time.

Once you know where your time is going, the next step is to analyze your results and rework your schedule. This requires the following.

First, identify and eliminate what you don't need to do at all. Some things are a waste of time. Time wasters don't bring any results to your work. For example, some meetings, phone calls, online chats, Internet searches, etc. The key question to ask is "What would have happened if I didn't do this at all?" If the answer is nothing would happen, then, if possible, stop doing it.

Second, identify and hand off those things that others can do. This is not delegation, for delegation implies you'll follow-up with others. It's determining how many things you do that others can do just as well. This is getting rid of things others can do without your supervision or follow-up.

Third, identify how you waste the time of others. Ask others, "What do I do that makes you less productive?" Or, "How do I waste your time?"

One common answer is too many meetings, or its counterpart, meetings that last too long, or its companion, meetings with no apparent agenda. Keep this rule in mind: no agenda; no meeting.

Step #3: Consolidate Time.

Utilize time in blocks for things you must do. Large chunks of time are always more productive than small bits of time. For example, an entire day blocked out for sermon preparation is more productive than two-hours a day for five days.

Determine the two or three things you must do and block out time for each. Put all your counseling appointments on one day of the week. Schedule all meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays, etc.

You CAN get more done this year.

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