

# Interim Ministry Resources

## Chapter 13 Identity

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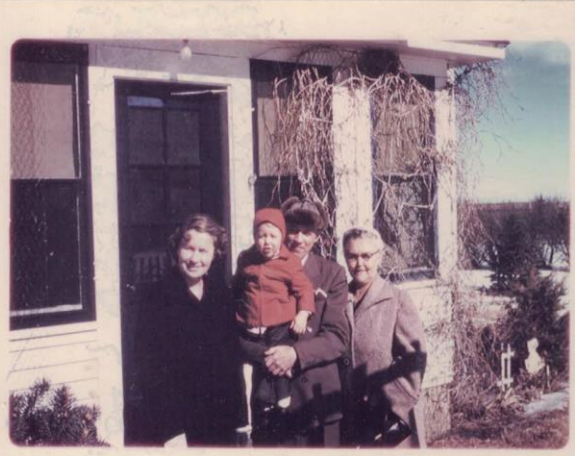
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**2) Home as training ground for faith**

My parents believed that the home is the primary training ground for passing on the faith.

### Harold L. Bolstad | Iowa Living Magazines

Harold L. Bolstad was born April 25, 1927 to Kinley and Nora (Nelson) Bolstad near Homestead, Montana. He married Pearl N. Norager on September 10, 1952. She passed away September 11, 1996. Harold served in the United States Army and was a veteran of the Korean Conflict. He worked as a finish carpenter and was employed by HCS Builders. Harold was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Story City and the Story City Kiwanis Club and was very active in both groups. He enjoyed gardening and volunteering at Habitat for Humanity.

Harold passed away at 87 years of age on July 3, 2014 at Bethany Manor in Story City.

Harold is survived by four sons, Rev. Lowell Bolstad, of Rice Lake, Wisconsin, Sheldon (Terry) Bolstad of Minneapolis, Minnesota, Neil (Linda) Bolstad of Cedar Rapids and Arlan Bolstad of Ames; two granddaughters; two great-granddaughters; and his sister, Marion Erdahl, of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Pearl; and three brothers, Donald, Jim, and Kermit.



<http://www.iowalivingmagazines.com/2014/07/08/harold-l-bolstad/>  
[Images for Harold L. Bolstad | Iowa Living Magazines](#)

I found the original Our Daily Bread Promise Box filled with Bible verses that we passed around among my parents and brothers at every meal before eating while cleaning out the house following my father's death.

### Our Daily Bread Promise Box

Satisfy your hungry heart with the bread of life. This traditional favorite will fit on your kitchen table and holds 120 cards with 240 KJV Scripture verses for daily inspiration and encouragement.



<https://www.christianbook.com/our-daily-bread-promise-box/pd/9651X>  
<https://www.etsy.com/listing/163860151/vintage-daily-bible-scripture-cards-in-a>  
[Images for Our Daily Bread Promise Box](#)

I also found a well-worn Norwegian Bible as well as the Bible presented to them on their 9/10/1952 wedding. Many of the pictures on the walls contained faith messages, and there were inspirational messages on the refrigerator doors. Their formation of faith made me who I am today. They knew well the admonition:

### Rewards for Obedience

<sup>18</sup>You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead. <sup>19</sup>Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. <sup>20</sup>Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, <sup>21</sup>so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

oremus Bible Browser: Deut. 11:18-21

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Deut+11%3A18-32&vnum=yes&version=nrsv>  
[Images for Rewards for Obedience](#)

[Images for <sup>18</sup>You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead.](#)

### 3) Move to Iowa in 1959

When my family moved to Iowa, we stayed with my uncle and aunt Sven and Solveig Hegland on their farm near Radcliffe.

### Sven Hegland (1885 - 1966) - Find A Grave Memorial

STORY CITY – Sven Hegland was born Oct. 23, 1885 at Hjelmeland, Stavanger, Norway, and died unexpectedly at Story City Jan. 6, 1966 at the age of 80. He came to the United States in 1907 and married his first wife, Malena Scheie in 1919 and his second wife, Solveig Norager, in 1939. He owned and operated farms near Garden City, Radcliffe, Williams, Goodell, and Ellsworth and Braddock, N.D. before moving to Story City in 1962.

Mr. Hegland is survived by his wife, Solveig and a brother, Even, also of Story City.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Malena and a sister, Martha Aukland.

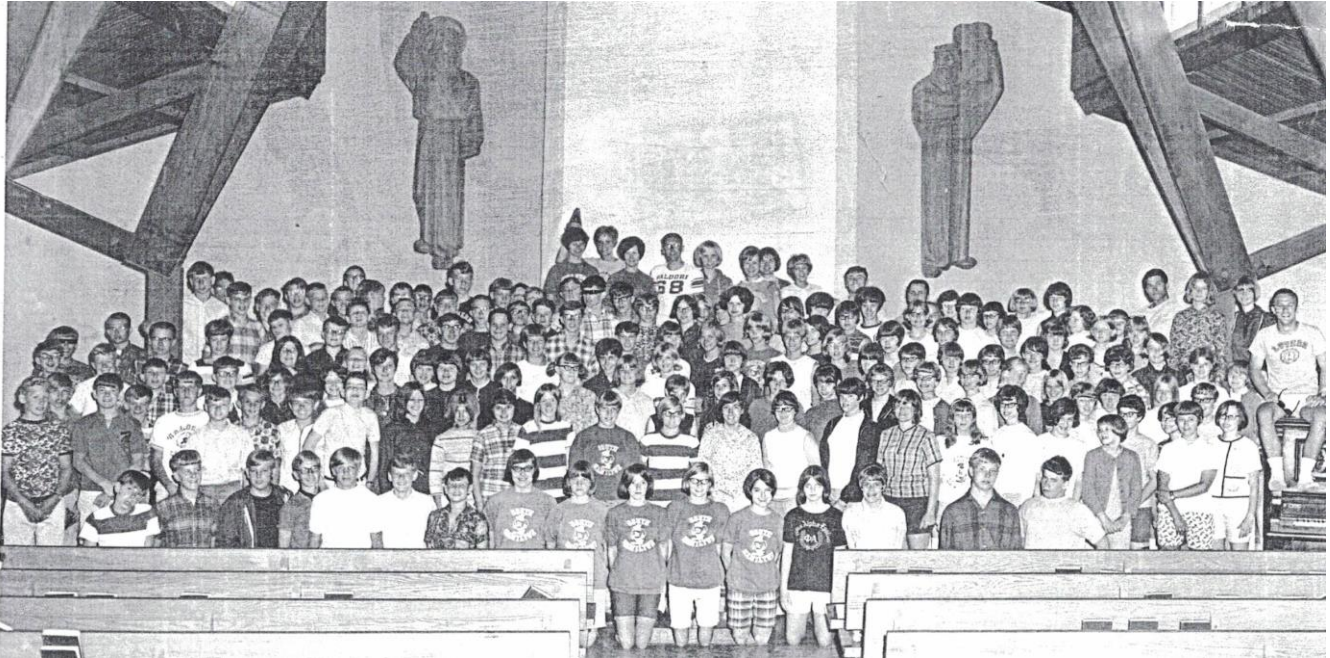


Funeral services were held at 2pm, Monday, January 10, 1966 from the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, with the Rev. Harold T. Masted officiating. Burial was in the Story City Cemetery.

[www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=112713670](http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=112713670)

<https://billiongraves.com/grave/SOLVEIG-HEGLAND/15475189#/>

Then, our family moved to a place in the countryside near Randall. I remember 1 hour each day of release time to go to a house next to the school where we were given religious instruction. Our family lived up the road from Riverside Bible Camp. I attended the camp in 1967 and then worked there as a junior counselor the summer of 1970. I look back on the summer of 1970 as the favorite summer of my life. The bible camp helped shape my faith and life.



The author, lower far left, at Riverside Bible Camp the summer of 1967.

#### **RIVERSIDE Bible Camp, Story City, IA**

Disciple-Growing

Riverside serves the people of God by making disciples. We are more than a camp. We are a community and a family that builds people up for Christian leadership. Our staff focuses on encouraging, teaching, service, and personal growth to become stronger leaders within the larger Church. By taking the spiritual growth of our community seriously, we create an environment in which our staff and campers can go and make disciples.

<http://www.riversidelbc.org/about/core-values>

[Images for RIVERSIDE Bible Camp, Story City, IA](#)

Once, I hiked out to Riverside Bible Camp and camped overnight with other Boy Scouts in the winter.

#### **50 Years ago, March 1966**

On the night of February 18, five boy scouts of Hawk Patrol earned their Snowflake Award. The five boys who braved the three degrees below zero weather in a tent at Riverside Bible Camp were Kent Madson, Bob Phillips, Steve Phillips, **Lowell Bolstad** and Larry Reisetter.

<http://www.storycityherald.com/livinglifestyles/looking-back-story-city.html-143>

[Images for Boy Scout Hawk Patrol Snowflake Award](#)

#### **4) Growing up in Story City, Iowa in the 1960s**

My school years were spent growing up in a **Scandinavian** enclave of **Story City, Iowa** and attending **Immanuel Lutheran Church** where I was confirmed and ordained. Although I am willing to serve different size congregations in various size communities composed of various ethnic backgrounds, a mid-size congregation of Scandinavian background in a city under 10,000 is the setting in which I feel most comfortable.

#### **Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, IA**

Immanuel Lutheran Church is a multi-generational community of believers who strive to build strong relationships in Christ and make Him Known to all. We desire that everyone know the new life that only Christ can give. At our worship services, you can count on hearing Biblically-based messages designed to be relevant to your everyday life. We strive to make our worship and educational experiences appealing to all ages. Visitors are welcome to attend any of our church activities.



<http://www.immanuelstorycity.org/>  
[Images for Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, IA](#)

### Story City, Iowa - Wikipedia

Story City is a city in [Story County, Iowa, United States](#). Story City is located within the [Ames, Iowa Metropolitan Statistical Area](#) which envelops all of Story County and which, when held in conjunction with the [Boone, Iowa Micropolitan Statistical Area](#), complements the larger Ames-Boone, Iowa [Combined Statistical Area](#). The population was 3,431 in the [2010 census](#), a slight increase from 3,228 in the [2000 census](#).<sup>[4][5]</sup>



Downtown Story City

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Story\\_City,\\_Iowa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Story_City,_Iowa)  
[Images for Story City, Iowa](#)

## 5) Going to church schools in the 1970s

Following graduation from Roland-Story High School in 1971, I attended Waldorf Junior College (Class of 1973) [Waldorf University] of Forest City, Iowa; Concordia College (Class of 1975) of Moorhead, Minnesota; and Luther Seminary (Class of 1979) of St. Paul, MN. All these institutions of higher learning, which are in the Norwegian Lutheran tradition, continued to shape my faith and life.

### Waldorf University

An Engaging Community of Learning and Faith

#### Our Mission

Waldorf University seeks to be an engaging community of learning and faith where relationships are formed and opportunities for learning and service abound. Our mission is to educate the whole person emphasizing integrity and equipping students to succeed and to serve the communities where they live and work.

#### Vision

Waldorf University faculty are dedicated to the goals and tenets of liberal arts education. The development of an appreciation of "a life of the mind" ought to begin in the home and school, be further nurtured at Waldorf, continue in studies at Waldorf, and become a lifelong process. Whether as future business leaders, teachers, professors, scientists, entrepreneurs, ordained clergy, psychologists or musicians—it is hoped that Waldorf graduates will aspire to lives of service. The "core" of the liberal arts program has as its goals that students:

- Learn to think, write and speak clearly;
- Begin the process of developing a mature and inquiring mind, with the ability to formulate questions, solve problems and make both intellectual and value judgments;
- Engage in and appreciate the arts;
- Acquire understanding of our historical and scientific heritage;

- Begin to develop an appreciation of other cultures and their ways of knowing;
- And consider their religious commitments for their meaning in life and the world in which they live and serve.

#### Values

As a liberal arts university with core values

Waldorf offers a curriculum to liberate the way students think so that they may develop a basic understanding and knowledge of how those in a variety of disciplines think and approach life. As a liberal arts university, Waldorf seeks to instill values of service, community, critical inquiry, and lifelong learning in each student and in the very culture of the college community. These values and this education prepare our graduates to understand and contribute to life in our complex and ever-changing world.

As a residential university

Waldorf offers a carefully designed student life program, as well as extensive co-curricular, cultural and community service activities designed to create a campus atmosphere conducive to a well-rounded educational experience. We value high academic achievement, personal growth, the building of lasting friendships and a growing awareness of community responsibility.

As an online university

Waldorf offers a broad range of quality online academic programs delivered in an innovative, flexible format while providing a positive experience that impacts the lives of students.

As a community that values religious faith

Waldorf seeks to explore the meaning and depth that religion and spirituality can add to life. The questions religion poses for the living of life and the unique perspective Christianity can give to the living of life are explored with academic rigor. Students are encouraged to develop a deep respect for the role religious devotion can play in giving direction, purpose and a moral foundation to life.

As a university engaged with the world

Waldorf seeks to bring the world to our community by enrolling a significant number of international students. Waldorf actively encourages all students to experience the world through multi-discipline opportunities for travel and study abroad.

As a university born of a strong academic heritage

Waldorf has upheld the Lutheran tradition of excellence in higher education since the college was founded in 1903. This tradition values service to the community, academic excellence, freedom of inquiry, a liberating education, and learning through the exchange of ideas in open conversation.

<http://www.waldorf.edu/about>

[Images for Waldorf University An Engaging Community of Learning and Faith](#)

#### Concordia College

The purpose of Concordia College is to influence the affairs of the world by sending into society thoughtful and informed men and women dedicated to the Christian life.

<https://www.concordiacollege.edu/>

[Images for The purpose of Concordia College is to influence the affairs of the world](#)

[https://www.concordiacollege.edu/admission-aid/visit-campus/campus-visits/preview-days/cobber-countdown/&utm\\_source=feature](https://www.concordiacollege.edu/admission-aid/visit-campus/campus-visits/preview-days/cobber-countdown/&utm_source=feature)

#### Luther Seminary

Luther Seminary educates leaders for Christian communities called and sent by the Holy Spirit to witness to salvation through Jesus Christ and to serve in God's world.

<https://www.luthersem.edu/>

[Images for Luther Seminary educates leaders for Christian communities](#)

[https://www.luthersem.edu/about/our\\_mission.aspx?m=5956](https://www.luthersem.edu/about/our_mission.aspx?m=5956)

### 6) Contextual education in seminary

When asked for a preference for contextual education at Luther Seminary in 1975, I requested a congregation different from the one in which I grew up to experience a different way of doing church. I was assigned to Prince of Glory Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota in North Minneapolis where the recent seminary graduate and new pastor was **Mark Hanson** who would later become bishop of the St. Paul Synod and presiding bishop of the ELCA. Prince of Glory was a changing congregation in a changing urban neighborhood, which, unfortunately, no longer exists as a congregation. This contextual education helped to prepare me for the changes in rural America in my first pastorate. [See chapters under Rural Ministry Resources on the comparisons of how rural America is becoming like a third world country (Who Will Stand Up for the Family Farm? Strengthening Our Rural Communities; Family Farm or Factory Farm: A Time to Choose; and Rural Communities: Dying or Being Reborn?)] This contextual education also helped to prepare me for the changes in congregations and contexts throughout my installed and interim ministry.

### 7) Seminary Internship

For seminary internship in 1977-78 I was assigned to Trinity Lutheran Church in the City of Owatonna – a large congregation in a city of 25,776 (2018) in Southern Minnesota. There were three other pastors on staff, and there had been 20+ seminary interns before me. When I checked their website Trinity Lutheran Church | Trinity Staff at the time of this post, there were 4 pastors as well as an intern pastor. I learned much from all 3 pastors and the congregation, which aided me when serving large congregations in interim ministry.





Trinity Lutheran Church | Welcome!

<http://www.tlcowatonna.org/>

[Images for trinity lutheran church owatonna, mn](#)

Intern Pastor Program - Trinity Lutheran Church

1977-78

Lowell Bolstad

<https://www.tlcowatonna.org/internpastors>

[Images for Intern Pastor Program - Trinity Lutheran Church](#)

## 8) Gathering for Conversations

So, we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (Romans 12:5)

“(name) Lutheran Church at the Turn of the Century – Gathering for Conversations” is the theme of the planned series of cottage meetings during the month of August. These gatherings for conversation mostly in the homes with some in the church if necessary are designed to give people an opportunity to converse on where we’ve been, where we’re at, and where God is calling us to go.

For the most part, the design is to gather people in neighborhoods. Evening meetings are planned to start at 7pm and go no longer than 8:30pm. Afternoon meetings are planned to start at 1:30pm and go no longer than 3pm. The interim pastor will serve as the facilitator for the conversations.

Those hosting the meetings will issue the invitations. It is hoped that the invitations to come to these cottage meetings will be well received. The pastor looks forward to conversing with you about the faith and life of the church.

The material gleaned from the conversations will be used by the Congregation Council and the Call Committee to set directions for the church. It is also hoped that members will emerge from these meetings willing to be placed on a slate of candidates to be presented before the congregation on Sunday, September 19 to elect a Call Committee of six people. This group will work with the pastor on a Ministry Site Profile which will be presented to the October 24 annual meeting. The profile will then be sent to the synod office. Then the synod staff will begin the process of finding names of candidates for the position of installed pastorate for the Call Committee to interview and present a recommendation to the congregation.

Oral Presentation by the Interim Pastor

This Congregation at the Turn of the Century: Gathering for Conversations

### Introduction

Word of thanks

Cottage meetings have a number of purposes

- Recognition of this key juncture in the life of the congregation
- Give people an opportunity to talk with each other
- Health and healing
- Make contact with as many members as possible
- Importance of the church in the life of members
- Lay groundwork for the call process
- Surface members willing to serve on the Call Committee

Devotions – One body, many members. (1 Corinthians 12:1-31).

Introductions

Ground rules

### Where Have We Been?

- Personal memories about the life of the congregation
- Distinctiveness of this congregation
- Previous pastors
- History of the congregation
- Tradition as an inspiration

### Where Are We At?

- Strengths

- Weaknesses
- Outlook
- Customs
- Involvement
- Special concerns
- Challenges
- Readiness

#### Where Is God Leading Us?

- Imagining the church ten years in the future
- Tradition and the larger culture
- Openness to change and growth

#### Pastor and People

- Looking for the best possible match
- Desired qualities in a new pastor
- Conditions to keep a pastor

#### Conclusion

- Wrap up
- Thanks
- Prayer and blessing

#### **Facilitation Made Easy: Practical Tips to Improve Meetings and Workshops [Esther Cameron]**

The facilitator's task of opening up discussion, getting ideas into the open and setting broad future direction is essential if a group is to reach consensus on a particular outcome and it is now one of the key techniques used in meetings and workshops. *Facilitation Made Easy* provides a practical introduction to the essential skills needed and will help readers develop a facilitation style that is unbiased and enables control without being overpowering. With detailed examples, proven tips for success, checklists and a self-assessment guide to help readers test their own personal approach to facilitation, the book will help readers to: Understand the facilitator's role Develop the ideal structure for workshops and meetings Control agendas and help to focus the outcome of meetings Deal with difficulties. This third edition also includes a new chapter on facilitating virtual meetings, explaining the mechanics of virtual teams, the pros and cons of virtual meetings, use of technology and tips on setting up, facilitating and participating in virtual meetings.

<http://www.amazon.com/Facilitation-Made-Easy-Practical-Workshops/dp/0749443510>

[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/171396.Facilitation\\_Made\\_Easy](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/171396.Facilitation_Made_Easy)

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/facilitation-made-easy-esther-cameron/1110830519>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0749446722>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Facilitation\\_Made\\_Easy.html?id=Uelt4madreAC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Facilitation_Made_Easy.html?id=Uelt4madreAC)

<https://www.koganpage.com/author/esther-cameron>

<https://www.amazon.com/Esther-Cameron/e/B001HCWC5G>

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/99907.Esther\\_Cameron](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/99907.Esther_Cameron)

[Images for Esther Cameron, author](#)

[Images for Facilitation Made Easy: Practical Tips to Improve Meetings and Workshops \[Esther Cameron\]](#)

#### Written Report from Congregational Leadership

To the Call Committee,

Without knowledge of this group's makeup, I write this as an elected representative of the Congregation Council.

You have a special, vital, and important task you've been asked to fulfill. A group of peers in the truest, spiritual sense has knocked on your door and trusted in your vision and foresight to select a pastor for all of us. This is not just a church, to many of our parishioners it is the only church. Calling a pastor to fill that pulpit is a formidable task.

Formidable not that it is a tough sell, but difficult due to a fairly serious shortage of seminary graduates. The law of averages, therefore, tells us we maybe can't be as "picky" as times past. Which doesn't mean you should only "kick one tire." Remember, this could be the most wonderful call of any pastor's career.

Where we've been...

Through a dozen cottage meetings, with a total attendance of about 80 parishioners, people were asked what they remember about this church's past, how they've been affected by the church.

People most often recalled events with a unique flavor of this church: Aebleskiver, dancing around holiday trees, Sunday School programs (as both a participant and audience), VBS, family camp, Young People's Society, Independence Day celebrations, singing "Silent Night" in various languages and so on. All these memories are not just generic church memories, they are, again, unique memories to this church. Not many churches can reflect on such a rare buffet of distinctive heritage.

The church is not just events, we are also a storied parish with a rich specific tradition: enjoying and celebrating life; a creative, constructive, and artistic community where you don't just see your fellow parishioners on Sunday, you socialize and do business with them all week long.

Through those traditional appreciations, we also have a definite dislike for pretension and protocol, with a slight hesitancy about evangelism and self-righteousness. We can honestly argue constructively, then socialize over scalding hot coffee and delicious baked goods. Friends don't agree on everything except to move forward.

We have a rich appreciation for nature, as our grounds and architect reflect. This is a church with a warm, inviting feel. Our family has a dramatic home. We really are a family, calling us a parish is merely for convenience.

Remember, this parish has survived and thrived through some difficult times: a pastor and people leaving to form another church, rise and fall of a brave seminary through division, former pastoral controversy, and, of course, a history of tragic fires that left tears and ashes, only to bounce back and flourish.

This church has weathered many a storm and fought some damaging winds... our recent storm had lots of thunder but no real lightning. There really was no scandal or deceit, only hearsay and conflict. This wasn't a major catastrophe. We'll survive and thrive again.

Where we're at...

The cottage meetings were a sounding board for many folks, as they should have been. Many comments surrounded the recent resignations of staff and some parishioners, both good and bad. Displeasure was expressed about the pastor, youth director, and Congregation Council. Both in the way things were being run and the way the situation was handled by the Congregation Council and all involved. Some people were slightly apprehensive about the future of the congregation and its staff. Others were taking a wait-and-see attitude, hoping the same things don't happen again or that recent drops in attendance aren't permanent. We're all apparently reading the same book, just different pages.

Optimism was expressed by many, though. Many folks expect the church to do well and feel that the rising number of families and youth can only be a positive sign of things to come.

Without sugar coating anything, there are a few people who were quite angry about the way events unfolded among the congregation. You, indeed, may have personal feelings about the storm that surrounded this congregation... that is to be expected. We just hope you can use those feelings in a positive way.

Where we're going...

The world has changed dramatically since we last called a pastor. Through urbanization and a climate of international information, we've grown out and in. Time has become a precious commodity for parishioners alike. Religion in general has had to recognize this. The Lutheran church has tried to lead this wave in a spiritual way and succeed so far. Christianity is never static, it evolves and involves more than any other aspect of humanity.

This church can't be static, we must pull together and adjust to our environment or we'll stagnate and shrink in our head-strong denial. We're no longer just Scandinavian, or male, or farmers, etc. As a parish, we've struggled with change in the past just as our faith, nation, and region have. The richness of our diversity is to be celebrated and cultivated. Our community is changing daily, we need to expound on that change and embrace its potential... it's our place. Innovation and tradition can make strange partners but who better than us? We've done it better than anyone and can continue that quality. Our new pastor must cherish this growth, community, and new world reality. We can create new recipes, yet still have a love for the old favorites.

This church has many of the qualities people look for in a church: rich, unique traditions; talented, caring members; gorgeous surroundings; a strong sense of community; fabulous children; intergenerational character; devoted Christian values; warm friendships; financial solvency; genuine joy and happiness; faithful caring and numerous small-town qualities that are so rare today. All of the aforementioned qualities must be recognized by the whole parish and its pastor in the coming years. The church of the future will look much like today, with the preservation of the finer qualities we've harvested fused with the seeds of ingenuity and harvested into a fabulous new tree of faith.

Many people expressed an interest in seeing this church grow beyond its roots and start joint activities of faith and fun with other local parishes.

This church doesn't just have a property or lot, we have one of the most spectacular spiritual neighborhoods of any church, a neighborhood that expands for blocks and miles. Our new pastor must be a person who can expand it even further in a positive, spiritual sense.

Remember, our neighborhood is large... but our community is huge.

Who we desire...

I could give you the laundry list of qualities people asked for in a pastor, but that wouldn't be fair to any mortal. We desire, as a group, what any group wants as qualities for a leader: honesty, integrity, fairness, innovation, appreciation, love, humor, etc.

We have a very informal list of wants that cannot really be compromised. Our pastor must want to be here, period. No compromising there. A lack of motivation can lead to a very unpleasant situation for everyone involved. Our pastor must be willing to like this community, parish, people, and situation. Accept this place and its traditions, even if they're not familiar.



Our pastor must be a common person, who can relate to the many generations and histories we're made of and somehow infuse all these remarkable ingredients into the menu of faith. Our youth have a truly difficult job of growing up today, our pastor must be able to relate to these unique people in a language they can appreciate and trust.

Our pastor is an ambassador, of sorts, to our community. This is vital to our growing as a living church. We ask that our pastor be involved with our children's lives, even outside the church. Be approachable and honestly care about them and our children's memories of this church will forever be positive.

Our pastor must be someone who can stir us on Sunday and be involved on Monday. Use the pulpit to guide and inspire us; don't talk down or scold us, we've got no room for self-righteousness.

Our pastor must be open and inviting to new members as well as old; the pastor is a host, server, guest and greeter all at once, every time they meet someone.

Our pastor can be any age or sex, experienced for new, any heritage, but must have the energy and desire to not only fulfill the job but grow into our family and history.

Many people expressed a desire for a full-time, live in the parsonage, around-the-clock pastor. With the changing climate of community, though, it would probably be alright if the pastor wanted to live in their own house.

In the past, it was assumed, when you got a new pastor, you would get an involved spouse, also. This can no longer be taken for granted but must be seen as a wonderful by-product if it can be. The parsonage would be a great place to raise a family, or retire without one. There should be no pre-disposed notions of age or marital status, only appreciation for the pastor's situation, talents, and hobbies.

All pastors must be put to some degree of litmus test, not necessarily their beliefs but for their fit into their new community of faith. If the shoe doesn't fit, do we take off a toe, or buy different shoes? We can't afford a pastor who doesn't fit... that will be the most important quality. We have so many diverse parishioners that it is a seemingly impossible task to fit those shoes for everyone, you can only hope that everyone respects and believes in your choice. Even the nicest shoes must be worn in before they can be used with comfort.

In retrospect, you have a truly demanding task. One that is so important, you must get it right the first time. My personal advice from several years on this Congregation Council: be critical, yet realistic. Devout, yet reasonable. Personal, yet humane. Do you genuinely like this candidate? Can this candidate enkindle a spirit of faith in you? Think of how this candidate will fit into your family.

Remember, you are choosing an ambassador of your own faith. Don't just settle, choose with that faith. Choose from your heart and soul. Choose from the perspective of the next generation. Celebrate the choice, for we trust in you the future of our little Eden.

May God bless and inspire you!

On behalf of the Congregation Council,

(name)

Congregation Council Secretary

## 9) Portrait of the congregation as a person

An interim ministry colleague used the book *Who Is Our Church? Imagining Congregational Identity* by Janet Cawley from The Alban Institute to involve congregation leadership in a process that resulted in a portrait of the congregation as a person.

### **Who Is Our Church? Imagining Congregational Identity by Janet R. Cawley (Author)**

After congregations have considered their history, added up all the statistics, and tried to be honest about their core values, the question still remains: "Who are we, really?" Author Janet Cawley offers a creative, engaging, and faithful way to answer just that question. Cawley demonstrates how to use a congregation's knowledge of itself to construct a metaphor of the congregation as a person and then draw on that metaphor to generate options for future mission. Cawley makes the case that congregations with a clear, well-articulated identity—those that know, accept, and love who they are—can be flexible and respond to change and new initiatives from the Holy Spirit with boldness because their basic sense of themselves is affirmed rather than threatened. They can make faithful and appropriate choices about what they should do. Congregations will find this intuitive, imaginative approach is useful, accurate, and lots of fun!

<http://www.amazon.com/Who-Church-Imagining-Congregational-Identity/dp/1566993210>

[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1933348.Who\\_Is\\_Our\\_Church](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1933348.Who_Is_Our_Church)

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781566993210/Who-Is-Our-Church?-Imagining-Congregational-Identity>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=156699702X>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Who\\_Is\\_Our\\_Church.html?id=iZ4dBAAQBAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Who_Is_Our_Church.html?id=iZ4dBAAQBAJ)

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/book-summaries/cawley-who-is-our-church.html>

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/ministry-resources/church-leader-foundations-church-culture-church-identity.html>

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/book-summaries/tag/congregational-culture>

<https://alban.org/archive/constructing-your-congregations-story/>

<https://alban.org/archive/imagining-congregational-identity/>

<https://alban.org/archive/congregational-web-sites-our-new-front-door/>

<http://www.minnesotavalleys.org/Resource%20Center.html>

Images for Janet R. Cawley (Author)

[Images for Who Is Our Church? Imagining Congregational Identity by Janet R. Cawley \(Author\)](#)

## 10) Changing Context

The sign outside the **Grassland Dairy Products, Inc.** milk plant in the city with a population of 1,026 read, "Ole prefers butter" reflecting both a long running debate in dairy country about oleo margarine as well as a Norwegian background. Many people in the congregation assumed the community was centered around dairy farming, as the county was #2 in milk production in the state. Upon closer inspection in doing the Ministry Site Profile, leadership discovered that far fewer members milked cows than originally thought. Large farmers bought up more land making for fewer farms. Mennonites and Amish moved into the area and bought up smaller farms. The east-west road was being made into a four-lane highway, which meant more people would be commuting to work in the future. This realization changed how they viewed their future and the call process.

## 11) Slowly declining establishment church or bustling center for mission?

From the Pastor

Is this congregation a slowly declining establishment church in the inner city? Or is this congregation a bustling center for mission in the heart of the city? Everything depends on the answer to that question.

What would it be like to be a slowly declining establishment church in the inner city? Here it depends upon which direction a person is looking. To resign oneself to slow decline is to believe that the best days are behind and all one can do is to hope to hang on as long as possible to what one has. To think that the primary reason for the church is to take care of one's own is another direction to which to look from this perspective.

What would it be like to be a bustling center for mission in the heart of the city? Here the direction would be to look to the present and the future as times of exciting challenges. To be convinced that the church is called to reach out beyond itself is the direction from which to look in this perspective.

A slowly declining establishment church in the inner city or a center for mission in the heart of the city? It all depends upon your perspective.

Sincerely in Christ,

Pastor Lowell Bolstad

## 12) Central Lutheran Church

From the Pastor

In the letter of call issued to me as your interim pastor, one of the parts states: "We will together be involved: Re-thinking and evaluating the self-image of the congregation."

This task has to do with looking at who we are and what we are about at this place in time. One dynamic that can help is in the recent selection of a theme for this congregation – "Living for Christ." How can we as individuals be living for Christ as part of the community and the world and as a part of the larger church? I would like to raise these questions in light of the name of the congregation: Central Lutheran Church.

Central – In what ways is Living for Christ central in our lives? What central role does the church play in our lives? How is this congregation central to the larger community? The call of the crucified and risen Christ makes a claim on our lives. How will you respond?

Lutheran – What does it mean to be a Lutheran? What does the Lutheran tradition have to offer for living for Christ? The distinctive Lutheran insight that we are saved by grace through faith sets us free to be people of God in this world. How can we live for Christ more effectively with that realization?

Church – What difference does it make to belong and to be involved in the life of the church? How does Christ's presence among the gathered people empower us for living the faith? None of us are called to live alone; we are called to live in Christian community. In the church, we are strengthened for living for Christ the whole week through.

Admittedly more questions have been raised than answers given. In living these questions, Christ becomes present to free us for faithful living.

Sincerely in Christ,

Pastor Lowell Bolstad

## 13) Congregational Listening Process Summation

[A consultant provided the following notes after doing a consultation with a congregation I was serving.]

*Written by Pastor Christine Hallemeier*

*August 19, 2013*

*I have participated in over fifty congregational listening processes in ELCA congregations throughout the Midwest. Very often there has been conflict arising from changing social dynamics as the congregation grows or shrinks in size.*

*In a listening process, I and a partner listen to groups of up to a dozen people who have signed up ahead of time to share their concerns about their congregation. I then take the information and give a "summation", usually on Sunday morning, to the whole congregation. The following is a typical summation, held during a pastoral interim, and modified to emphasize the most common issues that have arisen in the listening sessions I have done.*

Thank you to all who participated in this weekend's listening process. Thank you to the coordinator, to my listening partner, and to all who took time out from a busy day to participate because they care for this congregation. I would also like to acknowledge the fundamental work done by the Alban Institute in helping the church understand sociological change. While I am indebted to many for their insights, this report and recommendations are my responsibility alone.

My biggest challenge is—there is so much that I would like to include in this presentation but there is only time for the briefest outline. I will be glad to meet with your leadership for follow-up in the future if that would be helpful.

The bottom line: this is a critical time in the history of your congregation. You are at a crossroads in your history in at least two ways:

1. One involves the bigger picture, the challenges you face with many other congregations in the ELCA and most Protestant churches because of your size.

2. The other is a spiritual issue that will require the deepest resources of your faith to address.

#### The Bigger Picture

Fifty per cent of the congregations of the ELCA worship under a 100 people in church per week.

There are at least three reasons why this is the case:

- depopulation, especially in rural areas
- the merger that formed the ELCA; neighboring congregations formed from different predecessor traditions find themselves representing the same denomination and one often proves more energetic in attracting new members
- and, most commonly, the midsize crisis I will address this last item, the midsize crisis. Please bear with me as I give some necessary background about how two differently sized churches function.

#### Family sized church:

- under 50 worshipping on a Sunday
- survival based on the strong commitment of a few families
- mission energy comes from a spiritually mature lay leadership
- pastors come & go and are valued for pastoral care & traditional worship leadership
- resist change

#### Pastor-led congregation:

- 80 plus worshippers on a Sunday
- newcomers often attracted by the pastor
- the pastor provides cohesiveness and all members expect to have a personal relationship with her/him, i.e. “pastoral care”
- mission energy comes as the pastor works with those who have a vision for the future
- the pastor has a hand in forming most ministries

The lower limit on the size of a pastor-led congregation is economically based. How small can a congregation be and still afford a full-time pastor? The upper limit is a little harder to explain.

Human beings are capable of maintaining a limited number (150 is the common estimate) of ongoing, meaningful social relationships. When a group gets larger than this, it needs to develop an explicit set of values and rules and goals in order for its members to get along. A pastor-led congregation is characterized by the number of people this one leader can connect with and when the upper limit is reached, the community becomes stressed. In congregational listening processes, I often hear the complaint that the pastor has “favorites”!

The stress point for a congregation seems to me to vary according to specific circumstances. In one congregation, it happened when a gifted young pastor quickly attracted new members and the average worshipping attendance rose from 75 to 110 in two years. (Your congregation resembles this one.) In another, led by a mission pastor who got to know people over the course of fifteen years, stress occurred at about the 180 average attendance mark.

When this very natural stress point, dependent upon meaningful pastoral relationships, is reached, a pastor has two hard choices:

- A. He or she can concentrate on traditional worship and individual “pastoral care”. The result? The church will gradually shrink toward a “family size” and people will be unhappy as finances become tight.
- B. He or she can develop a “multiply the ministry” model within the congregation. The result? There will be change, and people will be unhappy.

These are some indications that a congregation is reaching a sociological stress point:

1. the pastor experiences overload and yet delegation of ministry is difficult
2. the leadership core experiences overload; at the same time, willing newcomers have difficulty finding where their gifts and services are most needed
3. there is a longing for unity, the “family feeling”
4. communication becomes an issue; people feel they no longer know what's going on
5. financial challenges become acute
6. decision making processes are unclear
7. there is an emphasis on the negative, a focus on what's missing
8. a culture of complaint arises; there is a lot of criticism of others without much encouragement
9. the number/kind of worship services often become a bone of contention



This is the time to look ahead at the next stage in congregational size, the Multiply-the-Ministry

Congregation:

- “family feeling” comes through small group caring
- the pastor nurtures leaders who expand the circle of caring; there is a focus on “Christian Care” rather than “Pastoral Care”, often characterized by Care Teams who help the pastor minister to the homebound and hospitalized
- mission energy comes from ideas developed by pastor and lay leaders together, who, in turn inspire consensus among the majority of members
- future-oriented lay leadership is vital; increased staff is needed to develop quality programs
- the pastor’s role shifts to recruiting, planning, training, evaluating, coordinating, motivating and helping people toward consensus; his/her main tasks center around worship quality and leadership development
- there is a careful, intentional program of visitor follow-up and new member assimilation
- the council leads the congregation into a vision for the future
- an expanded core of lay leaders takes on more responsibility for proliferating committees/taskforces/teams which “do” ministry; the council seeks to strengthen these ministries through a sense of shared purpose rather than by trying to manage them
- seeking ways to involve more/new people is a top priority
- there is a great tolerance change and for a “trial and error” approach to ministry

Your congregation is a textbook example of the midsize crisis. There is certainly stress here right now. Just look at the statistics for worshipping attendance:

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	%Change
	80	92	101	113	104	101	100	101	26.3%

You grew quickly in three short years, reached a stress point at 113. Conflict ensued, and the numbers dropped. This is a critical time in your history and you have two choices.

1. You can hold on to the values of a family-sized congregation, and you will become family sized.
2. You can be open to the challenges of multiplying the ministry. This means that there will be changes that you may not like. There is a widely used graph of the dynamics of change that I have found very helpful. In every community, there are different responses to possible change and they look something like this:
  - 7% are “freethinkers”, always thinking about new possibilities.
  - 13% are “pioneers”; they look at all the freethinkers’ crazy ideas & think “this one might have something to it”
  - 30% are the early majority, open to the ideas of the pioneers, but more cautious
  - 30% are the late majority, ready for change once the early majority is reached
  - 20% are the resisters; we can all be a part of this group, depending on the issue

In healthy change, the pioneers and early majority make sure that the issues and decision-making processes are clear. When the late majority comes aboard, the change is initiated whole-heartedly. In unhealthy congregations, change is put on hold until the resisting 20% are in agreement (which will never happen) or until there is a crisis (usually financial) which cannot be avoided. The real question is God’s call. If a congregation is determined not to change, even when the Spirit presents opportunities for growth and reaching out in love to others, the result is an anxious and whiny group of people whom no one wants to join!

The Immediate Spiritual Challenge

This congregation is full of great people.

This congregation is divided.

Participants in this listening process expressed a whole range of attitudes & opinions. Often, they were centered around the pastor and this is very natural in pastor-sized congregation! We heard:

- People who have a deep-set hostility toward the pastoral office which predates your last pastor
- People with a strong “us versus them” mentality, especially over the issue of youth ministry
- People who are grieving the loss of the “family-sized” congregation that existed not so long ago and are also grieving the death of loved ones who were pillars in the life of this church
- People who were genuinely hurt by your last pastor’s actions and don’t feel that they’ve been heard; some are at the point of interpreting his every action in a negative light, however well it may have been meant
- People who have a very mature view of the pastor’s ministry, seeing both strengths and weaknesses
- People who were drawn to the congregation by the pastor’s outreach and have a strong appreciation of the ways in which he leads the congregation’s “moving forward.” We heard “We were just about to turn a corner when he left!” more than once.
- People who so identified their congregational participation with the pastor’s ministry, that they are now drifting away from the congregation.

One consequence of this division is that people are unwilling to accept leadership positions in this congregation. Why put up with constant nagging criticism and even nastiness when you’re trying to do your best?

The second consequence (I fear) is that you will force your new pastor out very soon.

- If he/she acts on the family-church model, those with a passion for outreach and mission will leave.
- If the pastor makes changes, he/she will meet immediate resistance.

You are faced with two kinds of choices. One will be made together—will our future be as family-sized or future-oriented congregation? The other will be made by you as an individual as you ask yourself—do I want to act in a way that builds up the Body of Christ? God’s Spirit will bless you as you take these steps to give up your own particular sense of grievance and be open to God’s work.

1. If you are emotionally tangled up with resentment and anger, offer it up to God in prayer:

*This is how I feel, Lord. I can't seem to help it and it's making me miserable. Fill me with your loving power and change my heart.*

2. Who do you see on the “other side”? Make an effort to talk with them and truly hear their story before rushing to judgment.

3. People of spiritual maturity have a special role. You can see both sides—offer to be with people who are hurting in different ways and initiate a conversation.

4. Distinguish between people who act in good faith & those who act in bad faith. Those who act in good faith will try to improve things despite their anger and hurt. Those who act in bad faith stick with the attitude: “I’ve been hurt and it’s all your/his/their fault.” People who cannot accept their responsibility in broken relationships need to be cared for but they should NOT be invited to be in leadership positions.

A word about your next pastor. Expectations for a super pastor who will be everything to everyone and mysteriously heal divisions among those who don’t want healing will not be met.

A couple of comments—

1. If you chose to be family-sized congregation, you don’t need a full-time pastor and need to speak with the bishop about part time pastoral ministry.

2. If you chose to move ahead as a “Multiply-the-Ministry” congregation, your new pastor and congregation leaders and members will need:

- A familiarity with the dynamics of the midsize crisis. During this challenging time, financial and organizational transparency are essential.
- A priority on leadership development and involving others in ministry. (This means letting others do ministry without micro-management!)
- A priority on lively and Gospel-oriented worship services.

It was a tremendous privilege to be with you and to hear from people who care so deeply about the church. This congregation is full of good people and I pray for God’s deepest blessings as you follow Jesus’ path of reconciliation and mission.

*Used with permission*

#### **14) Time for Discernment**

[Newsletter article]

At the annual meeting, a plan was proposed for a “time for discernment” between the annual meeting and the Day of Pentecost. This three-month period will allow time for prayerful conversation around the three areas outlined below (unity, vision, and mission). Only unity will be included in this chapter. This is intended for the many and various groups and individuals in the congregation. Participants are invited to respond in writing to the questions offered around these three areas. Please give your signed comments to Pastor Lowell Bolstad. These will then be used by the Congregation Council for envisioning and leading this congregation into greater unity, clearer vision, and expanded mission.

Unity – What does it mean to be the body of Christ? Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 12 and 13, Romans 12:1-8, Ephesians 4:1-16. What do these passages say about life in the congregation? If you were to imagine the congregation singing four-part harmony, what would be the message of the song and what would be the tone of the music? What is the source of our unity? What are some examples you can think of the wide diversity here in this community of faith? How can we have unity amid diversity? In what ways has God given to the body all the gifts that are needed for the common good? What are some examples of “when one suffers, all suffer, and when one rejoices, all rejoice?” In what ways can you reach out to those who might feel distanced from the life of the congregation? Whenever members become dissatisfied to the point of deciding to leave the congregation and join another congregation in the community, it becomes a loss for the community of faith. As a part of the discernment process, the intention is to pose the questions: Why have people left the congregation? What attracts people to another congregation? The purpose is to reflect on how this congregation might be more effective in retaining its own and in welcoming new ones. If you are familiar with any of the people who have left the congregation, could you respectfully and tactfully engage in conversation and ask them to help us better understand their reasons for leaving and how this congregation might be more effective in retaining our members and attracting new ones.

#### **15) Mission and Values**

A congregation I served as an interim pastor worked on stating its mission and values before I came. This mission and values statement provided the basis for the partnership in the Gospel.

Our Mission

The members of this congregation strive to be:

- A WELCOMING community of faith, called to invite and embrace all people as we join together in hearing and living the Gospel of Jesus.
- A CARING community of faith, where all people can find love, acceptance, help, forgiveness, and encouragement.

- A SERVING community of faith, reaching out in partnership with God and others to meet the needs of our neighbors locally and globally.

### Our Values

We believe that God has acted on our behalf in Jesus and that through Jesus we can experience a life-transforming relationship with God.

We believe that we are saved through no actions of our own, but only through God's everlasting Grace and Mercy.

We are grounded in the great commandment of Jesus,

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22:37-40

We are grounded in the Great Commission of Jesus,

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19

We are committed to sharing Jesus with those that do not know him.

We are committed to welcoming and ministering to all people.

We are committed to equipping people to do ministry.

We are committed to serving in our community and the world.

### Resources

congregational handbook for pastoral transitions

**Development of Core Values**, Mission and Vision Statements III-6

One way to help people discover and identify their core values would be to invite all congregation members to gather in focus groups after church on Sunday. It will actually take two Sundays, two weeks apart, and they should both be scheduled before you have the first one. Make it celebratory and not a drudging "duty." What could be more exciting than discovering what God is calling you to do? As they are seated at tables, tell them that you are going to articulate your core values in order to be focused in your ministry. Define core values in a way that is clear to all, maybe as simply as using the definition above.

**handbook - Northwest Washington Synod**

<http://www.lutheransnw.org/files/leadership/TransitionHandbook.pdf>

[Images for Development of Core Values](#)

**Core values - Wikipedia**

Core values, the first value category of the value system

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Core\\_values](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Core_values)

[Images for Core Values](#)

**Core Values - YouTube**

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLGNJoiHoUsZlkwKhvuYcU9BVIUqUyY2qW>

[Images for Core Values - YouTube](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1\\_TUSnLkPe8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_TUSnLkPe8) Infor's core values - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3UJJYyVQYw> Our Core Values - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75LwZUCr9qE> Selco Core Values - YouTube

**[PDF]Discernment and Clarification of Core Values - Sand Bur Consulting**

This tool is designed to enable a congregation to fully engage with Scripture and with each other in the necessary conversations to discern and clarify these core values.

<http://www.sandburconsulting.com/corevaluesdiscernmentmodule.pdf>

[Images for Discernment and Clarification of Core Values](#)

<http://effectivechurch.com/discerning-and-developing-core-values/>

<https://www.willowcreek.org/-/media/images/7-0-about/242-community-guidebook-first-edition-feb2017.pdf?la=en> The Five Gs

Page 10

<https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/power-core-values/>

<http://waynehedlund.org/clarifying-core-values/>

<http://oslc.com/mission--core-values.html>

<http://thrivingchurch.com/Portals/41/Assets/Visioning%20Tools/Values%20Process.pdf>

[Images for Clarifying Congregation Core Values](#)

[http://unyumc.org/images/uploads/Rolling\\_Ridge\\_Tending\\_the\\_Soul.pdf](http://unyumc.org/images/uploads/Rolling_Ridge_Tending_the_Soul.pdf) Clarifying missional identity and core values as a pathway to the true self of the congregation

<http://oslchurch.com/about/mission-values/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/leadershape/core-values/>

[Images for leadership core values](#)



### [PDF] Finding the Core Values of Your Congregation A Tutorial

Core Values are the preferences or choices churches make in their life together. The way we behave reflects what. We truly value as a congregation. Values are not an idea, nor a program, nor a goal.

[https://nanopdf.com/download/ii-finding-the-core-values-of-your-congregation\\_pdf](https://nanopdf.com/download/ii-finding-the-core-values-of-your-congregation_pdf)

[Images for Finding the Core Values of Your Congregation](https://www.heartlight.org/articles/201309/20130915_corevalues1.html)

[http://www.heartlight.org/articles/201309/20130915\\_corevalues1.html](http://www.heartlight.org/articles/201309/20130915_corevalues1.html)

<http://discoverycrc.com/we-believe/core-values/>

### HINTS ON DEVELOPING CORE VALUES

- Keep your list to five to seven core values, 10 at the most.
- Core values should help you make 60 percent or more of your decisions at board and leadership meetings.
- Make sure your core values are action oriented

### SIDEBAR: Hints on Developing Core Values – Enrichment: Enriching and equipping Spirit-filled ministers

<https://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/Issues/2010/Winter-2010/SIDEBAR-Hints-on-Developing-Core-Values--Helping-Churches>

[Images for Hints on Developing Core Values – Enrichment: Enriching and equipping Spirit-filled ministers](https://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/Issues/2010/Winter-2010/SIDEBAR-Hints-on-Developing-Core-Values--Helping-Churches)

### [PDF] Identifying the Core Values of a Church - Church21

The core values of a congregation answer the question, “Why do we do what we do around here?”

<http://www.church21.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Identifying-core-values.pdf>

[Images for Identifying the Core Values of a Church - Church21](http://www.church21.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Identifying-core-values.pdf)

[http://aa86e41e7d951355383b-cb342165bfeaa4f2927aec8e5d7de41f.r23.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/c/0e498977\\_cd-core-values-defined.pdf](http://aa86e41e7d951355383b-cb342165bfeaa4f2927aec8e5d7de41f.r23.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/c/0e498977_cd-core-values-defined.pdf)

[http://www.peacelutheranseattle.org/?page\\_id=71](http://www.peacelutheranseattle.org/?page_id=71) Peace Lutheran Church » Core Values

<https://www.willowcreek.org/en/about/beliefs-and-values>

<https://www.hopechurch.org.nz/core-values-images/>

[www.imageatl.com/about/core-values/](http://www.imageatl.com/about/core-values/)

<https://www.pinterest.com/inspirevalerie/core-values/>

### [PDF] Planting New Congregations in the United Church of Christ

A Guidebook for Planting New Congregations in the United Church of Christ

Bible Study on **Core Values** Page 22

**Core Values** Page 23

Worksheet on **Core Values** Page 24

[http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/planting\\_brochure\\_pdfs/pnc-all.pdf](http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/planting_brochure_pdfs/pnc-all.pdf)

[Images for Bible Study on Core Values](http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/planting_brochure_pdfs/pnc-all.pdf)

[Images for Congregation Core Values](http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/planting_brochure_pdfs/pnc-all.pdf)

[Images for Worksheet on Core Values](http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/planting_brochure_pdfs/pnc-all.pdf)

### The Powerful, Invisible Influence of Core Values: What Every Congregation Needs to Identify Them - The Parish Paper

A congregation’s core values are deeply ingrained thought-patterns that motivate behaviors.

[http://bishopperryinstitute.org.au/uploads/PowerfulInvisibleInfluenceOfCoreValues-](http://bishopperryinstitute.org.au/uploads/PowerfulInvisibleInfluenceOfCoreValues-WhyEveryCongregationNeedsToIdentifyThem.pdf)

[WhyEveryCongregationNeedsToIdentifyThem.pdf](http://bishopperryinstitute.org.au/uploads/PowerfulInvisibleInfluenceOfCoreValues-WhyEveryCongregationNeedsToIdentifyThem.pdf)

[Images for The Powerful, Invisible Influence of Core Values: What Every Congregation Needs to Identify Them - The Parish Paper](https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/The%20Powerful,%20Invisible%20Influence%20of%20Core%20Values-%20Why%20Every%20Congregation%20Needs%20to%20Identify%20Them.pdf)

[https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/The%20Powerful,%20Invisible%20Influence%20of%20Core%20Valu](https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/The%20Powerful,%20Invisible%20Influence%20of%20Core%20Values-%20Why%20Every%20Congregation%20Needs%20to%20Identify%20Them.pdf)

[es-%20Why%20Every%20Congregation%20Needs%20to%20Identify%20Them.pdf](https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/The%20Powerful,%20Invisible%20Influence%20of%20Core%20Valu)

[\[PDF\] Replacement--Core Values Information & Survey Process - The Parish Paper](https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/The%20Powerful,%20Invisible%20Influence%20of%20Core%20Valu)

<https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/The%20Powerful,%20Invisible%20Influence%20of%20Core%20Valu>

[es-%20Why%20Every%20Congregation%20Needs%20to%20Identify%20Them.pdf](https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/The%20Powerful,%20Invisible%20Influence%20of%20Core%20Valu)

<https://www.theparishpaper.com/free-resources> The Powerful, Invisible Influence of Core Values: Why Every Congregation Needs to Identify Them

<http://www.wisconsinumc.org/connections/conference-news/the-parish-paper>

<http://www.wcucc.org/resource-center/church-management/parish-paper/>

<http://www.hcucc.org/the-parish-paper>

<https://www.theparishpaper.com/back-issue-index> Back Issue Index | The Parish Paper

<https://kocucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/P.P.-1-2008.pdf> [PDF] What Core Values Drive Our Church?, January 2008

<https://www.theparishpaper.com/back-issue/what-core-values-drive-our-church>

[https://vbmb-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Parish-Paper\\_2008-01.pdf](https://vbmb-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Parish-Paper_2008-01.pdf)

### Understanding Congregational Core Values - by Kevin Martin

Core Values are the unconscious expectations and values that form the congregation's heart and the glue that holds people together.

<http://www.virtueonline.org/understanding-congregational-core-values-kevin-martin>

[Images for Understanding Congregational Core Values - by Kevin Martin](http://www.virtueonline.org/understanding-congregational-core-values-kevin-martin)

<http://www.fcctc.org/about/core-values.php>

<https://effectivechurch.com/discerning-and-developing-core-values/>

<http://kindredchurch.org/mission> Kindred Community Church > Mission & Core Values  
<http://www.bethanycongregation.org/mission/educational-apostolate/248-bes-vision-and-core-values>  
<http://uccmn.org/pilgrimpoint/about-pilgrim-point/pilgrim-point-mission-core-values/>  
<https://dorsheitzedek.org/core-values>  
<https://kenesethisrael.org/about-us/our-congregation/core-values>  
<https://www.bethor.org/vision-mission-values>  
<https://www.abcoflash.org/about/core-values-beliefs>  
<http://www.centralreform.org/about-us/mission-core-values>  
[Images for mission-core-values](#)

## 16) Comprehensive Ministry Review

I volunteered to serve on a synod review team for a comprehensive ministry review led by Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Director of Evangelical Mission Rev. Laurie Skow-Anderson. The purpose of such a review is to help congregation leadership discover purpose for the congregation in God's mission. The team then gives affirmations and recommendations. Congregation leadership earlier had attended a workshop on "Change and Thrive: A Congregation's Journey from Decline to New Life" and was motivated to participate.

### Resources

#### Change and Thrive

Some of the topics that we will discuss at the workshop are:

- We are here now—accepting the present reality
- Life cycle of a congregation
- Technical and adaptive change; change and conflict
- The three great listenings, spirituality of vibrant congregations
- Importance of doing one-to-ones, Acts Bible Study
- Creating an authentic beloved community
- From the pastor-centered church to pastor as coach, engaging and equipping lay leaders
- The evangelizing church—putting the 'e' back into ELCA
- Building a guiding coalition and creating a 6-month plan

[http://www.nswi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/change\\_and\\_thrive\\_pt\\_1.pdf](http://www.nswi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/change_and_thrive_pt_1.pdf)

[Images for Change and Thrive](#)

#### Change and Thrive: A Congregation's Journey from Decline to New Life

What is God's purpose for your congregation?

That's a big question—one that several members of congregations in our synod gathered to discuss Saturday, Oct 18 at Calvary Lutheran in Minong. Presentations were part of the "Change and Thrive" workshops facilitated by four NWSWI pastors who have attended Mission Redeveloper training - Nancy Hanson, Amy Hessel, Michelle Nickodemus and Paul Simmons.

In an effort to better understand change and how to implement change in congregations, the group learned about the science of renewal, the congregational life cycle, eight characteristics of vital congregations and the difference between adaptive and technical change.

The facilitators challenged the group to create a six-month plan to renew their congregations by focusing on:

Spiritual practices needed for renewal;

Three Great Listenings: listening to God, listening to each other, and listening to the outsider,

Encouraging one-to-one conversations, and

Being the Beloved Community (an authentic Christian community).

Another important key to congregational renewal is being willing to experiment, to try new things, and to identify what the congregation needs to stop doing because it is not working, and it is taking time away from other important renewal projects.

Finding God's purpose for your congregation will almost certainly involve change—and perhaps moving in a new, missional direction. While it might seem a bit overwhelming at first, remember that forming a guiding coalition of key leaders will increase your chance of success. Two additional workshops will be held in November. Why not gather a few lay leaders together and join the conversation!

Saturday, November 1 (9 a.m. - 1 p.m.) at Zion Lutheran, Stratford OR

Saturday, November 15 (9 a.m. - 1 p.m.) at Ezekiel Lutheran, River Falls

Pastors and two to five lay leaders are encouraged to attend this free\* event. Contact the synod office to register: [lbartsch@nswi.org](mailto:lbartsch@nswi.org) or 715-859-6810

If you'd like more information, contact any of the Redeveloper Pastors of our synod: Brian Campbell, Mark Hall, Martin Halom, Nancy Hanson, Amy Hessel, Michelle Nickodemus, Dean Simpson, Paul Simmons, and Jay Ticknor.

[http://www.nswi.org/news\\_and\\_events/news.phtml?id=B70D9368](http://www.nswi.org/news_and_events/news.phtml?id=B70D9368)

[info@nswi.org](mailto:info@nswi.org)

[Images for Change and Thrive: A Congregation's Journey from Decline to New Life](#)

### COMPREHENSIVE MINISTRY REVIEW: "IT MIGHT BE TIME TO CHANGE THOSE SOCKS"

Rev. Laurie Skow-Anderson, DEM and assistant to the bishop Learn about a major effort to renew congregations in our synod.

A ministry review is an attempt to revitalize congregations. If your congregation is in need of renewal, believes that God has a purpose for its future, and if it realizes that change is necessary, then you might consider a Comprehensive Ministry Review.

[View the web page for Walking Together details. - Northwest Synod of Wisconsin](#)

[http://www.nswi.org/news\\_and\\_events/Walking\\_Together.phtml](http://www.nswi.org/news_and_events/Walking_Together.phtml)  
[info@nswi.org](mailto:info@nswi.org)  
[Images for COMPREHENSIVE MINISTRY REVIEW](#)

[PDF] [february 2015 newsletter - Faith Lutheran Church](#)

Dear Friends in Christ,

The one constant truth in an ever-changing world is that change is inevitable. People will post things from the past on Facebook and ask, "Who remembers this?" and there will be a picture of an old ringer washing machine, or the ping pong video game, or the TV knob before we had the remote. It wasn't so long ago that no one had cell phones and the internet was something from a science fiction novel. Now these things are part of everyday life and we can't imagine going back to a time when they were not part of our lives. Change also comes to the church as each generation wrestles with what it means to BE the church in our time and place. We at Faith are no exception and we are in the process called a Comprehensive Ministry Review. It is part of the Change and Thrive – Part 2 process (How to Thrive Through Change, Even When It Scares You). Our Ministry Review will be Feb. 20-22. There is more information about the process below and I invite you to read about it, and pray for Faith Lutheran as we go through the process. If you would like to be involved in meeting with the review team, let me know. Our goal is to thrive through the changes that are happening around us here in Cameron and in the world.

Serving with you in Christ,

Pastor Loren

<http://faithcameron.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/February-Newsletter-2015.pdf>  
[Images for Thrive Through Change, Even When It Scares You](#)

Information about the Comprehensive Ministry Review process and the role of the Synod Ministry Review Team

Periodically it is important for all congregations to reflect on how God is working in their midst and how they are called to live out God's mission within their community. As part of this reflection it is important for congregations to take an honest look at themselves – both at their outward activities and their inward motivations so that they can celebrate how they are walking with God, make corrections where they have gotten off course and identify the new paths that lay ahead.

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the ELCA has developed a way of helping congregations reflect on these things using the help of people from outside the congregation. When people outside the congregation join a cross section of people from inside the congregation, they are able to examine issues from different perspectives and shed new light on things. This time of review, reflection, and sharing is called a Comprehensive Ministry Review. Those who join the congregation in this process are called the Synod Ministry Review Team.

For more information, contact Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Director of Evangelical Mission Rev. Laurie Skow-Anderson [lskow-anderson@nswi.org](mailto:lskow-anderson@nswi.org) <http://nswi.org/about-us/our-staff>  
[info@nswi.org](mailto:info@nswi.org)  
[Images for Comprehensive Ministry Review process and the role of the Synod Ministry Review Team](#)

## 17) Smirk

Imagine, if you will, one of those displays of images of faces corresponding to different feelings. Which face could be used to describe a congregation? Although this may sound simplistic, one congregation I served could be characterized by a smirk. This congregation carried the reputation of considering themselves above the rest of the area congregations. Some of the leadership believed their role to oversee staff to make sure the staff members were doing the job they were getting paid for. "That's what we pay these people for!"

### Resources

#### Emotions Poster by Robert Clyde (Author)

The Emotion Expressions poster is the quickest and easiest way to link faces and feelings. Use it to increase vocabulary and learn about different emotions. Children and adults alike will be able to begin reading facial expressions and express their emotions more clearly. This is a great tool to jump-start discussions about what situations cause different feelings, and how to deal with them appropriately. Ideal for any mainstream or special education classroom.

<http://www.amazon.com/Emotions-poster-Robert-Clyde/dp/1902765133>

[Images for Robert Clyde \(Author\) emotions poster](#)

<https://www.amazon.com/Feelings-Poster-Robert-Clyde/dp/190276515X>

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/390054017699420024/> Increase Vocabulary, Different Feelings, Special Education Classroom, Facial Expressions, Robotics, Asd, Counseling, Bands, Robots

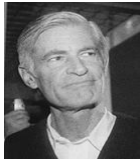
[Images for Different Feelings on Pinterest](#)

#### Smirk - Wikipedia

smirk is a [smile](#) evoking insolence, scorn, or offensive smugness., falling into the category of what [Desmond Morris](#) described as Deformed-Compliments Signals.<sup>[1]</sup>

A smirk may also be an affected, ingratiating smile,<sup>[2]</sup> as in [Mr. Bennet's](#) description of [Mr. Wickham](#) as making smirking love to all his new in-laws.<sup>[3]</sup>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smirk>



A smirk.

<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/smirk>  
[Images for smirk](#)

#### Smirk - definition of smirk by The Free Dictionary

smirk [smɜ:k]

*n*

a smile expressing scorn, smugness, etc., rather than pleasure

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/smirk>  
[Images for smile expressing scorn, smugness](#)  
[Images for derision](#)

#### smirk - Dictionary Definition: Vocabulary.com

A *smirk* is specific kind of smile, one that suggests self-satisfaction, smugness, or even pleasure at someone else's unhappiness or misfortune.

*Smirk* can function as either a noun or a verb: "Wipe that *smirk* off your face. Don't *smirk* at me, buddy: you're gonna get yours next!" A smirk implies you think you're better than the person you're smirking at. Ever heard of the term "service with a smile"? Yeah, well, there's a reason it's not "service with a *smirk*."

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/smirk>  
[Images for pleasure at someone else's unhappiness or misfortune](#)

### 18) Wine or vinegar?

One congregation I served seemed to live on the fine line between sweet wine and sour vinegar.

#### Resources

##### David Gemmell - Yquotes.com

No need for confusion, my dear Mulgrave [...] **Beautiful wine and sour vinegar** come from exactly the same source. Curiously if one leaves a bottle of wine open for long enough it will become vinegar. Happily, in this house wine never survives long enough to go bad.

<http://yquotes.com/david-gemmell/55904/>  
[Images for beautiful wine and sour vinegar](#)

##### What is the difference between wine and vinegar? - Quora

Real vinegar is wine which has been colonized by bacteria which have transformed the alcohol in the wine into acetic acid.

<https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-wine-and-vinegar>  
[Images for What is the difference between wine and vinegar? - Quora](#)

### 19) Preservation

I remember looking at a photo gallery of pastors in one church in a village with a population of 433. A father followed by his son served for decades in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and understandably their photos were bigger than all the others. The leaders of this congregation saw no need to try to invite new people to the congregation. They wanted to preserve the church so that people who left home to work in the cities on the eastern side of the state had a place to come back to upon retirement. At the time of this post, I am aware of at least 3 antique shops in the village and an auction company that specializes in collector's liquidations.

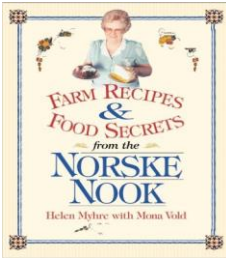
### 20) Lots of good eaters

Back in 1992 at one of the first congregations I served in interim ministry, (an open country congregation as a part of a two-point parish), a mother of one of the confirmation students brought a heaping plate wrapped in tin foil of hot, homemade food fresh from the oven for me each Wednesday evening when she picked up her child from Confirmation. She and her husband raised 5 kids and milked cows. How she had time and the presence of mind to do this is beyond me!

One of the other cooks in the congregation initially thought of buying a root beer stand but started a café in 1973 instead that became award winning especially for its pies. **Norske Nook Restaurants and Bakery - Osseo, Wisconsin**. I fondly recall the congregation as "the one with lots of good cooks." The old saying applied to the potlucks and the annual lutefisk dinner, "Nobody went away hungry." There were always "lots of good eaters."

#### Farm Recipes and Food Secrets from the Norske Nook [Helen Myhre, Mona Vold]

When a small-town cafe in Osseo, Wisconsin, was praised for "some of the world's best pies" in the best-selling guidebook *Roadfood*, Helen Myhre and the Norske Nook became famous! The same home-cooking tips Helen shared on "Late Night with David Letterman" she now shares with you. From breads to gravies, meats to jellies, and of course, that celebrated sour cream raisin pie, Myhre shows you how to bring a rich, thick slice of Midwest cooking into your kitchen.



<http://www.amazon.com/Farm-Recipes-Food-Secrets-Norske/dp/0299172341>  
[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2529896.Farm\\_Recipes\\_and\\_Food\\_Secrets\\_from\\_the\\_Norske\\_Nook](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2529896.Farm_Recipes_and_Food_Secrets_from_the_Norske_Nook)  
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/farm-recipes-and-food-secrets-from-the-norske-nook-helen-myhre/1103428677>  
<https://www.dragonflybooks.com/book/9780299172343>  
<http://norskenook.com/shop/cookbooks/norske-nook-cookbook/>  
<https://norskenook.com/>  
<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0299172341>  
[https://books.google.com/books/about/Farm\\_Recipes\\_and\\_Food\\_Secrets\\_from\\_the\\_N.html?id=rZbz3adtoyYC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Farm_Recipes_and_Food_Secrets_from_the_N.html?id=rZbz3adtoyYC)  
<http://uwpress.wisc.edu/books/2097.htm>  
<http://www.chicagonow.com/armchair-cook/2014/08/farm-recipes-food-secrets-from-the-norske-nook/>  
<http://northwoodsbrewpub.com/product/farm-recipes-and-food-secrets-from-the-norske-nook-recipe-book/>  
[https://madison.com/wsj/lifestyles/food-and-cooking/recipes/cooks-exchange-soup-and-more-from-norske-nook/article\\_6718350a-9a5b-5978-985d-2145c3e7b338.html](https://madison.com/wsj/lifestyles/food-and-cooking/recipes/cooks-exchange-soup-and-more-from-norske-nook/article_6718350a-9a5b-5978-985d-2145c3e7b338.html)  
[https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/farm-recipes-and-food-secrets-from-the-norske-nook-the-midwests-1-roadside-cafe\\_helen-myhre\\_mona-vold/431585/#isbn=0299172341&idq=4174908](https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/farm-recipes-and-food-secrets-from-the-norske-nook-the-midwests-1-roadside-cafe_helen-myhre_mona-vold/431585/#isbn=0299172341&idq=4174908)  
<https://www.twincities.com/2015/05/02/wisconsin-norske-nook-spills-its-pie-secrets-in-cookbook/>  
<https://norskenook.com/photo-gallery-2/>  
Images for Helen Myhre, Mona Vold  
[Images for Farm Recipes and Food Secrets from the Norske Nook \[Helen Myhre, Mona Vold\]](#)

In 2009, I served in a community with another Norske Nook. On Wednesday evenings, a group of people from one of the congregations in the two-point parish met on Wednesday evenings for pie night at the restaurant. One of the women in the group had worked at the restaurant for many years making the pies.

#### Norske Nook, Rice Lake - TripAdvisor



Norske Nook Restaurant and Bakery

[3.616 Google reviews](#)

Family Restaurant

Branch of a regional chain serving a mix of Norwegian & American standards, plus many homemade pies.

Address: 2900 Pioneer Ave, Rice Lake, WI 54868

Phone: (715) 234-1733

Hours:

Open today · 6:00 am – 8:00 pm

Menu: [norskenook.com](http://norskenook.com)

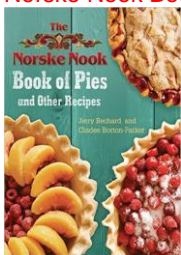
[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant\\_Review-g60231-d1171617-Reviews-Norske\\_Nook-Rice\\_Lake\\_Wisconsin.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g60231-d1171617-Reviews-Norske_Nook-Rice_Lake_Wisconsin.html)

[https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g60231-d1171617-i150893977-Norske\\_Nook-Rice\\_Lake\\_Wisconsin.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g60231-d1171617-i150893977-Norske_Nook-Rice_Lake_Wisconsin.html)

In 2015-16, I served in a congregation where I was served pie at 8am on my second day for the meeting of the men's group. The donor was the owner of the Norske Nook in that community 2 hours north of the original restaurant on Hwy 53. He bought the original restaurant in 1990 and expanded to other locations. He related that, when he purchased the first restaurant, he followed the original owner around and wrote down all the recipes, because she went by memory and not by note cards.



The Norske Nook Book of Pies and Other Recipes [Jerry Bechard, Cindee Borton-Parker]



The Norske Nook, founded as a small-town café in 1973, is now a foursome of revered pie shrines in Osseo, Rice Lake, Eau Claire, and Hayward, Wisconsin. The Nook's international fame grew from a tradition of Midwest home baking, informed by Scandinavian roots and enriched by the luscious ripe fruit and sumptuous sour creams and cream cheeses of America's dairyland.

This cookbook features the restaurants' award-winning baking: Scandinavian specialties, cheesecakes, tortes, cookies, muffins, and more than seventy recipes (and variations) for pie. More than fifty new pie recipes have been created by the Nook bakers since 1990, when Jerry Bechard purchased the Osseo café from founder Helen Myhre. The Norske Nook has won thirty-six blue ribbons at the National Pie Championships in Florida—including three in 2014, for Lemon Cream Cheese, Peaches and Cream, and Jamberry.



<http://www.amazon.com/Norske-Nook-Book-Other-Recipes/dp/0299304302>

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/23576898-the-norske-nook-book-of-pies-and-other-recipes>

<https://www.powells.com/book/the-norske-nook-book-of-pies-and-other-recipes-9780299304300>

<http://norskenook.com/shop/cookbooks/the-norske-nook-book-of-pies-and-other-recipes/>

[http://host.madison.com/entertainment/dining/norske-nook-pies-take-center-stage-in-new-cookbook/article\\_44984996-4e0b-570e-99ab-4641651052b1.html](http://host.madison.com/entertainment/dining/norske-nook-pies-take-center-stage-in-new-cookbook/article_44984996-4e0b-570e-99ab-4641651052b1.html)

[Images for Jerry Bechard](#)

[Images for Cindee Borton-Parker](#)

[Images for The Norske Nook Book of Pies and Other Recipes \[Jerry Bechard, Cindee Borton-Parker\]](#)

[http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci\\_28041252/wisconsins-norske-nook-spills-its-pie-secrets-cookbook](http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_28041252/wisconsins-norske-nook-spills-its-pie-secrets-cookbook)

[Images for norske nook pie secrets](#)

<http://www.startribune.com/what-s-cooking-norske-nook-spills-its-secrets/300948271/>

<http://uwpress.wisc.edu/books/5406.htm>

<http://www.epicurious.com/archive/blogs/editor/2013/10/a-norske-nook-swedish-goes-heartland-pie-lingonberry.html>

[http://www.apg-wi.com/sawyer\\_county\\_record/news/local/the-pies-of-norske-nook-featured-in-new-book/article\\_eb95a0fa-de00-11e4-835e-8f75281d498e.html](http://www.apg-wi.com/sawyer_county_record/news/local/the-pies-of-norske-nook-featured-in-new-book/article_eb95a0fa-de00-11e4-835e-8f75281d498e.html)

<http://www.jsonline.com/features/food/norske-nooks-pecan-pie-rv916vd-197359071.html>

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/travel/ct-trav-0607-norske-nook-pies-20150528-story.html>

<https://norskenook.com/norwegian-restaurant-bakery-gift-shop-locations/>

<https://norskenook.com/menu/>

[Images for norske nook menu](#)

<http://norskenook.com/menu-breakfast-classics/>

[https://norskenook.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Norske-Nook\\_Main-Menu\\_JohnsonBoyd-6.29.16.pdf](https://norskenook.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Norske-Nook_Main-Menu_JohnsonBoyd-6.29.16.pdf)

[The Restaurant Show | Norske Nook | 3/15/16 - YouTube](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z\\_JjeRXxVvI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_JjeRXxVvI)

[Images for Restaurant Show | Norske Nook | YouTube](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdgsmnlmVnU> CW57 | The Restaurant Show | Cindee Borton-Parker | Norske Nook | 5-17-16 – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAKxu5GWqc> CW57 | The Restaurant Show | Cindee Borton-Parker | Norske Nook | 6-14-16 - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTkMwRuclrk> CW57 | The Restaurant Show | Cindee Borton-Parker | Norske Nook | 7-05-16 – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9HGDzyDqn8> Norske Nook coming to DeForest - YouTube

On my next to the last Sunday, I asked the praise band to play for a gospel music service, and I bought apple pies from the Norske Nook as well as vanilla ice cream from the nearby Kwik Trip for a pie and ice cream social between services of worship.

## 21) When we meet, we eat

A former pastor coined a phrase to describe the congregation: "When we meet, we eat." Believe me when I say the people did a lot of meeting and eating. Interestingly, the men of the congregation did much of the cooking, especially for the big meals.

## 22) Unique physical characteristics of worship facility

The unique physical characteristic of a worship facility sometimes provides a way to refer to a congregation. One such congregation in the largest population center in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin is known as the "ski slope church" because of its roof line,

### About Who we are - Trinity Lutheran Church



<http://www.trinity-ec.org/about.phtml>

[Images for trinity lutheran church eau claire wi](#)

### Doering & Hase's Wedding Ceremony - Trinity Lutheran Church

Dec 27, 2014 - The ceremony will be taking place at Abby's church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The church is off of Clairemont Avenue and has a **ski slope** roof design that makes it recognizable from the road.

<http://www.theknot.com/wedding/Doering-Hase/view/8647088756222689/41261226>

[Images for ski slope roof design](#)

while another congregation in the same city was known as the church with "the bright red doors."

### First Lutheran Church (ELCA) - Eau Claire, WI

First Lutheran Church is located two blocks north of the County Courthouse in downtown Eau Claire. You'll easily identify them by the **bright red doors** which open to their sanctuary. They are a congregation for and about the world.



<http://www.visiteauclaire.com/listings/First-Lutheran-Church-ELCA-/649/>

[Images for First Lutheran Church \(ELCA\) - Eau Claire, WI](#)

## 23) Second tier

At one congregation, I presented the transition dynamics at the monthly meetings of the Congregation Council and invited conversation. When discussing identity, I asked, "How would you describe the personality of your congregation?" One member spoke forthrightly regarding the congregation, "Reserved and reluctant to change." Another said, "People can sometimes be kind of cranky." I asked, "How would you describe the personality of your community?" One member responded, "People will greet each other at the community fair, but would rather sit on the back patio at home by themselves than sit on the front porch and wave to people." The member added, "There are two tiers of churches in the community that a newcomer would consider. The Assembly of God, the Evangelical Free, and the UCC are in the first tier. We're in the second tier."

## 24) Self-defense

Invariably, the front page of the county seat newspaper for the community of the congregation I served seemed to relate something about the VFW or American Legion, the police/sheriff or fire departments, hunting or fishing, while inside pages carried photos and/or articles about the local veterans' memorial park and the judo club. The community also boasted a boxing club and a bear hunting club. An outdoor rifle shooting range stood outside of town, while an indoor bow and arrow shooting range stood on the edge of town, not to

mention a National Guard Armory on the other side of town. I quipped once in conversation with the mother of one of the boxers, “The people of this community seem uniquely prepared to defend themselves.”

## 25) Good sportsmanship

I remarked to a member of the congregation that I observed the fans at the school athletic events to be especially well mannered. The member, who also served as a timekeeper for many of the basketball games, replied that the school had a reputation for respect. In fact, he related that occasionally when some school choice parents come into the district and start yelling at the refs, the other parents sometimes took them aside and told them, “We do not act like that around here. This is how we behave...”

### Sportsmanship | Schools | Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association

Attendance at interscholastic activities is a privilege with the expectation to exhibit positive and respectful behavior. For the enjoyment and respect of all in attendance, your cooperation in demonstrating the **high ideals of sportsmanship** is expected and greatly appreciated.

<https://www.wiaawi.org/Schools/Sportsmanship.aspx>

<https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Sportsmanship/DefinitionFundamentals.pdf>

[Images for Sportsmanship | Schools | Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association](#)

[Images for high ideals of sportsmanship](#)

## 26) Blessing of animals

It is said, “A dog is a (hu)man’s best friend.” When I bless the animals as a part of the Commemoration of St. Francis, I notice how each congregation contains a variety of personality traits and that, oftentimes, the animals, as a part of the family, mirror those traits.

At one congregation, one family was big and lumbering and lived on the farm.

Q: What kind of dog did they present for a blessing?

A mother and her children were more petite and lived in town. She worked as a hair stylist.

Q: What kind of dog did they present for a blessing?

A: The first family presented a St. Bernard, while the mother and her children presented a miniature poodle.

When I first started offering a Blessing of Animals, I thought it would be children bringing their pets. More and more, I see older people present animals, which are companions, especially after the children have left home and they are left with an otherwise empty nest.

### Resources

#### How pets influence our faith - Living Lutheran

Many ELCA congregations will do a pet blessing in early October, honoring the legacy of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals. In this article, we hear how pets have influenced the faith life of Living Lutheran readers.

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2016/10/pets-influence-faith/>

[Images for How pets influence our faith - Living Lutheran](#)

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

#### 3 Ways Owning a Pet Makes You a Better Person | Prevention

Read enough of the research and you start to wonder if our species might disintegrate into a chaos of petty isolationism if our pets weren’t here to aid our growth as humans. And as pets nudge this evolution, what’s fascinating is exactly which human traits they bring out in us.



<http://www.prevention.com/health/healthy-living/3-ways-owning-pet-makes-you-better-person>

[Images for Owning a Pet Makes You a Better Person](#)

## 27) Washing dishes by hand

An open country congregation turned the sanctuary around, added a kitchen, fellowship hall, and classrooms several decades earlier so that members, instead of coming into the narthex, walked into the fellowship hall with the kitchen to the immediate left. The people served food on numerous occasions and elected to use plates and glassware instead of disposable materials. Men and women, boys and girls gathered around the sink and counter to wash and dry dishes. The congregation resisted suggestions to purchase an automatic dishwasher because of the camaraderie involved in washing and drying dishes.

## 28) Preacher-eater churches

One member suggested at a meeting of the Congregation Council that the congregation call a young pastor, while the president cautioned, “There are enough old Norwegians here who could chew him up.” The next 2 pastors came fresh out of the seminary anyway and lasted about 3 years each until they could find new calls.

## Resources

### Dealing with The Preacher-Eaters in the Pews | Pastor Joe McKeever

Pity the new pastor who walks into a church unprepared to deal with carnal leaders who enjoy their power positions and cannot wait to let the new minister know who's in charge.

<http://joemckeeper.com/wp/dealing-with-the-preacher-eaters-in-the-pews/>

Images for Dealing with The Preacher-Eaters in the Pews | Pastor Joe McKeever

<https://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/joe-mckeeper/what-happens-when-a-church-fires-a-pastor.html>

Images for joemckeeper/what-happens-when-a-church-fires-a-pastor

### Preacher Eaters - Building A Healthy Church Through Repentance

What is a preacher eater? The preaching eating church is a church that fires its pastor (or the pastor quits) every two or three years, and they begin the long, expensive search for a new one. If your church has had five pastors in the last 10 to 15 years, or if you have a hard time finding men who apply for the job, your church is probably a preacher eater.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/preacher-eaters-building-healthy-church-through-repentance-sears>

Images for Preacher Eaters - Building A Healthy Church Through Repentance

### Six Main Traits of Preacher Eater Churches - ThomRainer.com

A preacher eater church has a series of short-term pastors, and those departing pastors have few positive words to say about them. As my pastor friend noted, "That church will eat you alive."

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/02/six-main-traits-preacher-eater-churches/>

Images for Six Main Traits of Preacher Eater Churches - ThomRainer.com

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/03/six-traits-preacher-eater-churches-rainer-leadership-311/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/08/before-you-fire-your-pastor/>

<http://equip.sbts.edu/article/beware-preacher-eater-churches/>

<https://sharperiron.org/filings/022217/32941>

<https://www.facebook.com/Thom.S.Rainer/posts/1391946817531977>

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/11/five-dangers-church-cartel/>

#3

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/12/painful-reality-church-bully-cartels/>

#3

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/01/seven-steps-take-cartel-bullies-run-church/>

#4

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/08/dying-churches-die/>

#2

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/06/six-stages-dying-church/>

#2

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/04/autopsy-of-a-deceased-church-11-things-i-learned/>

#7

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/11/three-common-sentences-dying-churches-revitalize-replant-010/>

#2

<https://www.amazon.com/Thom-S.-Rainer/e/B001IGLMVG>

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/27470.Thom\\_S\\_Rainer](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/27470.Thom_S_Rainer)

Images for thom rainer (author)

## 29) Vacation destination

I went early one afternoon to the community where I was going to meet with the Congregation Council for the concurrent interview. I picked up the local paper and read an article entitled "Helping agency offers the next step", which gave an insight into the context:

Our area is known as vacation destination blessed with natural beauty that inspires, but often screened by the thick verdant forest and the glare of the glistening blue lakes is the high level of poverty and human struggle of people on the margin, county residents struggling not to be homeless, to keep their car running so that they can make it to a minimum wage job, struggling with the choice of paying a medical bill or buying groceries.

I went to a big box store on a winter day with the snow falling. The clerk stated that she held down more than one job but did not own a car so that she was going to ride her bike back home after finishing her work shift.

## 30) Good Samaritan

I was walking back from a community event to the parsonage late one afternoon about two weeks into a new assignment. It looked like rain, but I thought I had enough time to stop for something to eat. Sure enough, when I got close to the church, the rain started to come down in sheets. Because I did not have my keys to the church with me, I kept walking to the parsonage some four blocks away. A car stopped, and the driver rolled down the window and yelled out, "You live around these parts?" I pointed and yelled back, "Four more blocks." She yelled to me, "Get in then." I thanked her for the kind gesture and said, "You're a good Samaritan." She replied, "That's what we do in this community!"

## 31) Members and attenders, visitors and guests

The church was situated in the middle of a tourist area. The people who gathered for services of worship, especially in the summer, included members and attenders, visitors and guests. I kept this in mind when planning for and when leading services of worship.

## 32) Country Club or Mission Outpost?

The church was located one block from the golf club.

A country club caters to its members,

while a mission outpost sends people out into the community.

#### The Mission Outpost Model for Church - YouTube

Pastor and author Mike Slaughter talks about how the world can be changed when churches take on the role of a mission outpost.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORGKjU4-FCU>

[Images for Mission Outpost Model for Church - YouTube](#)

[Images for author Mike Slaughter](#)

### 33) Identifying the Congregation's Personality

As an interim pastor, I work with the various personalities of different congregations. *Identifying the Congregation's Personality: An Introduction to Congregational Type* by Dr. Michael C. Rehak has proved to be helpful in providing the appropriate pastoral leadership for a particular congregation's personality. For instance, as an INTJ personality, I was asked to accept an assignment in a congregation that displayed many of the characteristics of an ENFP personality. His booklet gave a description of such a congregation personality and then suggested:

#### Clergy Leaders

Pastors would be wise to recognize that this congregation needs to be valued for its valuing of others. The authority of the pastor is based on involvement in people's lives. Clergy who have the gift to bring healing and peace to personal issues are especially respected. While the expectation for the pastor in this congregation may be that of peacemaker and friend, a primary role is likely to be the maintainer of the system. Consistency may be an issue. Resistance to change is not an issue when the relational benefits are articulated. Respect can be lost by strong adherence to, or emphasis on, polity, details, or theory. Page 19

#### Congregational Identity

Having been trained and licensed in 1984 in the use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), which is grounded in Jungian Psychology, Michael began his research, *Identifying the Congregation's Corporate Personality* in 1988. At the same time, he honed his skills as a teaching consultant, contracting with major Silicon Valley companies to give middle-management seminars using the MBTI as a knowledge base. The initial research thesis was completed in 1992, followed by a research article published in *The Journal of Psychological Type* in 1088 (vol. 44). Upon moving back to Wisconsin later that year, he founded the Institute for Congregational Identity.

In 1999, Michael's discernment led him into the ministry of being an Intentional Interim; often taking on the more hurt or troubled congregations. His understanding of congregational personalities, with support knowledge of levels and dynamics of conflict, and congregation size dynamics, have been assets in his interim work. A break in parish ministry was taken from 2001-2007 to serve as the Associate with the Bishop for Congregational Health.

<http://congregationalidentity.org/meet.html>

[Images for Institute for Congregational Identity](#)

<http://congregationalidentity.org/contact.html>

[http://congregationalidentity.org/Institute\\_for\\_Congregational\\_Identity/7\\_Research\\_Article.html](http://congregationalidentity.org/Institute_for_Congregational_Identity/7_Research_Article.html)

### 34) Who Are We?

One congregation I served asked "Who Are We?" in their website article on the visitor's tab and in the response to follow said that the congregation is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and the ELCA "can trace its roots back to the Protestant Reformation that took place in the 16<sup>th</sup> century."

#### Who Are We?

This congregation is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The ELCA, along with other Lutheran churches, can trace its roots directly to the Protestant Reformation that took place in Europe in the 16th Century. Martin Luther, a German monk, became aware of differences between the Bible and church practices of the day. His writings, lectures and sermons inspired others to protest church practices and call for reform.

By the late 1500's the Reformation had spread throughout Europe. Followers of Martin Luther's teachings were labeled "Lutherans" by their enemies and adopted the name themselves. Lutheran beliefs eventually spread throughout the world as early explorers took their faith with them on their voyages.

As people migrated to the New World, and started their own churches, a number of these congregations would form a "synod" or church body, and as the nation expanded, so did the number of Lutheran church bodies. Over a period of many years these synods merged into larger synods.

In 1960, The American Lutheran Church was formed through the union of three smaller church bodies of German, Norwegian, and Danish background. In 1962, another merger created The Lutheran Church in America. Joining with a number of congregations that had severed their relationship with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, these church bodies, The ALC, LCA, and AELC, merged in 1988 to form the present ELCA, representing over 5 million Lutherans in over 11,000 congregations.

Churches of the ELCA confess the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the



Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe. We accept the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of our proclamation, faith, and life. We also accept the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of faith, and the historical documents of the Reformation—Augsburg Confession, Smalcald Articles, Formula of Concord, Small and Large Catechism—as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church. Confirmation classes at this congregation are offered 7th – 9th grade, with Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation Day) in October of the 10th grade. Communion instruction is offered during the Lenten Season of the 5th grade. We invite all who are baptized, instructed, and believe the Lord is truly present in the sacrament, to partake of Holy Communion with us.

This congregation invites you to join our fellowship as we worship and do ministry, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Come join us in the Body of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

### 35) Dying or Being Reborn?

In 1989, I self-published the booklet *Family Farm or Factory Farm? A Time to Choose*, and in 1990 I self-published the booklet *Rural Communities: Dying or Being Reborn?* In Part VII Life in the Midst of Death of the latter booklet, I wrote two chapters: Chapter 17 Acknowledging the Grief, Chapter 18 Accepting the Challenge.

The first week of a new assignment 25+ years later I walked through the village and drove through the countryside and saw the change in the countryside from small farms to a few large farms and to a village at one time filled with Scandinavians and Germans now filled with recent immigrants from south of the border who worked at the large packing plant. Even many of the Amish and Mennonites on the land often worked on the large farms rather than trying to make a go of it by milking cows on a small scale. For the people of the village congregation and the open country congregation both growing smaller and older, it seemed like the loss of a way of life. As far as I could figure, only three families out of both congregations milked cows. I was not prepared for the wash of emotions that came over me. As Yogi Berra used to say, "It's déjà vu, all over again!" Also, it can be said, the future is now, as the family farm and its way of life is disappearing. I recall a colleague in the ministry now retired who moved from Iowa to Wisconsin many years earlier because he believed Wisconsin was the last place there was any semblance of family farming and the accompanying way of life. The corollary is, "When it's gone in Wisconsin, it's gone!" At the same time, I was struck by the determination of people in both congregations to continue to be a presence in the community even amidst the increased challenges.

The next week, I received a phone call from a woman in the rural neighborhood who been served divorce papers that day. Her situation consisted of alcoholism, isolation, verbal and physical abuse.

The next week after that, I listened to an interview on National Public Radio by Steve Inskeep with J. D. Vance, author of *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, though set in a different part of the country, still illuminated what is happening in much of rural America. I was struck by his comments on how important the church is in these communities but that, in the midst of the decaying social fabric, people are sliding away from the church.

#### 'Hillbilly Elegy' Author on The White Working Class and America's Greatness - NPR

Steve Inskeep talks with J.D. Vance, whose new book *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* looks at why the white working class is broken and how that helps explain the phenomenon of Donald Trump.

<http://www.npr.org/2016/08/04/488637593/hillbilly-elegy-author-on-the-white-working-class-and-americas-greatness>

[Images for 'Hillbilly Elegy' Author](#)

### Resources

#### *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* by J. D. Vance (Author)

From a former marine and Yale Law School graduate, a powerful account of growing up in a poor Rust Belt town that offers a broader, probing look at the struggles of America's white working class

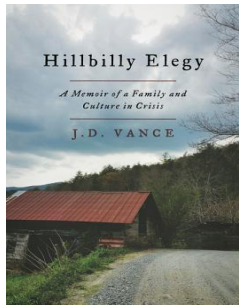
*Hillbilly Elegy* is a passionate and personal analysis of a culture in crisis—that of white working-class Americans. The decline of this group, a demographic of our country that has been slowly disintegrating over forty years, has been reported on with growing frequency and alarm, but has never before been written about as searingly from the inside. J. D. Vance tells the true story of what a social, regional, and class decline feels like when you were born with it hung around your neck.

The Vance family story begins hopefully in postwar America. J. D.'s grandparents were "dirt poor and in love," and moved north from Kentucky's Appalachia region to Ohio in the hopes of escaping the dreadful poverty around them. They raised a middle-class family, and eventually their grandchild (the author) would graduate from Yale Law School, a conventional marker of their success in achieving generational upward mobility.

But as the family saga of *Hillbilly Elegy* plays out, we learn that this is only the short, superficial version. Vance's grandparents, aunt, uncle, sister, and, most of all, his mother, struggled profoundly with the demands of their new middle-class life, and were never able to fully escape the legacy of abuse, alcoholism, poverty, and trauma so characteristic of their part of America.

Vance piercingly shows how he himself still carries around the demons of their chaotic family history.

A deeply moving memoir with its share of humor and vividly colorful figures, *Hillbilly Elegy* is the story of how upward mobility really feels. And it is an urgent and troubling meditation on the loss of the American dream for a large segment of this country.



<http://www.amazon.com/Hillbilly-Elegy-Memoir-Family-Culture/dp/0062300547>  
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<http://www.weeklystandard.com/why-trump-is-failing-the-white-working-class/article/2003637>  
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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_SMbG\\_1vug](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_SMbG_1vug) Hillbilly Elegy - Amazon Books - YouTube  
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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1\\_xBFbClw-0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_xBFbClw-0) Newsmax Prime | JD Vance on his new book that shows the American Dream is still alive and well – YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdlG5Dpcacs> JD Vance on growing up white and poor in America – YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVvuTKWzOcs> J.D. Vance on his new book Hillbilly Elegy - YouTube  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_Idvppb\\_io](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_Idvppb_io) The decline of the white working class: Featuring J. D. Vance and Charles Murray | LIVE STREAM - YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmWi2Azthy4> J.D. Vance on Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of Family and Culture in Crisis - Full interview | VIEWPOINT – YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUQWjeGom6U> The struggling, rural, white communities that feel like nobody cares - YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzeQfllJLF0> Author J.D. Vance Explains How Trump Is Winning the White Working Class Vote  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soqQlv\\_nsPA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soqQlv_nsPA) Hillary Clinton Voters on J D Vance's Book HILLBILLY ELEGY @JDVance1  
<http://www.cnn.com/videos/tv/2016/08/13/exp-gps-0814-vance-hillbilly-elegy.cnn> A haunting memoir explains Donald Trump's support - CNN.com  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/megyn-kelly/video/going-home-best-selling-author-j-d-vance-opens-up-about-his-painful-childhood-and-the-future-ahead-975925827899> Going Home: Best-Selling Author J.D Vance Opens Up About His Painful Childhood and the Future Ahead  
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[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/15109469.J\\_D\\_Vance](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/15109469.J_D_Vance)  
[Images for J. D. Vance \(Author\)](#)  
[Images for Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis by J. D. Vance \(Author\)](#)

### J.D. Vance and the Anger of the White Working Class - WSJ

He hopes that his experiences and path upward with the help of religion, discipline and family will inspire communities to promote those values. “Concretely, I want pastors and church leaders to think about how to build community churches, to keep people engaged, and to worry less about politics and more about how the people in their communities are doing,” he says. “I want parents to fight and scream less, and to recognize how destructive chaos is to their children’s future.” He thinks that school leaders could help by being more cognizant of what’s going on in students’ home lives. But most of all he wants people to hold themselves responsible for their own conduct and choices. “Those of us who weren’t given every advantage can make better choices, and those choices do have the power to affect our lives,” he says.



<http://www.wsj.com/articles/j-d-vance-and-the-anger-of-the-white-working-class-1469813974>  
[Images for J.D. Vance and the Anger of the White Working Class](#)  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/j\\_d\\_vance\\_america\\_s\\_forgotten\\_working\\_class](https://www.ted.com/talks/j_d_vance_america_s_forgotten_working_class)  
[Images for /j d vance america s forgotten working class](#)  
[https://www.ted.com/speakers/jd\\_vance](https://www.ted.com/speakers/jd_vance)  
[Images for ted/speakers/jd\\_vance](#)

And on the fifth Sunday I was there, a father and mother in their early 30s showed up for the service of worship during the gathering song. I talked to him afterwards. He explained that he was the fourth generation on a centennial dairy farm milking 50 cows. He explained that the large factory farms negotiate for both their purchase of supplies and for their sale of raw milk outside the community so that the money does not turn over in the local economy. The feed mill across the street from the hotel I was staying in was where the smaller family farmers came to do business. Larger farms mean fewer people in the community and in the congregation.

### Squeezed between low prices and rising expenses, dairy farmers are leaving the farm

After spending his entire adult life as a dairyman, Joe Lieftring of rural Eau Galle in Dunn County sold his cows at auction on Thursday. Lieftring, standing with his cows the day before the auction, said the weak dairy economy drove him out of the business...

Lieftring, too, has seen — and survived — lean times before in the dairy market and always kept plugging along. In the past, he just continued milking his cows twice a day and waited for the next upturn in the market. But this time just feels different, he said, noting that prices have been down for about two years without much prospect of going back up. His optimism is gone when it comes to the future of small farms in the Dairy State. “When you drive around the countryside, you see farm after farm all sitting empty,” Lieftring said. “That’s what Wisconsin used to be, but it’s not anymore. I think smaller farms are going to be a thing of the past.”

<http://www.leadertelegram.com/News/Front-Page/2017/06/17/Gone-sour.html>  
<http://www.thebullvine.com/news/squeezed-between-low-milk-prices-and-rising-expenses-dairy-farmers-are-leaving-the-farm/>  
[Images for dairy farmers are leaving the farm](#)  
<https://www.channel3000.com/news/wisconsin-farmers-hope-millennials-will-take-over-for-the-500-dairy-farms-lost-in-2017/684096875>  
<http://www.waow.com/story/37219584/2018/01/Monday/wisconsin-dairy-farmers-notice-a-decline-is-business>  
<https://www.jsonline.com/story/money/business/2017/04/05/wisconsin-dairy-farmers-shut-out-canadian-market/100087448/>  
<http://www.weau.com/content/news/Wisconsin-sees-decline-in-number-of-dairy-farms-468332613.html>  
[Images for Wisconsin-sees-decline-in-number-of-dairy-farms](#)  
<https://www.wisfarmer.com/story/news/midwest/2018/02/20/farm-family-witnesses-end-their-dairy-dreams/351153002/>  
[Images for farm-family-witnesses-end-their-dairy-dreams](#)

### 36) Showing up early

190 people showed up for a Saturday, 11am memorial service at an open country congregation. 90% of the people were seated in the nave and adjoining fellowship area by 10:45am. Most stayed for the lunch following the committal. When I mentioned my observation to an older woman the next morning at 8.05am before an 8.30am Sunday worship, she replied, "We like to show up early and catch up with each other." The following Wednesday, I showed up to lead a mid-week service of worship at the local nursing home in town at 1:37pm for a 2pm listed start time. As I got off the elevator on the second floor, I looked down to the worship area where the residents were sitting in rows ready for the service of worship. At first, I wondered if I was late. But the efficient staff brought 40+ people to the service of worship early. When I talked to one of the staff, they said everybody they could think of that could come was there. So, at 1:45pm I began the service. Experiencing so many people showing up early for a service of worship in 3 different circumstances expectantly ready makes leading services of worship more satisfying.

#### Arrive at Church Early, On Time, or Late? | Peter DeHaan

Arrive Early: When we walk through the church doors early, it says we're eager to worship God, and we enjoy Christian community. It shows respect for God and others. Depending on our personality we may spend this extra time in quiet contemplation, in prayer, or in conversation.

<http://www.peterdehaan.com/spiritually-speaking/do-you-arrive-at-church-early-on-time-or-late/>  
Images for Arrive at Church Early

### 37) Second home

I invited conversation with the Congregation Council of a village church about the transition dynamic of identity. One member, who had joined the congregation 15 years earlier, said she felt like the church was her second home.

#### Resources

##### Free Essays on My Church is My Second Home - Net Essays

The reason for all this happiness and joy is all the friendships, compassion and love that everyone gives. It has a home away from home type of feeling to it.

<https://www.netessays.net/viewpaper/132297.html>  
Images for Church is My Second Home

##### Help for the Small-church Pastor: Unlocking the Potential of Your Congregation by Steve R. Bierly

"It feels like home. Sunday morning is a family reunion."

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0310499518>

Page 92

Churches of less than 150 remain the rule rather than the exception in American Christianity. However, seminaries don't equip their students in every way that's necessary to effectively lead smaller congregations -- despite the fact that most seminary graduates will become small-church pastors. *Help for the Small-Church Pastor* offers pastors of small churches the guidance and encouragement they need. In this common-sense book, Steve Bierly draws from his eleven years in ministry to show what makes smaller congregations tick. *Help for the Small-Church Pastor* provides practical insights on uniquely "small-church" issues, such as-- The characteristics of small churches - How to work effectively as an "insider" within the small church - How God is at work in powerful ways in smaller assemblies - How to motivate your church toward positive change and true growth - How to invest your own time and energy in the right directions - How your church can reach out to the community in ways that are practical and productive -- "There are many ways for even the smallest congregation to be true to the church's calling," says Steve Bierly. *Help for the Small-Church Pastor* will steer you through the strengths and weaknesses of your small church to unearth its true riches.

<https://www.amazon.com/Help-Small-Church-Pastor-Steve-Bierly/dp/0310499518>

<http://www.zondervan.com/help-for-the-small-church-pastor>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0310499518>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Help\\_for\\_the\\_Small\\_church\\_Pastor.html?id=Qy2sullpbuMC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Help_for_the_Small_church_Pastor.html?id=Qy2sullpbuMC)

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/book-summaries/bierly-help-for-the-small-church-pastor.html>

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/ministry-resources/church-leadership-strategies-small-churches.html>

<https://www.ruralministry.net/books-on-rural-america-and-ministry>

<http://goba.org/church-revitalization-bibliography>

[http://d3pi8hptl0qhh4.cloudfront.net/documents/dmin/Theo\\_Prac\\_Bibliography.pdf](http://d3pi8hptl0qhh4.cloudfront.net/documents/dmin/Theo_Prac_Bibliography.pdf)

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<https://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3558&context=syllabi>

Page 5

[https://www.bobyoungresources.com/bibliography/bibliography\\_small-church.pdf](https://www.bobyoungresources.com/bibliography/bibliography_small-church.pdf)

Page 1

EMS 102 L00.A - Criswell College

Page 9

[https://www.criswell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/SP17-Syllabus\\_Meraz\\_EMS-102-Church-Evangelism-L00.A-1.pdf](https://www.criswell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/SP17-Syllabus_Meraz_EMS-102-Church-Evangelism-L00.A-1.pdf)

Page 7

<https://www.amazon.com/Steve-R.-Bierly/e/B000APF2PS>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/917040.Steve\\_R\\_Bierly](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/917040.Steve_R_Bierly)

Images for Steve R. Bierly, author

Images for Help for the Small-church Pastor: Unlocking the Potential of Your Congregation by Steve R. Bierly

##### Now I Remember Why Church Feels Like Home - The Washington Post

The black church of the '60s and '70s had been an integral part of our respective communities, indeed of every black community in this country. It was not just a place we went to on Sunday mornings and then forgot about the rest of the week. It

was a core of family and social relationships. Its ministry reached out beyond the hallowed walls and stained- glass windows to join -- in many cases, lead -- the civil rights movement all across the South.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1984/05/27/now-i-remember-why-church-feels-like-home/fac3f926-b7ae-43a4-94ef-6fed6ca54a69/?utm\\_term=.d1f0c50e90a3](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1984/05/27/now-i-remember-why-church-feels-like-home/fac3f926-b7ae-43a4-94ef-6fed6ca54a69/?utm_term=.d1f0c50e90a3)

[Images for Now I Remember Why Church Feels Like Home - The Washington Post](#)

### 38) Progressive or provincial?

The introduction page to a pictorial directory for an open country congregation read:

Who we are.

*(church)* is progressive rural congregation. With humble beginnings, this congregation...

Pastor *(name)*

I think the words of this long-term, much beloved pastor were well-intentioned, but I experienced the congregation as more *provincial* than *progressive* although I would not have said so in an introduction to a pictorial directory. It was the first congregation I had served in which a room next to the nave was dedicated as the Heritage Room. The matriarch once stated emphatically, "I don't like change!" I quipped, "The only one who likes change is the baby with a dirty diaper." She laughed good naturedly, as she had recently babysat a great grandson. I talked with her grandson during a baptismal orientation who stayed to work on the family farm and wanted nothing to do with the big city. A few months later, she approached me to ask who had changed the light bulb in the light fixture in the nave directly above where she sat. I quipped, "How many people does it take to change a light bulb?" She recognized the light bulb joke, chuckled, and walked away. The next time I saw her, I asked, "Did you find out who changed the light bulb?" to which she replied emphatically, "Yes!" I said, "I don't want to know. Sometimes, things happen."

When I invited conversation with the Congregation Council on

18. Please tell us how each phrase describes this congregation

e. This congregation is always ready to try something new.

of the Congregation Report there was a distinct pause, and then a reply, "I don't know about that." Following some further conversation, on the spectrum of Hardly at all – Somewhat – Very well, the council decided on Somewhat.

#### Resources

##### Progressive | Definition of Progressive by Merriam-Webster

Simple Definition of PROGRESSIVE

: moving forward

: happening or developing gradually over a period of time

: using or interested in new or **modern ideas especially in politics and education**

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/progressive>

[Images for modern ideas especially in politics and education](#)

##### Provincial | Definition of Provincial by Merriam-Webster

Simple Definition of PROVINCIAL

: a person who lives in or comes from a **place that is far away from large cities**

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/provincial>

[Images for place far away from large cities](#)

### 39) Rural Congregation in Context

A previous pastor left behind a term paper he had written while pursuing an advanced degree at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. Entitled *Congregation and Community: A Study of a Rural Congregation in Context*, the pastor offered A Theological Interpretation of the Congregation in Communal Context towards the end of the paper.

This congregation is not a church in acute crisis, but it is a church faced with changes within its own membership and changes to the communal context, changes that have required the congregation to search its collective soul for answers to some difficult questions. Why are we not growing? Why are all the same people doing the work of the church? Where have all the teenagers gone? Why has our Sunday School program dwindled so dramatically in the last ten years? Why have there been unrest, tension, and conflict in our congregation? These questions have driven the proceeding social analysis as they have driven the leadership of this congregation to see answers that are honest and answers that are faithful to their understanding of the church's mission. The church can complain, it can go into denial, or it can blame the messenger; or it can adapt itself to a changing context. This congregation has tried all of these and like an individual in grief periodically returns to some of them for solace. But I believe the congregation is seeking positive responses to its concerns.

I see my role is twofold. The first task is to provide an interpretive framework for these concerns. To provide an initial response to the question, "What is God doing here?" My second task is to offer a vision of where God is calling us as a congregation. This task is a response to the question, "What does God want to do through us?"



#### 40) Sense of smell

My second Sunday at one congregation, a man lingered afterwards and offered, "This church used to smell like barn, because so many farmed. I don't think anybody here farms anymore." A candidate for the position of installed pastor asked to visit with me, and when I showed the church to the candidate, the candidate remarked, "This church doesn't smell old."

##### Resources

###### Church in rural America - Living Lutheran

As she was on her way to her first worship service of the morning, Jess Felici, a pastor of Mountain Lutheran Parish, received a phone call from a member saying worship was canceled. Why? It was skunk mating season and the sanctuary fell way to the animals' unfortunate fumes, making it too smelly to be in the church for worship.

After she stopped by the church to attest to the circumstances herself, Felici decided to use the extra time to visit the home of some members. She had planned on sharing a cup of coffee and conversation in their living room, but instead found them all in their chicken house dealing with a rooster feed situation.

What Felici thought would be a typical morning worship service turned into coffee in a chicken house picking eggs. "If that doesn't give a good description of rural ministry!" she said.

Felici serves a five-point parish in rural West Virginia, the heart of Appalachia, with her husband, Jason. They spend their time going back and forth between Mount Hope in Upper Tract, Faith in Franklin, St. John in Moyers, Calvary in Brandywine and New Hope in Minnehaha Springs.

"We have all sorts of wonderful experiences here that you don't have the opportunity to do outside of rural ministry," she said. "You could be spending Saturday at a farm meeting baby lambs, worship on Sunday and hospital visits that evening. There is no set schedule and every day is a wild adventure."

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2017/04/church-rural-america/>

[Images for Church in rural America - Living Lutheran](#)

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

###### 5 Things Your Body Odor Says About You | Prevention

Some scientists call it your "odorprint." It's why dogs can track fugitives on the run and why perfume smells slightly different on you than it does on anyone else.

<http://www.prevention.com/health/what-your-body-odor-means>

[Images for 5 Things Your Body Odor Says About You | Prevention](#)

###### Olfactory system - Wikipedia

The olfactory system, or sense of smell, is the part of the sensory system used for smelling (olfaction).

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olfactory\\_system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olfactory_system)

[Images for Olfactory system](#)

###### Why Can't You Smell Your Own Home? - New York Magazine

Everyone's place has a smell. Some homes smell like fancy perfume or Anthropologie candles; others smell like cats.

<http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2014/08/why-cant-you-smell-your-own-home.html>

<https://www.thecut.com/2014/08/why-cant-you-smell-your-own-home.html>

[Images for Why Can't You Smell Your Own Home? - New York Magazine](#)

#### 41) More relationships in rural setting

I met with the young couple in pre-marital conversations to help plan for the wedding. They joined the congregation to make a new start for themselves together. I asked them how many they might expect in the gathered assembly for the wedding. He came from a large family and worked in a family business. Knowing that many could not come, and many others would come only for the reception, he replied that he had to stop with invitations at first cousins because the total had reached 480. His brother went beyond first cousins for invitations to his wedding, and the total reached 600. As it turned out, there were about 180 in attendance to make for a full house at the open country church. At the rehearsal dinner, I met still another brother who said that he and his girlfriend had been asked to be part of the bridal party in 8 weddings that summer – 4 for him and 4 for her.

###### Why do urban and rural views and values differ?

Rural people have more relationships characterized by this direct, personal style of interaction than do urban residents.

The social sphere of urban dwellers is limited to a much smaller range of friends and acquaintances.

[http://www.farmandranchguide.com/entertainment/country\\_living/rural\\_life/why-do-urban-and-rural-views-and-values-differ/article\\_63563bda-2f66-5ff6-bc7a-37e3d6408834.html](http://www.farmandranchguide.com/entertainment/country_living/rural_life/why-do-urban-and-rural-views-and-values-differ/article_63563bda-2f66-5ff6-bc7a-37e3d6408834.html)

[Images for Why do urban and rural views and values differ?](#)

#### 42) Changes in land ownership

The organist and her husband invited me to a pie and ice cream social at a neighboring open country church on a Sunday morning after the service of worship and offered to drive. We went through a village where I observed the large grain elevators. Back in the day, most of the rolling hills susceptible to erosion was otherwise used for growing hay to feed dairy cows. He explained that a family member received a buyout from a family owned large manufacturer in a nearby city (population 2,925 at the 2010 census.). This woman bought a \$1 million house from a doctor for her daughter to live in and outbid others in the purchase of farmland that became available. The

land, much of it highly erodible, was then used to grow corn and soybeans to put in the privately-owned elevators. In addition, she purchased houses as they became available to convert into rental units.

## Resources

### Corporate stranglehold of farmland a risk to world food security, study says

Small farmers are being squeezed out as mega-farms and plantations gobble up their land.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/may/28/farmland-food-security-small-farmers>

[Images for Corporate stranglehold of farmland a risk to world food security, study says](#)

### Growing Corporate Hold on Farmland Risky for World Food Security

It is commonly heard today that small farmers produce most of the world's food. But how many of us realize that they are doing this with less than a quarter of the world's farmland, and that even this meagre share is shrinking fast? If small farmers continue to lose the very basis of their existence, the world will lose its capacity to feed itself.

GRAIN took an in depth look at the data to see what is going on and the message is crystal clear. We need to urgently put land back in the hands of small farmers and make the struggle for agrarian reform central to the fight for better food systems.

<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/growing-corporate-hold-on-farmland-risky-for-world-food-security>

[Images for Growing Corporate Hold on Farmland Risky for World Food Security](#)

### Small Farms & Big Business: Family Farms Struggle against Industrial Agriculture

In the 1930s, the United States was home to 6.3 million farms; today, there are approximately 2.2 million, and fewer every day. The average age of today's farmer or rancher is 59 years old, and many are retiring without a successor, as their children don't want — or can't afford — to take over the family business. Thus, as farms' inheritors increasingly abandon the farm, a vacuum of stewardship opens up, leaving many wondering who, or what, will take their place.

<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/438983/small-farms-big-business-family-farms-struggle-against-industrial-agriculture>

[Images for Small Farms & Big Business: Family Farms Struggle against Industrial Agriculture](#)

The next Sunday, I was talking with members at a community dinner sponsored by the church. The subject of deer collisions with cars came up. One man stated, "I think there are more deer than ever out there." He went on to explain that outsiders buy up large tracts of land for deer hunting, post their land, and take only trophy bucks. With land concentrated in fewer hands, there are more deer and less people on the land.

### Wisconsin Hunting Land for Sale | Whitetail Properties

2017 was another very memorable year for the Whitetail Properties team.

<https://www.whitetailproperties.com/hunting-land/wisconsin>

[Images for Wisconsin Hunting Land for Sale](#)

## 43) Being together

The last Sunday of one month, many people came to church wearing a family t-shirt from their reunion the day before. The first Sunday of the month members of the gathered assembly sang the Albert Malotte version of the Lord's Prayer after the Words of Institution and then knelt by tables at the altar rail for the distribution of the elements. The next Wednesday, four quilters got together on a summer day even though they normally quilted during the school year because they "missed being together." The following Friday, members of the congregation got together at the village park for a meal and a game of softball. The next Sunday, one of the farm families hosted Church in the Barn with a Gospel Music Service followed by a meal. The following Saturday I received the following invite:

Hi Pastor!

(name) mentioned he invited you to our annual Hoedown but that he didn't share the details!

It is Saturday night in our party barn... people start arriving between 5 and 6 pm. We provide a "hot dog bar " with a variety of "dogs/brats". You do not need to bring anything there is always an over abundance of food. The Dj and karaoke starts at 7 . We have yard games and lots of visiting and catching up with neighbors and friends!

We hope you can join us!

The Wednesday morning between Church in the Barn and Hoedown at the Party Barn, a member stopped in during office hours who wanted to make sure I was coming to a corn feed at the village park that night. This member also explained to me that the open country congregation used to be in a shared ministry agreement with a village church other than the previously mentioned village with the ballfield. The former pastor spent most of his time with the open country church because the village church only needed leadership for the services of worship and joint confirmation instruction as well as occasional weddings and funerals.

## Resources

### Cat vs Dog - Difference and Comparison | Diffen

Cats and dogs are the most popular [pets](#) in the world. Cats are more independent and are generally cheaper and less demanding pets. Dogs are loyal and obedient but require more attention and exercise, including regular walks.

[http://www.diffen.com/difference/Cat\\_vs\\_Dog](http://www.diffen.com/difference/Cat_vs_Dog)

[Images for Cat vs Dog - Difference and Comparison](#)

### Difference Between Dog and Cat | Difference Between

As a pack animal, the dog loves company, and will never feel bored if one spends lot of time with it. On the other hand, cats [love](#) to spend a lot of time alone.

<http://www.differencebetween.net/science/nature/difference-between-dog-and-cat/>  
[Images for Difference Between Dog and Cat | Difference Between](#)

#### 44) Short pastorates

A seminary graduate took a call to a town and country parish. He intended to stay awhile until the church secretary turned on him and alienated others against his family. Most of the previous pastors lasted less than 5 years also.

##### Resources

#### Ministry Matters™ | The Tough Truth about Our Small Churches

What Jason experienced as love, community, and charming homespun fidelity in his small church I have more often found to be deadly, club-like interiority, insufferable triviality, and hostility toward newcomers.

<http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/4096/the-tough-truth-about-our-small-churches>  
[Images for Tough Truth about Our Small Churches](#)

#### Rural churches a unique start for young clergy | General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

A recent study by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) found less than 10 percent of seminary graduates open to serving in congregations with fewer than 100 members. An even smaller percentage of graduates said they were willing to serve in a rural setting.

<https://www.gbhem.org/article/rural-churches-unique-start-young-clergy>  
[Images for rural churches a unique start for young clergy](#)

#### Three Reasons Rural Churches Matter More Than You May Think

Many people see small, rural churches like the minor leagues: they are great place for pastors to be trained but the really good ones won't ever stay there. The real game is played in the big cities. Or so we've been told. Well, I think we've been told wrong. Rural churches matter much more than we've been led to believe. Here are three reasons why.

<http://www.lifeway.com/pastors/2016/10/03/three-reasons-rural-churches-matter-more-than-you-may-think/>  
<https://factsand Trends.net/2016/10/03/three-reasons-rural-churches-matter-more-than-you-may-think/>  
[Images for Three Reasons Rural Churches Matter More Than You May Think](#)

#### 45) Patriarch, benefactor, chaplain

A seminary grad full of vim, vigor, and vitality enters a first call in a small open country congregation full of ideas only to meet with resistance from the patriarch acting on behalf of the benefactor. The seminary grad may think of the role of pastor to be a mission leader in an outreach center, while the patriarch sees the role of the pastor to minister to the needs and desires of the people.

##### Resources

Searching for the Key: Developing a Theory of Synagogue Size – Alban

[Family church \(up to 50 adults and children at worship.\)](#) A small church organized around one or two matriarchs or patriarchs who often are the heads of extended biological families in the church. The [pastor functions in a chaplain role](#), leading worship and giving pastoral care. A [pastor who challenges the authority of the patriarch or matriarch or presumes to be the primary leader of the congregation generally will not stay long.](#)

[Alban at Duke Divinity School » Searching for the Key: Developing a Theory of Synagogue Size](#)

<https://alban.org/archive/searching-for-the-key-developing-a-theory-of-synagogue-size/>

[Images for Family church \(up to 50 adults and children at worship.\)](#)

<https://alban.org/category/leadership/>

<https://alban.org/about-alban/alban-weekly/>

<https://alban.org/books/>

#### The Power Structure within a Church Can Steamroll the Minister Robert L. Perry

The informal power in a church is mysterious and covert. Informal power is centered in individuals and has its 'meetings' over the phone, on the parking lot after church or at the coffee shop downtown. These individuals are not elected to their positions of power. They may be matriarchs or [patriarchs, wealthy benefactors](#) or simply church members with strong natural leadership gifts.

<https://www.mtmfoundation.org/2012/08/the-power-structure-within-a-church-can-steamroll-the-minister/>

[Images for Power Structure within a Church](#)

#### 46) A tale of two churches

A pastor took a call to a congregation because he was convinced that they were serious about engaging youth and young adults. A pastor, who took a call to a neighboring congregation, wrote in his vita that his priorities were to visit the sick and tend the dying.

#### 47) Becoming more experiential

I grew up in the American Lutheran Church (ALC). The *Lutheran Standard* was the official magazine. The ALC became a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in 1987. *The Lutheran* was the official magazine. The name was changed in 2016 to *Living Lutheran*.

##### Resources

###### American Lutheran Church - Wikipedia

The American Lutheran Church (ALC or sometimes TALC) was a [Christian Protestant denomination](#) in the United States and Canada that existed from 1960 to 1987. Its headquarters were in [Minneapolis, Minnesota](#). Upon its formation in 1960, the ALC designated [Augsburg Publishing House](#), also located in Minneapolis, as the church publisher. The *Lutheran Standard* was the official magazine of the ALC.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_Lutheran\\_Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Lutheran_Church)

###### From The Lutheran to Living Lutheran

While the magazine has witnessed a great deal of change throughout its history, the stories have always played a vital role in connecting the entire church body to each other and the world. *Living Lutheran* will continue that legacy. "Storytelling is what we love to do, and we feel blessed to tell the world the stories of the ELCA," Fuller said.

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2016/04/lutheran-living-lutheran/>

[Images for From The Lutheran to Living Lutheran](#)

###### The Lutheran Standard: 125 Years of Denominational Journalism - SAGE Journals

In this historical case study of three distinctive phases in the magazine's publication, the author traces the emergence of a modernized journal of the American Lutheran Church.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/107769906804500109?journalCode=jmqb>

[Images for Lutheran Standard: 125 Years of Denominational Journalism](#)

###### Welcome to Living Lutheran - Living Lutheran

Welcome to the new *Living Lutheran*, the flagship publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Through its primary expressions – a monthly magazine and this website – we continue to share the good news of Jesus Christ through stories, reflections, news and so much more. Please take a tour of the site – there is a place for you here! Explore the many opportunities to share your faith story and learn about who we are as the ELCA – a church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Again, welcome to the new Living Lutheran.

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2016/03/welcome-living-lutheran/>

[Images for Welcome to Living Lutheran - Living Lutheran](#)

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

#### 48) How to fall

I first met her on Sunday morning after the service of worship. She said that, at age 77, she still worked with the Wednesday educational ministry because she loved kids. The next Wednesday, she gave hugs to the kids to welcome them. Many of them were non-members from the village (population 660 in 2010). While giving instructions for the upcoming Christmas program, she stumbled on the altar step and fell. Others helped her up. She smiled as she asserted that she was alright. She then explained that her grandson had told her, "Tuck and roll." He had been thrown from a car and did a tuck and roll to survive. When I inquired further of her, she elaborated that she stretched and walked each day. She could easily have fallen flat on her face,

###### Fall flat on face - Idioms by The Free Dictionary

fall (flat) on one's face

1. *Lit.* to fall down, face first. *Bobby fell flat on his face and skinned his nose. Down he went—he fell on his face.*

2. *Fig.* to fail miserably, usually in a performance. *She was terrible in the play. She fell flat on her face. The whole play fell on its face.*

See also: [face](#), [fall](#), [on](#)

McGraw-Hill Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs. © 2002 by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

<https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/fall+flat+on+face>

[Images for fall flat on face](#)

but because of a tuck and roll she got up and continued to work with the kids. The next morning at quilters she explained her fall and credited the tuck and roll for being able to get up and walk away.

###### Urban Dictionary: Tuck and Roll

The technique, almost always done while running, involves diving forward in such a way that your shoulder lands on the ground first, and you roll into a [little](#) ball. As you come out of the ball, immediately spring back up into a running [stance](#), or [move](#) into a kneeling position.

<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Tuck%20and%20Roll>

[Images for Dictionary: Tuck and Roll](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEdUJqt9XMM> how to do a tuck and roll - YouTube  
[Images for how to do a tuck and roll - YouTube](#)

#### 49) Quilters can be a stitch

I looked at all the quilts that the quilters were preparing to lay on the pews for the blessing the following Sunday and said, "These quilts represent a lot of work." One quilter replied, "Oh, but it's been a lot of fun."

I enjoy visiting with the quilters. I try to coordinate my office hours at a church with the quilters designated day. One year, I served in 3 different locations. The first location, the quilters met on Tuesday, the second on Wednesday, and the third on Thursday.

#### Resources

15 best Lutheran World Relief Quilt Project images on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/lovngratitude/lutheran-world-relief-quilt-project/>

Images for Lutheran World Relief Quilt Project Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/luthworldrelief/beautiful-inspiring-quilts/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/sofanatik61/church-quilts/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/helgamast/quilting-women/>

#### Quilters | Zion Lutheran Church

Zion Lutheran Church Quilters. Since 1964, the quilting group at Zion has been creating quilts for the Lutheran World Relief quilt ministry. The quilts are created from new or nearly new fabric that has been donated for that purpose. 200-300 quilts are sent annually to Lutheran World Relief for distribution to those in need around the world as well as domestically.

The quilting group meets Monday, September through May, at 9:15am in Augustana Hall. Anyone interested in participating in this ongoing project is encouraged to join the group at any time. Sewing/quilting experience is not essential since there are many different ways to give assistance as needed.

<https://www.zionlutheran-manistique.org/quilters>

Images for Quilters Lutheran Church

[www.stpaulsdillsburg.com/ministries/quilting-ministry.html](http://www.stpaulsdillsburg.com/ministries/quilting-ministry.html)

<https://www.flcsf.org/quilters/>

[www.lordoflifeva.org/quilters](http://www.lordoflifeva.org/quilters)

<https://www.lcrelca.org/quilters/>

<http://www.watertownimmanuel.org/outreach/quilters.cfm>

<https://faithspicer.org/faith-quilters>

<http://www.mlc.org/groups/quilting-ministry>

<https://www.hosannamankato.com/grow/adult-ministry/social-activities/care-quilters/>

<http://www.adventop.org/fellowship/quilters/>

<https://www.trinityalgona.org/tlcquilters>

<https://www.zionluthcamas.org/our-ministries/zion-quilters.html>

Images for our-ministries/zion-quilters

<http://gloriadei-nky.org/quilters>

<http://www.trinitylansdale.com/trinity-quilters/>

<https://www.bethlehem-lutheran.net/connect/quilting-queens.html>

[http://clclakeland.com/quilters\\_2018\\_quilts\\_for\\_rally\\_day](http://clclakeland.com/quilters_2018_quilts_for_rally_day)

[https://www.rlccok.org/mission\\_quilters](https://www.rlccok.org/mission_quilters)

<https://gracehendersonville.com/quilting-group/>

<http://trinityaa.org/trinity-programs/small-groups/quilting-group/>

Images for trinity-programs/small-groups/quilting-group/

<https://oslc-warrenton.org/serving-our-community/quilting-ministry/>

Images for serving-our-community/quilting-ministry/

[https://www.victoriaadvocate.com/news/features/faith/trinity-lutheran-church-quilters-sew-love-for-world/article\\_8969f6fe-23aa-11e8-9cc7-cbaae9d6abb7.html](https://www.victoriaadvocate.com/news/features/faith/trinity-lutheran-church-quilters-sew-love-for-world/article_8969f6fe-23aa-11e8-9cc7-cbaae9d6abb7.html)

<https://lcotm.org/ministries/quilters/>

<http://www.rlccok.org/quilting-ministry.html>

<http://www.calvaryperham.com/quilt>

<https://www.crosslutheranmilwaukee.org/ministries/quilting-ministry.html>

#### 50) Birth order

Four congregations in a multi-point parish seemed to me to reflect personality characteristics similar to that of birth order siblings.

1<sup>st</sup> – overbearing

2<sup>nd</sup> – irritable

3<sup>rd</sup> – sweet

4<sup>th</sup> – fun



## Resources

### Birth order - Wikipedia

Birth order refers to the order a child is born in their family; first-born and second-born are examples. Birth order is often believed to have a profound and lasting effect on psychological development.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birth\\_order](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birth_order)

[Images for birth order](#)

### How Birth Order Relates to the Characteristics of Children

Characteristics of first, middle, & last children and how to best love them.

<https://howdoesshe.com/birth-order-characteristics/>

[Images for How Birth Order Related to the Characteristics of Children](#)

### The Birth Order Book: Why You Are the Way You Are by Dr. Kevin Leman (Author)

This updated edition of Dr. Leman's classic bestseller offers key insights into how birth order affects personality, marriage and relationships, parenting style, career, and children.

With insight and wit, Dr. Leman offers readers a fascinating and often funny look at how birth order affects personality, marriage and relationships, parenting style, career, and children.

<https://www.amazon.com/Birth-Order-Book-Why-You/dp/0800734068>

[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/48760.The\\_Birth\\_Order\\_Book](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/48760.The_Birth_Order_Book)

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/birth-order-book-kevin-leman/1102829761#/>

<http://www.cornerstonechristiansupply.com/firstchapter.asp?index=1234&mode=view>

<http://www.drleman.com/store/the-birth-order-book.html>

<http://shop.cbn.com/firstchapter.asp?mode=view&index=1234>

<http://www.powells.com/book/birth-order-book-why-you-are-the-way-you-are-9780800723842>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_Birth\\_Order\\_Book.html?id=KV37zrD5tgC](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Birth_Order_Book.html?id=KV37zrD5tgC)

[https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_Birth\\_Order\\_Book.html?id=fP7XcWsOYU8C](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Birth_Order_Book.html?id=fP7XcWsOYU8C)

[https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_new\\_birth\\_order\\_book.html?id=pVO\\_gepsHZQC](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_new_birth_order_book.html?id=pVO_gepsHZQC)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Birth\\_Order\\_Book](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Birth_Order_Book)

<https://www.elitedaily.com/life/culture/birth-order-personality-traits-life/1710960>

<https://www.amazon.com/Kevin-Leman/e/B001ITX34W>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/36931.Kevin\\_Leman](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/36931.Kevin_Leman)

[Images for Dr. Kevin Leman \(Author\)](#)

[Images for The Birth Order Book: Why You Are the Way You Are by Dr. Kevin Leman \(Author\)](#)

## 51) Preferences

It's a good thing my preferences don't run towards sushi and symphony,

### Etiquette for Attending a Symphony - The Spruce

Patrons of the symphony generally wear **semi-formal**, elegant, and **business attire**. On certain occasions such as an opening night, **formal attire** may be requested.

<https://www.thespruce.com/symphony-etiquette-1216508>

[Images for Etiquette for Attending a Symphony](#)

### 32% of Americans never tried sushi, Pei Wei survey says | Fast Casual

Those in the Midwest are more likely than those in regions closer to oceans to have never tried sushi.

<https://www.fastcasual.com/news/32-of-americans-never-tried-sushi-pei-wei-survey-says/>

[Images for sushi](#)

because many of the places I've served the local preferences run towards by smelt and country.

### How to know if you're meant for the country music lifestyle - Quora

So why am I so passionate about country music? It's simply the story of my life. It brings back some good memories and some not so good. But as Garth Brooks once said, "I could have missed the pain, but I'd have had to miss the dance. And I wouldn't have missed that for the world."

<https://www.quora.com/How-do-you-know-if-youre-meant-for-the-country-music-lifestyle>

[Images for country music lifestyle](#)

### LIONS Annual Smelt Feed - Facebook

ANNUAL SMELT FEED Alma Lions Club Fundraiser DATE & TIME: April 30th, 11am-4pm. LOCATION: Henderson's Silver Moon in Alma, WI SPONSOR: Alma Lions Club MENU "All-you-care-to-eat" smelt, homemade potato salad, coleslaw, baked beans, French bread & refreshments.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1867348813553670/>

[Images for LIONS Annual Smelt Feed](#)

## 52) Sweet and sour

The former pastor told of how 3 women in the congregation criticized him and gossiped about him and his family. He said these attitudes and actions were a contributing factor in his decision to seek another call. I experienced them as frowning often and laughing seldom. I steeled myself to respond to their concerns and kept an eye on my back to be aware of their actions. When I became preoccupied with their attitude and actions, I reminded myself of the accompanist and her sister who led the music ministry and an older choir member who also worked with the children. Whenever I thanked the sisters for their music, one or the other would usually respond, "We are glad to do this ministry." Whenever I talked with the older woman about her work with the children, she would usually respond, "I just love 'em."

## 53) Resilient

I used 3 questions for transition dynamics at one multi-point parish: Where have we been? (heritage); Where are we at? (identity); and Where is God leading? (vision). During the pastor's time in one of the meetings of the Congregation Council, I invited conversation around Where are we at? (identity). The president offered, "Resilient." He added that the congregation was at a place where they had bounced back from a setback.

### Resources

#### A 'tough, resilient' congregation - News - Times Telegram - Herkimer, NY

A great amount of this history has been collected into a book by church historian Jack Henke. This, among other events, is how the church is celebrating its 175th anniversary.

"One characteristic of our congregation is that they have overcome (various) tribulations," Henke said." (They) set their nose to the grindstone — they love their church. And what they have overcome is simply amazing."

[www.timestelegram.com/news/20171108/tough-resilient-congregation](http://www.timestelegram.com/news/20171108/tough-resilient-congregation)

[Images for 'tough, resilient' congregation](#)

[Images for overcome tribulations](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/467318898814020070/> overcoming trials and tribulations images - Bing images - Pinterest

[Images for overcoming trials and tribulations images - Bing images - Pinterest](#)

#### Building a Resilient Congregation by Sarah Byrnes — YES! Magazine

Recently, a group of Resilience Circle leaders has been discussing the idea of a "theology for community resilience." How do the resources of our faith traditions support and empower our communities during this time of economic and ecological challenge? How can we help church members overcome their fears of deep and systemic change? Does a theological message—especially in our increasingly pluralistic and multicultural society—add something unique to the work of creating a new economy?

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/blogs/common-security-clubs/building-a-resilient-congregation>

[Images for Building a Resilient Congregation by Sarah Byrnes — YES! Magazine](#)

[Images for theology for community resilience](#)

<http://www.ncca.org.au/safe-as-churches/building-resilience>

<http://www.midamericacph.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Building-Resilient-Communities-through-Trauma-Informed-Congregations.pdf>

<https://www.acesconnection.com/g/faith-based-connection/topic/invitation-strategic-planning-meeting-on-building-resilient-communities-thru-trauma-informed-congregations>

<http://www.brookfieldinstitute.org/events/2016/9/23/to-bend-but-not-break-leadership-for-building-resilient-congregations>

<https://experiencelife.com/article/the-5-best-ways-to-build-resiliency/>

[https://www.templeshalom.org/blogs?post\\_id=207892](https://www.templeshalom.org/blogs?post_id=207892) Building Our Resilience, Restoring Hope - Temple Shalom

<http://gpchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Embracing-Change-Slides.pdf> [PDF]Building Resilient Congregations

[Images for Building Resilient Congregations](#)

#### Resilient Congregations - Alban Institute » Alban at Duke Divinity School

Our congregations are going through a miraculous and inspiring time of change and adaptation and I am so excited to see the changes that have needed to happen for a long time. Not every congregation is going to survive intact, but I am now convinced that we will be stronger and more faithful communities in the future.

<https://alban.org/archive/resilient-congregations/>

[Images for Resilient Congregations - Alban Institute](#)

<https://alban.org/archive/leading-into-the-promised-land-lessons-learned-from-resilient-congregations/>

<https://alban.org/archive/centerview-resilient-congregations/>

<https://alban.org/archive/resilient-congregations/>

<https://alban.org/archive/resilience-in-the-recession-economic-impact-study-highlights-congregational-strengths/>

<https://alban.org/author/nekduke-edu/>

#### What Does the Bible Say About Resilience? - OpenBible.info

<https://www.openbible.info/topics/resilience>

[Images for Bible and Resilience](#)

<http://biblereasons.com/resilience/>

<http://www.afterthearcall.com/2011/10/12/seven-scriptures-to-inspire-resilience-during-tough-times/>

<http://letterpile.com/inspirational/2-Bible-Stories-and-Strategies-For-Living-a-Resilient-Life>

<https://lifehopeandtruth.com/life/christian-living/perseverance-and-the-science-of-resilience/>  
[www.beliefnet.com/inspiration/galleries/5-things-resilient-people-do.aspx](http://www.beliefnet.com/inspiration/galleries/5-things-resilient-people-do.aspx)  
<https://www.ourdailyjourney.org/2016/04/19/resilience/>  
[www.brewsterbaptistchurch.org/resilient-faith-spiritual-resilience/](http://www.brewsterbaptistchurch.org/resilient-faith-spiritual-resilience/)  
<http://www.afterthearcall.com/2011/10/12/seven-scriptures-to-inspire-resilience-during-tough-times/>  
[Images for scriptures-to-inspire-resilience-during-tough-times](#)

#### 54) Smiles and scowls

Three women in one congregation remained consistently upbeat, while 3 others remained consistently downcast. I avoided the latter and gravitated toward the former.

##### Resources

##### scowl - Dictionary Definition : Vocabulary.com

When you scowl you make an angry face. The angry face you make is also called a scowl. Lighten up. Scowl is an expressive word: it shares "ow" with frown, and if you say it like you mean it you might end up scowling yourself. Being scowled at is more unsettling than being frowned at. A scowl is like an angry frown you would give someone if you disapproved of them.

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/scowl>

[Images for scowl - Dictionary Definition](#)

<https://www.shutterstock.com/search/scowl>

[www.dictionary.com/browse/scowled](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/scowled)

<https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/scowl>

[https://www.macmillandictionary.com/us/pronunciation/american/scowl\\_1](https://www.macmillandictionary.com/us/pronunciation/american/scowl_1)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1KEZAQBBVM> How to Pronounce Scowl - YouTube

[Images for Scowl - YouTube](#)

##### What Does Your Smile Say About You? - WebMD

Your smile -- simple, straightforward, and most important, sincere -- can attract more than admiring looks. A smiling face tells people that you're an outgoing and intelligent person worth getting to know.

<https://www.webmd.com/beauty/features/smile-personality#1>

[Images for What Does Your Smile Say About You? - WebMD](#)

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/13/smile-facts-science\\_n\\_4267242.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/13/smile-facts-science_n_4267242.html)

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3475211/What-does-smile-say-you.html>

<https://www.quora.com/What-does-your-smile-say-about-your-personality>

<https://jennifermargulis.net/articles/what-the-size-of-your-smile-says-about-you/>

<http://www.lowesislanddentistry.com/blog/cosmetic-dentist-potomac-falls-your-smile-says/>

<https://renaissancedentalcenter.com/what-does-your-smile-say-about-you-and-your-future/>

<https://pearlywhites.com/blogs/news/smile-say-about-you>

<http://mamiverse.com/what-does-your-smile-say-about-you-69101/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/fulfillment-any-age/201804/3-types-smiles-and-what-they-say-about-you>

<https://www.elitedaily.com/wellness/weird-things-your-smile-says/1677974>

<http://www.clarkdentalgroup.com/learning-center/cosmetic-dentistry/what-does-your-smile-say-about-you/>

<https://www.rd.com/culture/secrets-smile-reveals-about-you/>

<https://www.elitedaily.com/p/what-your-smile-reveals-about-you-your-personality-according-to-experts-8656513>

<https://www.womenshealthmag.com/life/a19982102/meaning-of-a-smile/>

<https://www.kyrenefamilydentistry.com/blog/psychological-effects-great-smile/>

<https://www.powerofpositivity.com/smile-personality/>

#### 55) Painfully reserved

One member drank all night, came home, and shot himself through the cheek in front of his family and then through the top of his head with the second shot. His wife had asked for a divorce a few days earlier. This instance was one of many tragedies that one extended family experienced. A member of the Congregation Council stated, "I don't come to church because I don't want to have to pay for a pastor who makes way more than I do." While I could get a chuckle during the sermon out of the gathered assembly at the other 2 congregations in the parish, the best I could muster from the assembly at this congregation was a wry smile. People shared the peace only with those within arm's reach. Members sat in the balcony and the back 5 pews and left the front 7 pews empty.

##### Addressing Depression and Suicide in Your Church | CT Pastors | Christianity Today

Ten percent of American adults suffer from depression, and more than [38,000](#) people die by suicide each year. Plenty of the people represented by these statistics will be sitting in church next Sunday morning.

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2013/april-online-only/addressing-depression-and-suicide-in-your-church.html>

[Images for Addressing Depression and Suicide in Your Church | CT Pastors | Christianity Today](#)

Throughout all the ages depression has plagued mankind. Nebuchadnezzar's tortured nights of sleeplessness, Lincoln's suicidal ruminations, Churchill's "black dog" moods-the dark thread of depression is woven throughout history. It has beset rich and poor, strong and weak, believers and nonbelievers.

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/1981/spring/81|2027.html>

[Images for Ministering To The Depressed | CT Pastors | Christianity Today](#)

### 56) How I know I am in a rural church

The president of the congregation gave a dozen brown eggs to me for Christmas that he had raised on his farm. The organist gave a package of 2 lfe to me on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas that she had made with her niece that morning. Boots outnumbered shoes for footwear, and dresses were only seen worn at weddings. Caps worn to church carried emblems of seeds and tractors. The attendance sheet at the back of the church included a column for weather. Weather was a main topic as the men stood shoulder to shoulder when they talked in the gathering area after the service of worship. The women stood in a tighter circle in the gathering area. The conversations ended when somebody said, "Well, I 'spose...", and headed for the door.

### 57) Church kitchen politics

I attended a funeral service officiated by one of the other pastors on staff. The 11am service of worship went over the noon hour as 2 other preachers spoke, and 9 family and friends shared remembrances of the deceased. The bottom of the last page of the bulletin included the statement:

If you are going to the cemetery, please follow the directions of the funeral director. After the internment at *(name)* Cemetery in the Town of *(name)*, you are invited back to the church fellowship hall to enjoy food and fellowship provide by *(name's)* family and served by the women of the church. If you are not going to the cemetery, you are invited to proceed down to the church fellowship hall to wait for those going to the cemetery to return.

I went down to the church basement rather than go to the cemetery. I thought to myself that this wait could take a while as I recalled how on a nice summer day people often linger in the cemetery. I conversed with others at the table and stared at the plate of cake in front of me. Then, I saw some hot dishes being brought out to the serving table. A tall man with a high-pitched voice announced, "OK folks, we can eat now." Then, there was a pause. People looked at the president of the Women of the ELCA who announced, "It says in the bulletin to wait for the family to return." I could see that people engaged in conversation as to what to do next. Then, a woman came over to the table and said to me, "You can get in line." The church secretary remained in her office rather than come out to the church kitchen during this whole time.

### 58) From happy to surly

I first served the congregation as part of a two-point parish early in my interim ministry. I was asked to serve the same congregation as a part of a reconfigured two-point parish 20+ years later. I remembered the people as warm and friendly the first time around, but experienced some of them as critical and argumentative the second time around.

### 59) Church Museum

The tile floors glistened as I observed when I walked down into the church basement on my first Sunday of the new interim assignment as did the hardwood floors in the sanctuary. Numerous signs in the kitchen gave directions of how to keep the place up. Pictures on the wall portrayed the history of the congregation. The 3 separate cemetery plots were mowed and attended to. Everything about the building and grounds looked impeccable.

When I was still serving in the previous assignment, the president of the Congregation Council in the above-mentioned church called me to tell me about a council meeting in which the patriarch and his wife shouted down a request by a father of one of the young people to release monies from the youth fund to help pay for the upcoming churchwide youth gathering. The argument used against the request was that the father and daughter had not done enough work. The president, who was a brother to the father making the request, said he was about to quit and asked if it would be possible for me to come to the next meeting after the installed pastor left but before I was to start. I told him I was using allotted vacation and could not come. As it turned out, he canceled the meeting.

Ten days into the new assignment I attended a gathering of the youth and adults who participated in the youth gathering as they planned a thankyou supper and presentation for the multi-point parish. After the details had been attended to, the father who made the request shared more about that council meeting. A young adult who had transferred from that congregation to another congregation in the parish where the thankyou supper was to be held stated, "That church is a museum."

### 60) A tale of two banners

The banner on the wall of the lectern side was entitled Sharing the Spirit Since 1870. Underneath were pictures of facilities constructed in 1870, 1889, 1909, 1930, and at the bottom the name of the congregation. The banner on the wall of the pulpit side was entitled Let the Children Come to Me with a portrayal of Jesus receiving the children. The assembly sat in the pews between these two banners. I interpreted these banners to express, on the one hand, holding the past in high regard, and, on the other hand, passing on the faith to the next generation. The reports I received coming into the congregation seemed to indicate that the predominately older generation were more swayed by the banner on the lectern side than the banner on the pulpit side.

### 61) Open Sundays?

I agreed to officiate at a funeral service in a struggling open country church for a woman who had attained 100 years of age. She left the area when she was 34 but was brought back to be buried beside her husband. She associated with a singing group at a UCC church for a short time in later years. Otherwise, she did not attend services of worship regularly. Nineteen people came to the service. At the funeral lunch, a man asked me, "Do you have church here, or do you just have funerals?" I replied, "Every Sunday." I asked him where he came from. He said he came from Cedarburg, which is rated as one of [2018 Best Milwaukee Area Suburbs to Live – Niche](#). I received the hymns requested by the family from the funeral director on Thursday. I printed the bulletin on Saturday. The son emailed the funeral director on Saturday night to say he wanted one less hymn. The funeral director called the organist on Sunday morning. I

heard from the organist at the 4pm service. I redid and reprinted the bulletin on Sunday evening. The next day at 10:40am the son asked if there could be a hymn added. I said the bulletins were already printed. In addition, the daughter had not shown up as of 10:55am, and the son asked if I could wait. I said there was no way of knowing when she would show up, and the funeral needed to start at 11am. She showed up at 10:59am. She looked at her mother in the coffin, the funeral directors closed the lid, and I started the service. There was no procession or recession. During the committal, the cell phone rang for the wife of the son. She stepped aside to deal with the call. One of the lunch servers recommended a certain kind of cake. After eating a sandwich and piece of cake, I left.

## 62) Openings and closings

I served one assignment at an open-country three-point parish. In all, (2) three-point parishes and (2) two-point parishes were being served by interim pastors in the same conference at the same time. In addition, there were 4 church buildings in the conference, which were being kept up by the cemetery associations. I figured the conference did not need any more legacy churches, and I determined to do what I could for congregations to continue to assemble for services of worship. A member of the transition task force at one of the congregations brought a newspaper article one Sunday for me to read on Test of Faith: The Unchurched of America.

### As churches close in Minnesota, a way of life fades | Star Tribune

The toll of declining church attendance is evident across the state, including at La Salle Lutheran, above.

<http://m.startribune.com/index.php/as-minnesota-churches-close-a-way-of-life-fades/486037461/>

Images for As churches close in Minnesota, a way of life fades | Star Tribune

<https://www.northerncrossingsmercy.org/test-of-faith/>

<https://www.npr.org/podcasts/414687786/m-p-r-news-with-kerri-miller> AUGUST 14, 2018 Churches are closing, attendance is falling, why?

Images for Churches are closing, attendance is falling, why?

<https://www.hartsem.edu/2018/07/professor-scott-thumma-quoted-in-article-about-church-closings/>

Images for professor-scott-thumma-quoted-in-article-about-church-closings/

## 63) Buggies, cars, and trains

I passed an Amish house on my way to the 3<sup>rd</sup> congregation of the three-point parish my 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday. The buggies at the Amish farmstead outnumbered the cars at the church. As I left after the service of worship, I looked the other direction to see the train cars filled with frac sand. When the congregation was established 150+ years earlier, the landscape was populated by small farms. The patriarch of the congregation explained to me that in the last 10-15 years the Amish, on the one hand, were moving in and buying land to raise cattle, and, on the other hand, mining companies had been buying land to extract frac sand the previous 30 years. He estimated it was only a matter of time before the congregation ceased holding services of worship.

### Resources

#### FRAC SAND MINING Industry Report

Historically, the frac sand mining industry has been relatively small; however, this industry is now on the verge of substantial growth in the region. Most of the sand mining jobs have been concentrated in Jackson County although Trempealeau, Buffalo, and Monroe County are beginning to take advantage of their natural resources and the growing industry. All of these counties are experiencing mass buyouts of land from companies hoping to build sand mines. The wages in the region for this industry are family sustainable and significantly higher than the state and national average for the industry.

[http://www.wcwrpc.org/frac\\_sand\\_mining\\_industry\\_report\\_21112.pdf](http://www.wcwrpc.org/frac_sand_mining_industry_report_21112.pdf)

Images for FRAC SAND MINING Industry Report in Wisconsin

#### Wisconsin Amish - Amish America

Wisconsin's Amish population has increased at a much faster rate than most over this 20-year period, gaining 150% as opposed to an average of roughly 100% (see Young Center, 2010). Older small communities are found at Blair in Trempealeau County, Spencer in Marathon County, and Chetek in Barron County.

<https://amishamerica.com/wisconsin-amish/>

Images for Wisconsin Amish - Amish America

## 64) Wholesome

Empty barns on both sides of the roads up and down the valleys tell the story of a way of life of family farming long past. So, it was refreshing to read an article left behind by the former pastor of a farm woman in the congregation who embraced family farm dairying.

### Women in Jeans: Elizabeth Hovey - Dairy Star

Whitehall, Wis. – Trempealeau County – 115 cows

What have you enjoyed most about dairy farming or your tie to the dairy industry?

Being able to be home with my children is by far the best, along with working with my husband. I enjoy every day spent on the farm. My children have been able to see firsthand the circle of life and the value of hard work. I love seeing the enthusiasm in their faces when a new calf is born and when the machinery is hitting the fields. They all fight over who gets to go with when it is harvest time.

<https://dairystar.com/Content/News/Daily-News/Article/Women-in-Jeans-Elizabeth-Hovey/1/256/13842>

<https://issuu.com/dairystar/docs/10-28-17-1star>

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Images for Women in Jeans: Elizabeth Hovey - Dairy Star

Images for value of hard work