

initiative for ministerial excellence

Initiative for Ministerial Excellence

The Initiative provides support and nurture for three historic tasks of ministry: proclamation, worship leadership and caring for community. Additionally, the Initiative seeks to support and nurture the ministerial virtues of vision, imagination, discernment and relationship through a Ministerial Residency Program, Peer Learning Groups and by encouraging churches to provide continuing education opportunities and sabbaticals for its ministers.

Peer Learning Groups

Peer learning groups are small communities of CBF ministers who meet monthly to provide opportunities for worship, spiritual growth, study, discussion of ministry-related issues and fellowship. Groups are small, generally with 10-14 members.

Each group is led by a convener trained by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The convener and group members determine the focus of each month's gathering. The Fellowship provides the groups with suggested resources related to promoting pastoral excellence and congregational health.

There are currently over 90 peer learning groups with over 800 Fellowship ministers participating. These groups are spread throughout the eastern, central and western United States.

Beginning a Peer Learning Group

- The purpose of a PLG is for participants to enjoy a balance of friendship and shared learning through regular meetings, retreats, conferences, fellowship, etc.
- Meeting content may include discussion, presentations, book studies, sharing a meal, etc. Let your imagination be your guide!
- The convener is asked to share a one-page proposal outlining the intended focus of the group and is given a budget up to \$1,000. Included in the proposal should be issues the group hopes to address and the desired outcomes (results, goals) for the group (or as determined by the group).
- Proposals should be emailed to Mary McCoy at mmccoy@thefellowship.info and their regional coordinator.

The expectation is that the content and focus be self-determined by those in the groups – in other words we're not going to tell you what to study or discuss, but we hope to be resource-full when you want ideas. We hope that mutual trust, encouragement and support will be byproducts of shared learning. You're part of a growing movement in the Fellowship as there are more than 90 clergy peer groups functioning across the CBF constituency.

The convener's role is to contact potential participants and facilitate the meetings. Some minimal reporting from you is necessary so that we can report to the Lilly Endowment, Inc. what we are learning about sustaining ministerial excellence through our Initiative. You are responsible for sharing with the regional coordinator some highlights from your meetings, the major themes discussed, resources used, and who attends. A meeting report form is included in this resource that you may choose to use for reporting or a couple of paragraphs in an email is also sufficient. Also, please ask your members to

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complete a member information form and return those to Mary McCoy via email or hard copies by snail mail.

There are regional coordinators for the east, central and west regions. His or her role, generally, is to serve as a resource to the conveners as they establish and develop the groups. These coordinators also report back to the IME team what resources groups are utilizing, what they're learning, how they are developing and issues for which CBF can be a better resource to clergy.

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The Goal

The goal of the Initiative for Ministerial Excellence is to influence the culture of CBF, providing an environment which leads to healthier pastors who embody ministerial excellence. The Initiative provides support and nurture for three historic tasks of ministry: proclamation, worship leadership and caring for community. Additionally, the Initiative seeks to support and nurture the ministerial virtues of vision, imagination, discernment and relationship.

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- The convener is asked to share a **1-page proposal** outlining the intended focus of the group and a budget up to \$1,000. Included in the proposal should be **issues** the group hopes to address and the desired outcomes (results, goals) for the group (or as determined by the group).
- Proposals should be returned to Mary McCoy at mmccoy@thefellowship.info and Bill Bruster at bbruster@thefellowship.info.

The expectation is that the content and focus be self-driven by those in the groups – in other words we're not going to tell you what to study or discuss, but we hope to be resource-full when you want ideas. We hope that mutual trust, encouragement and support will be bi-products of shared learning. You're part of a growing movement in the Fellowship as there are more than 80 clergy peer groups functioning across the CBF constituency.

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discussed, resources used, and who attends. A **meeting report form** is attached that you may choose to use for reporting or a couple of paragraphs in an email is also sufficient. Also, please ask your members to complete a **Member Information Form** and return those to Mary McCoy via email or hard copies by snail mail.

Bill Bruster serves as the "Regional Coordinator" for MO, TX, OK, LA, KS, IL, and AR. His role, generally, is to serve as a resource to the conveners as they establish and develop the groups. He also reports back to the IME team what resources groups are utilizing, what they're learning, how they are developing and issues for which CBF can be a better resource to clergy.

Proposal for funding of Peer Learning Group
_____, Convener

In 2007 our Peer Learning Group (PLG) is focused on collegial support, resource sharing, and continuing education. Our group consists of five members:

Each of us has responsibilities in the local church in the area of student ministry. We have identified two issues of importance for our PLG as well as corresponding plans to explore and address the issues.

Ministerial Identity

- Where does ministerial identity originate
- How is it evolving for us as individuals

We will consider ministerial identity in our monthly meetings through conversation and through review of insights offered in Off Road Disciplines by Earl Crep. It is anticipated that this book will challenge us with fresh perspectives on examining who we are as individuals, our motives for being in ministry, and the authenticity of our personal faith. Guided by the leadership of the Spirit, we expect that it will lead to an increased grounding in our individual callings.

Ministry Framework

- What structures frame and support our ministries
- Goal and objective setting in ministry

Through guided conversations each month we will explore the structures, both institutional and self imposed, in and through which we minister. This exploration will lead to a better understanding of how our structures influence the level of effectiveness and fulfillment we achieve in our places of service.

We will participate in a two day retreat where we consider the impact of setting ministry goals and objectives. Relying on the experience of the group members, we will hear what role goals and objectives have played in our various ministry settings. The retreat will also include individual presentations of current ministry goals and objectives of group members as well as time for feedback intended to further inform and shape goals and objectives.

Budget Proposal

Monthly meals: \$420

Retreat expenses: \$450

Books: \$130

Total: \$1,000

Member Information Form
Peer Learning Groups
CBF Initiative for Ministerial Excellence

Name _____

Group Convener's Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

This is my home address This is my business address

Telephone (day) (____) _____ - _____ (evening) (____) _____ - _____

Email _____

Date of birth ____/____/____ Date of ordination ____/____/____

Name of College _____ Degree _____ Year _____

Name of Seminary _____ Degree _____ Year _____

Post Graduate School _____ Degree _____ Year _____

Congregation/Agency Where You Work _____ City _____ ST _____

Size of Congregation (in terms of average worship attendance at "main" services) _____

How long have you served with this congregation/agency? _____

Is your church a participating congregation with CBF? Yes No

If so, how? (Check all that apply):

CBF is in our budget

We collect for CBF's Offering for Global Missions

Members can designate where their contributions go

Information from this form will be entered into the database of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

CBF Initiative for Ministerial Excellence Peer Learning Group Meeting Report

Convener Name –

- **Meeting date and location**
- **Number of attendees**
- **Topic of Focus of the Meeting**
Underline as many as are applicable then briefly describe:
 - Spiritual growth
 - Bible study
 - Theological reflection
 - Ministerial competencies
 - Ministerial support
 - Other
- **Brief Summary of Activities in the Meeting**
Underline as many as are applicable and briefly describe:
 - Book review
 - Discussion
 - Lecture
 - Personal sharing
 - Worship
 - Bible study
- **What did the group create/generate/learn?**
- **What meaningful event, conversation, sharing happened that you can share with the IME staff?**
- **Any special needs?**