

Philosophy of Ministry

Role of the Pastor (Personal Vision for EM)

Aforementioned, the role of the pastor I believe is to empower the people/ congregation to live a Christ-centered life. Here in this section, it is not my intention to comprehensively list all the responsibilities of a pastor. There are many details that a pastor must be responsible for, however, it is my objective to articulate the purpose of the pastor in light of Vision for the English Ministry.

- ?? Empower People with Distinct Vision for the Ministry: Jesus is the head of the Church and the pastor is the primary leader of the local church. Sometimes the congregation is confused about their roles, which can become messy in church. As the primary leader of the church, it is the pastor's responsibility to lead the local church to the vision God has communicated to him. In this I believe that the secondary leaders (elders, deacons, etc.) must be submissive to the pastor. Submission does not mean dominance in practice of politics, or blindly following. It simply means respecting the decision of the pastor regardless of their possible personal differences. When the congregation takes away this privilege, they are stripping the pastor of confidence and competence.
- ?? Empower the Leaders to Lead: Pastor must be involved in developing leadership within the congregation. I believe in team ministry not only with other pastors, but sharing ministry with lay leaders. Leadership development means recognizing, training and encouraging people to become leaders of the church who will take ownership and become effective in leading others to become Disciples of Christ. I believe in small groups. It is the most important ingredient of English Ministry specifically, because Korean-Americans living in US desperately need the sense of community and meaningful relationships. And because of my firm belief in small groups, I must invest my time in developing the leaders who can oversee the small groups effectively.
- ?? Empower by Teaching the Word of God: It is my intention to disciple willing members aside from leadership meetings. I personally enjoy teaching the word of God and if at all possible, I will continue to do so in a discipleship group setting. I am personally challenged to be a life-long student of the Word of God, and this will be a great opportunity to continue to learn. I believe in an interdependent church model (coexistence for the purpose of maximizing our resources, effective ministry, etc.) between KM (Korean speaking Ministry) and EM (English speaking Ministry). We have an obligation to continue the legacy of our faith, which started with the 1st generation, and we have an obligation to disciple the next generation of Korean-Americans. In doing this, we must be sensitive so that we can attract other ethnic groups to the congregation.
- ?? Empower by Preaching the Word of God: This is the most important responsibility of the pastor. He must pray, study, meditate, exegete, prepare and deliver the message of God's Word. He must communicate to the congregation relevantly, with conviction and passion so that people will learn to live Christ-centered lives. I believe in expository preaching; not preaching my agenda or even a topical agenda. What God has to say not only to the congregation, but also to me has tremendous implications. This must be the focus of our worship service, and it must also be the guiding light in our lives.

In conclusion, I firmly believe that God has a specific vision for English Ministry. Personally, as 1.5 generation, I see this dire need somewhat more clearly than others. We are at the brink of 2nd generation becoming a majority compared to our fading 1st generation. With less Koreans immigrating to the US, the possibility and necessity of EM to take charge is no longer a mirage. More importantly, being involved in Christian Education for so long, I realize the essential role EM plays in the Christian education of our next generation. We have a unique role as EM to bridge the gap and to empower those whom we serve for the clear purpose of building God's kingdom. For this purpose, I will endure. I will persevere. I can empathize with the words of Lance Armstrong who wrote in his book, *Every Second Counts*, "Pain is temporary, but quitting lasts forever."