

Discussion Questions for Lay Leader Rally as relates to the “Five Areas of Focus.”

- 1) **Healthy Congregations:** Book Of Discipline, ¶ 201. *Definition of a local church*—The local church provides the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs. It is a community of true believers under the Lordship of Christ. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by persons divinely called and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ’s own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit, the church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers, and the redemption of the world. ¶ 204. *Care of Members* - Each local church shall have a definite evangelistic, nurture, and witness responsibility for its members and the surrounding area and a missional outreach responsibility to the local and global community. It shall be responsible for ministering to all its members, wherever they live, and for people who choose it as their church.
 - a) What makes a healthy Congregation?
 - b) What are the characteristics of a Healthy Congregation
 - c) How Healthy is your church congregation?
- 2) **Effective Leaders:** from the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶ 251. *Duties of Leaders and Members*—1. Out of the professing membership of each local church (¶ 128), there shall be elected by the charge conference a lay leader who shall function as the primary lay representative of the laity in that local church and shall have the following responsibilities:
 - a) fostering awareness of the role of laity both within the congregation and through their ministries in the home, workplace, community, and world, and finding ways within the community of faith to recognize all these ministries;
 - b) meeting regularly with the pastor to discuss the state of the church and the needs for ministry;
 - c) membership in the charge conference and all committees where along with the pastor the lay leader shall serve as an interpreter of the actions and programs of the annual conference and the General Conference. It is recommended that the lay leader may also serve as the lay member to annual conference.
 - d) continuing involvement in study and training opportunities to develop a growing understanding of the Church’s reason for existence and the types of ministry that will most effectively fulfill the church’s mission;
 - e) assisting in advising the church council of opportunities available and the needs expressed for a more effective ministry of the church through its laity in the community;
 - f) informing the laity of training opportunities provided by the annual conference and/or district. Where possible, the lay leader shall attend training opportunities in order to strengthen his or her work. The lay leader is urged to become a certified lay servant.

- 3) **Congregations For Children (C4C):** Congregations for Children is a statewide initiative of the United Methodist Church focused on reflecting the love of Christ to our neighbors by helping children in public schools who are living in poverty through:
- Enhancing k-3 literacy skills
 - Providing the 4 basic needs
 - Increasing parent involvement and interaction with Positive Adult Role models
 - Advocating for community and governmental support of Public Education

How is your church involved in C4C?

- 4) **Dismantling Racism:** (*Ask* If Donald W. could play this video for the #4 area of focus:

<https://nccumc.org/anti-racism/>

- Being equipped, getting to work, and offering witness to the work. Disciples intentionally learn and grow toward anti-racist healing. **Scripture references:** **[John 13:34](#); [Acts 10:34-35](#)** (taken from the video intro)
- Have you taken the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)?
<https://www.idinventory.com> The Intercultural Development (IDI) is a widely used and effective cross-culturally valid assessment for building cultural competence.
- Name places in your local church where you are involved in dismantling racism.

- 5) **Unity:**

- Read Ephesus 4:1-6 (*Unity in the Body of Christ*) *As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the **unity** of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

What does unity look like in your local church?

- Read Luke 4:18-19; *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

How are you living this vow as a lay leader?