

The Heart of the D.S.

This section known as “From the Heart of The D.S” is a blog where we come to learn what is it that’s in the D.S.’s heart and mind.

A Contention of Sense and Faith



BY REV. ALPHER SYLVESTER
District Superintendent, Connecticut



Grace and Peace be unto you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The demands of the appointment making season could be somewhat intense; juggling several meetings while living into the responsibility of this call could demand so much of your attention to the point where you fail to be thankful for the things God is doing for us and in our midst. To that end, I find that I must be intentional in naming the things that I am most thankful for. I thank God for leaders that are willing to give of themselves and lead besides me. I am thankful for a district that is not afraid to love unconditionally and for individuals who are bold enough to live out their faith together in spite of their differences.

Leaders = Team Players

The leaders that leads besides me functions as team player among our district clergies. They are sacrificial in utilizing their exceptional gifts and graces to the building up of the Body of Jesus Christ. They continue to exhibit the ability to infuse life, stimulate growth and to be forward thinking. They are visionaries but pliable enough to assume a supportive role in ministry so as to assure the success of our churches and worshipping communities. Their commitment to critical thinking and analysis sets them aside as a blessing to the church in this modern era. Could you join with me to celebrate their ministry among us and to pray that God will continue to sharpen their skills and heighten the immanent leadership potentials that are yet to be fully tapped and utilized to advance the body of Christ through them; for their leadership and their guidance, I am truly thankful.

I am also thankful for the leadership teams that I have met and able to interact with at our local churches. I have found that there are commonalities in their dedication to ministry,

their professionalism and desire to see the best for their communities and their church. Lewis Center for churches defines those qualities in local leaders that assures success; they are: Understanding their proper role in the church; functioning according to Biblical and disciplinary standards; they have high emotional intelligence (EQ); they don't bully and refuses to be bullied; others recognize their integrity; they act. I have found that most of our churches are led by you – leaders that possess these characteristic and for that I am thankful.

Maintaining a Positive Image of You or Your Community

Our district demonstrates an incredible ability to love in spite of the difficulties that confronts our denomination. In a recent missive, I

defined and celebrated that love we share. I celebrate you as a committed people that loves God and each other. This is demonstrated by your deep commitment to your church and community. The

giving of your time, talents and tithes paint a portrait of a selfless people committed to mission and providing service to the least of these. I want to challenge you to protect this portrait of yourself. Repel any negative voice or indication that suggests otherwise. One of my mentors suggests that, in the face of adversity and turbulent times that we exist in, retention of a positive image of yourself or worshipping community is mission critical to personal effectiveness and

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success in ministry. That mentor suggests that there are three ways to protect that positive image of you or your community: a) seize the moments to celebrate your personal experiences and the work of God in your midst. B) Learn from other people's successes and failures through reading, observation, hearing and listening; don't repeat it, best it! c) Work on yourself and your community to be better in increasing membership, attendance, profession of faith, baptism, confirmation and your shared commitment to stewardship. I am thankful for the evidence of this love and the potential to live into it as a district.

Christian Responsibility = Coexist Despite the Differences

I am thankful for individuals who are bold enough to live out their faith together in spite of their differences. In appointment making there are two significant steps; there is an intake and later an introduction of the appointed pastor. Recently, at an intake, a group of leaders empathically stated that within their community they find themselves to be of different mind theologically and ideologically. They attest that sometimes it's painful for them to see eye to eye on issues but they like it that way. They pleaded that anyone that the Bishop and the cabinet sends cannot try to change them but journey with them to live out their Christianity to the glory of God. This is a reoccurring theme that I hear as a DS. It is an attestation

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of the heart of most! We are different but have the ability to coexist and to live out our Christianity responsible to our God.

Stronger Together

Lastly, I must reiterate part of a missive that I wrote in prior communications. Our district is embracing a challenge to live into the Methodist DNA of **“Connectionisms”** and the **“power of the Laity.”** We are stronger together in spite of our differences. Together, we are building a stronger link that empowers laity, clergy and retirees to live out a vision of shared ministry responsibility. We are aligning local best practices and resources that will assist us to answer the question “How do we do ministry?” where the laity takes ownership for making disciples, assuring discipleship and

investing in each other lives. Clergy assumes the role of “resourcing chief,” where we glean from the wisdom and experience of our clergy retirees and find effectual and creative medium to impart that information to our people in the pews. I am celebrating the power of our district strategic teams where we are aligning geographically to address and alleviate some of our ministry challenges. I am celebrating leaders that are emerging and seizing the opportunity to advance God's kingdom, equip God's people and using their gifts and graces, positioning to take back the land and reclaim our Methodist identity. I am celebrating a district on the move, powered by its people, dependent on their God. Our possibilities are interminable! Today, the “T” shirt that was given to you speak to our commitment to these ideals. It emphasizes “#Collaborative Ministry in CT, 2019-2020.” This “T” shirt affirms my thankfulness for you and my hope that we could use our Methodist DNA to strengthen our connection and build up ministry to the glory of God and the building up of the kingdom.