

THIS IS ONEIDA THE ONEIDA PASTORS' CONFERENCE

One of my memories of growing up at Oneida involved visitors on our campus for the Mountain Mission Conference. While I wasn't at all involved in that conference, I remember scores of people appearing on our campus for a week or so in the summer. I sometimes wondered who all those people were and why they would come to Oneida every summer. I now know who those people were. They were pastors and their families, and I am guessing they came to our campus to have their spirits fed, to spend time with their families, and for rest and relaxation. Many of them also came because they knew and loved Oneida.

Unless someone has been a pastor, he or she can't quite understand the challenges pastors face. A pastor is often expected to be CEO, CFO, head of maintenance, confidant, friend, teacher, bus driver, and on call 24 hours a day. It's hard to describe to folks, but preaching is emotionally, physically, and spiritually exhausting. I remember from my pastoring days simply wanting to crash on Sunday afternoons.

Perhaps some pastors stay too long, but too many pastors leave churches too soon. Pastors should leave when the Lord leads them to do so, not because they are upset or because someone is upset with them. There are many reasons for this alarming rate of turnover, but I believe part of the reason is that too many pastors don't take the time to feed themselves and also make their families a priority. In my role here at Oneida, I feel as though I am, in some ways, pastor of a large, extended church -- that church being the fine Christian folks all across Kentucky who help us do what we do and also our many students and staff. I have been very intentional in making sure my first ministry is to my family, but Oneida is nearly a 24/7 job. Much like a pastor, I am always on call, even when I am off the clock.

Over the past three years, I have received many questions and comments about that Mountain Mission Conference, and we now plan to host The Oneida Pastor's Conference this coming summer. The dates are July 24-26, 2017. We want pastors and their families to come and be blessed. We will have some great speakers and will provide lodging, meals, and recreation free of charge. We plan to house our guests for the conference in our brand new Carnahan-Daugherty Hall. We simply want to say thank you to our pastor friends and their families who do so much for so many.

You will hear and receive more details later on, but for now mark this date on your calendar and plan to come and be blessed at The Oneida Pastor's Conference – July 24-26, 2017.



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OBI President**

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