

Guidelines for Sermon Feedback

Immediate feedback is a good way to learn. Therefore we recommend that the Supervisor and Lay Committee offer feedback that helps the student to improve their skills of preaching. The lay perspective feedback should be helpful, purposeful statements that are geared to improve the student's delivery and preparation for sermons. Students most learn to pay attention to process, internal and external, and to listen to how we are heard (over against how we intended to be heard). Below are ways to give and receive input into the ongoing

1. See whether you can identify the purpose of the sermon
2. Are you able to identify the organization, structure, and movements (transitions) in the sermon?
3. Where did you hear the Gospel?
4. Was the message faithful to the text (i.e., did the person preach a sermon that honored the text or did they use the text as a "jumping off point" to say what they wanted to say)
5. What metaphor really captured your imagination?
6. Was there an example that made the sermon come live?
7. Was there pastoral sensitivity (did you believe the preacher showed care for the congregation's concerns)?
8. Was there prophetic intensity (did you believe the speaker showed passion for the message of justice, peace, hope, and redemption)?
9. Did the preacher deliver the sermon with confidence?
10. Did the preacher's bodily presence "say" the same thing as the message (as in, was the person fidgeting or not sure what to do with her or his hands, avoiding eye contact)?

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Try to be helpful/not hurtful

Avoid saying "great," "best," "excellent," "good," "bad," "poor"

Begin sentences: "It would have helped me if..."; "I appreciated..."; "The sermon was...."

Exercise Christian generosity (speak the truth in love)

Give HELPFUL information (information that allows the person to improve or to celebrate)

Give SPECIFIC examples from the sermon

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For the students: when receiving feedback, DO NOT DEFEND YOURSELF during this learning process; maintain a spirit of humility and teach-ability

Dr. Valerie Bridgeman
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