Theology of Ministry Paper

One of the key elements of effective ministry on the part of the pastoral leader is a clear theological vision for ministry. Religious leaders with a well developed theology for ministry will be better able to lead faith communities to articulate a faith foundation for all they do. Religious leaders who do not have a well developed theology of ministry risk drifting from the central tasks of equipping disciples of Jesus Christ for effective ministry and working for justice in the world.

This paper is designed to pull together the resources and experiences of your seminary journey thus far and allow you to articulate your current theology of ministry. Knowledge gained from your supervised ministry setting and all of your coursework to date in pastoral theology, church history, theology, ethics, and biblical studies should be integrated into each section of the paper. Please study the attached grading rubric that your instructors will use to grade the papers.

Note: Two copies of the paper should be turned in to your instructor.

In 10-12 page single-spaced pages, address the following five areas:

1. Pastoral Identity (2-3 pages)
   a. How do you perceive your gifts, your motives, your role, your likes and dislikes as a minister after serving in your supervised ministry setting?
   b. Describe one specific event, relationship or experience (can be positive or challenging) from your supervised ministry setting that helped you to better understand what a minister is and does. Relate this to biblical, theological or historical resources.

2. Nature and Mission of the Church (2-3 pages)
   a. What is the nature and mission of the church / community of faith in the world? How did your supervised ministry experience affirm or challenge your definition of the church?
   b. Who belongs in the church and why? Integrate your supervised ministry experience into your answer and cite biblical, theological or historical resources.

3. Activity of God in the Church and World (2-3 pages)
   a. When and how did you see God in your supervised ministry experience? How did your ministry experience complement or challenge your biblical/theological understanding of God’s character and activity? Be specific.
   b. How has your understanding of the life and work of Jesus Christ and the activity of the holy spirit impacted or been challenged by the community of faith in which you have served?

4. Your Vision for Future Ministry (2-3 pages)
   a. How has your understanding of ministry been changed or challenged this year?
   b. If you were able to describe how and in what kind of community you hope to minister in the future—assuming you have access to adequate resources—what will be the character of the community and how will you lead? Integrate what you have learned about your pastoral leadership strengths and your use of pastoral power and authority.

5. Going Forward (1 page)
   a. Having looked forward and articulated your vision for future ministry, how can you best prepare to live into that vision? What classes will you take? What experiences (CPE, counseling, additional internships or training) do you need to pursue? How will you care for yourself?
   b. What is your action plan for the next two years? Be specific.