

Years ago, I was a young pastor of 27-years-old in my first church. I attended pastors' meetings and thought that the other pastors looked and acted old and stuffy and dry. Now I'm the pastor who looks old and acts stuffy and dry. It all happened so fast.

Along the way, I'm still trying to learn some good lessons, most of them the hard way.

1. Spend as much time as you can in ministry doing what you love to do and as little time as possible doing those activities and responsibilities that you don't like to do.
A pastor friend was feeling burned out and ready to quit the ministry. He seemed to be running to a church meeting almost every night of the week. What he loved to do was visitation. We talked about ways he could spend less time at meetings and more time visiting with people. We will have to do a number of ministry tasks we don't enjoy. If we really can't stand them, the challenge is to find a different way to get them done. But let's invest the bulk of our time and energy in doing what we love to do.
2. Enjoy and be patient with both the Lord and His people.
The Lord works in His timing. I want to see people saved, discipled and serving now. I want change now. The Lord takes a longer view. Pastors serve a church for a short period of its existence. Long time members and attendees have seen pastors come and go. Even when it does not match our time-table, we can learn to appreciate these faithful saints and what the Lord is doing in their midst.

I have taken the call to pastor churches where at least a few of the people were not convinced I was the right person for the job. This created friction and conflict in the short term. But after years of ministry together, most of those who questioned my fitness became friends and supporters. People are more important than goals. Love God and love His people.



3. Spend time with your church leaders and up-and-coming leaders.
One way to do it is to set up a rotating schedule to meet with one of them each week over breakfast or lunch to talk and pray. It will build bonds that sustain us through challenges and disagreements.
4. Laugh, a lot, every day, even on Sundays.

***A cheerful heart is
good medicine.***

On that note, here is a joke:

Three pastors and their wives died and went to heaven. St. Peter met them at the pearly gates.

To the Episcopal couple he said, "You loved money so much, you called your wife 'Penny.' I can't let you in."

To the Lutheran couple he said, "You loved food so much, you called your wife 'Candy.' I can't let you in."

Hearing this, the Baptist pastor leaned over to his wife and whispered, "It doesn't look good for us, Fanny."

-Pastor Wade Duroe
Crossroads Church, Chippewa Falls, WI