

# Interim Ministry Resources

## Afterword

My father [Harold L. Bolstad](#) died 7/3/2014, and my mother [Pearl N Bolstad](#) 9/11/1996. I spent the week prior to All Saints Sunday 2014, sorting possessions in their [Story City, Iowa](#) home prior to the house being put up for sale the summer of 2015. My father built the house in 1993. Before that, they lived in the house across the street, which he built in 1961. My father also built a duplex on a corner lot next to the original house in 1975 and another duplex in 1987 on the other corner lot adjoining the house built in 1983. One thing that struck me was a trait characteristic of those from their generation: "Don't throw it away. You may need it someday." My mother worked as a homemaker and spent much of her time cooking, gardening, preserving, cleaning, washing, sewing, and making rag rugs. I bagged up fabric to fill a pick-up truck and took it to [Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, IA](#) for the quilters only to find out later my sister-in-law did the same thing a few years earlier. My father worked as a non-union finish carpenter for H&F Builders, now known as HCS, in Ames 1959-1993 full-time and 1993-2009 as a sub-contractor specializing in stair railings for a total of 50 years. My youngest brother took over his position in 1994 and has continued to this day. Father and son have worked for the company over the course of 60+ years. My father collected tools and saved wood as well as other materials. The garage and shed were filled. Unfortunately, I did not pick up the interest in cooking from my mother, but I did pick up the interest in carpentry from my father.

The bumper sticker on the refrigerator was more than a clever phrase for my father. [My Boss is a Jewish Carpenter](#). It was a statement of faith. He lived out his faith in the home, congregation, community, and workplace, as others witnessed his faith orientation. The bookshelves were filled with faith books, song books, magazines, and devotionals. My mother collected inspirational articles and poems, while my father collected congregation annual reports going back 50 years to 1964 as well as the bulletins for the previous several months. He even saved his course books and teaching materials from when he taught 9<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday school in the 1960s and '70s. He sang in the choir, served in various leadership positions, and performed carpentry work at the church, parsonage, and nearby [RIVERSIDE Bible Camp, Story City, IA](#) as well as [Habitat for Humanity of Central Iowa](#).

Among other things, I learned from my father, who collected an increasing number of tools through the years, was that different jobs call for different tools. At the same time, my father not only collected many tools, but he collected many tool boxes full of tools. Likewise, when I started going with him on the job in 1968 and started working on the framing crew in 1971, I carried one tool box with a hammer and saw, tool belt, and a few other tools. I will never own as many tool boxes as my father did, but I own more than I did in 1971. I have done rehabbing and building in my discretionary time. See [Rural Ministry Resources - The Earth Is our Home - Chapter 2. A Home on the Hay River](#) for the story of one such effort. See [8Stewardship2Reflections 4\) Examining personal finances and living more simply](#) for the story of another effort. I have learned that, on the one hand, there are flippers and, on the other hand, there are makeovers. The former involves buying a run-down house in a nice neighborhood, making necessary improvements in a timely manner, and selling for a profit. The latter involves gutting the house and starting over. [This Old House | Watch Online | PBS Video](#) gives a more realistic portrayal than [Watch Extreme Makeover Home Edition | ABC TV Show](#). Rehabbing, in contrast to new house construction, also provides another lesson in that I have learned to slow down in order to figure out the next steps. As such, I have learned to be both deliberative and adaptive. In addition, rehabbing teaches tenacity. I bought a bank foreclosure house in March 2010 determined to "pay as I go." It proved to be quite a challenge, and many times I questioned my sanity. I nailed up board and batten siding on the outside and put down wood flooring on the inside. I kept the rough-hewn ceiling joists exposed in order to make it look like a lake cabin as it is situated on Lakeshore Drive and as it offers a view of the lake even if it is not on the lake front. Oftentimes, I'd quip, "It'd be a whole lot easier to put on vinyl siding, slap up drywall, and lay down carpet." But I kept going even as it took 6+ years to complete when the water was finally hooked up to the bathrooms and kitchen in May 2016.

My parents believed that the home is the primary training ground for passing on the faith. I found the original [Our Daily Bread Promise Box](#) filled with Bible verses we passed around among my parents and brothers at every meal before eating. 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. They knew well the admonition: The Great Commandment <sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. <sup>5</sup>You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. <sup>6</sup>Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. <sup>7</sup>Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. <sup>8</sup>Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, <sup>9</sup>and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. [Deuteronomy 6:4-9](#)

The attitude of "Don't throw it away. You may need it someday." informed this baby boomer in my collection of reflections and resources. I studied at [Luther Seminary](#) in St. Paul, Minnesota 1975-79. Interestingly, during my 4 years at the seminary, I counted the number of seminarians at the seminary originally from a 15-mile radius of my home town of Story City, Iowa and discovered the number to be 15. Two other students from my home congregation studied at other seminaries during that time. From 1978 to 1987, 4 sons and 1 daughter of the congregation were ordained in my home congregation of Immanuel Lutheran Church. In looking back, I realize many of the congregations from my home area exhibited a culture of sending leaders to the seminary. Also, long before my time, the evangelist [Billy Sunday](#) [William Ashley "Billy" Sunday (11/19/1862 – 11/6/1935)] was born and grew up near Ames 15mi away.

I took 2 years of Greek at [Concordia College](#) in Moorhead, Minnesota; took an elective on Martin Luther from [Dr. Warren A. Quanbeck](#) and an elective on Dietrich Bonhoeffer from [Dr. James Burness](#) the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of seminary; tested out of Intro to Theology; worked on the maintenance crew at the seminary during the summer after my 1<sup>st</sup> year, took the maximum load of credits on the three quarter system all three academic years; took clinical pastoral education at [MD Anderson Cancer Center](#) in Houston, Texas the summer of 1977; took a year of internship 1977-78 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Owatonna, Minnesota; and spent much of my senior year 1978-79 collecting as many resources as possible before going out into the parish. I graduated with 147 "Pass" credits and 3 "AU" credits. I completed my basic training for interim ministry with the Interim Ministry Network (IMN) in 1991. I started out using the Five Developmental Tasks, then appreciated the IMN move to Focus Points as explained in [Five Developmental Task vs Focus Points: Bringing the New to Light A perspective by Alan Mead](#) <https://files.constantcontact.com/fbaed027be/b1a2e186-e872-43d2-a983->

[9735e7ddbddd.pdf](http://9735e7ddbddd.pdf), and then adapted them and added to them to propose Transition Dynamics. Through the past 40 years of pastoral ministry, I lined my shelves with books and magazines, filled bankers' boxes with files, and three-ring notebooks with papers. I attended countless workshops, seminars, and continuing education events, and watched webinars on various phases of pastoral ministry.

This website, then, represents reflections and resources of the years of seminary education and parish ministry as well as the earlier foundation of home, congregation, and Lutheran church colleges [[Waldorf Junior College](#) in Forest City, Iowa (1971-73) (now [Waldorf University](#)) and [Concordia College](#) (1973-75)]. In addition, the world-wide web offers access to more resources than I could have ever imagined when I first entered the pastoral ministry. I availed myself of this access for the bulk of the resources and am passing on what I found. When I studied at the seminary, I witnessed the passing of the torch from the WWII Generation to the next generation, and, when I first started in the pastoral ministry, I turned for advice to a pastor nearing retirement in a neighboring village. Now, I want to turn around and share reflections and resources with others. Whimsically, I try to imagine what it might have been like to have had access to these reflections and resources when I first started in the pastoral ministry in 1980, but then realistically, I remind myself that I am where I am and the best I can do is to pass on these reflections and resources to others at whatever stage of their ministry.

My involvement in publishing began in 1969 when I reported on high school sports for the [Story City Herald](#). I reported for and co-edited the [The Lobbyist | Waldorf Communications](#) at Waldorf Junior College and worked as a photographer for the [Concordia College - Cobber Yearbook](#). While a senior at Luther Seminary, I wrote an article entitled "The Lay Activity Controversy among Norwegian Lutherans in America" included in Chapter 12 Heritage. Appendix - Controversy in the Church, and published by the Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly. Vol. 55, no. 4, winter 1982, page 146. Through the years of pastoral ministry beginning in 1980, I have worked with various congregation newsletters. From 1988 to 1994, I edited the [The Lutheran Supplement](#) (Read our synod's quarterly insert into [The Lutheran Magazine](#)). I have reviewed/edited congregation constitutions for the [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin | Evangelical Lutheran Church of America](#) since 2009. I edited a volunteer-operated monthly community newspaper called the [Hay River Review](#) (1987-96) using [Macintosh](#) computers for desk top publishing. After I self-published 5 booklets (1987-92), offered on this website under Rural Ministry Resources, I agreed with The Conclusion of the Matter<sup>12</sup> And further, my son, by these words be admonished: of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness to the flesh. [Ecclesiastes 12:12 \(KJ21\)](#)

It occurred to me 20 years later in 2012 that I could pass on reflections and resources electronically. This self-funded, non-commercial website started as an attempt to put as many reflections and resources as possible into digital format in order that I might be more mobile and less dependent on books, magazines, files, and papers. Then, I began to share these reflections and resources with colleagues upon request. When I began to think that these reflections and resources might be helpful to a larger audience, I can only quip, "The project got out of hand." I kept composing reflections and compiling resources, so that, after 8+ years, 100+ files, and 5,000+ Arial 9pt. narrow margin pages replete with [Images for \(subject\)](#) interspersed to let the search engines multiply the resources exponentially, I determined to post the website and go from there. 2017 was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my Rite of Confirmation in 1967. When my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday came in 2018, it seemed like I was just hitting my stride. While this website is intended for rostered ministers, one of the inspirations came from members who said, "I bet you could write a book!" My goal is to put as many reflections and resources as possible at the reader's fingertips. In a term paper, the thesis is spelled out, and the footnotes added at the bottom of the pages and the bibliography at the end of the paper. Here brief reflections, which look more like footnotes, are followed by resources. Then, sections listed by topics provide even more resources. One of the reasons for the stacking of internet addresses is that the internet is constantly changing, and an address present today may be gone tomorrow.

Whereas a preaching website is more like a grocery store to obtain food for the weekly task, this Interim Ministry Resources (IMR) website is more like a hardware store to obtain tools for the job. I figure that, even if a reader does not find the reflections particularly helpful, I trust that at least some of the resources may prove useful. Such a reader may simply search the 50+ page Index for topics. The good news is that, with the digital medium, the reader won't have to store as many books and magazines on shelves, files in bankers' boxes, or papers in 3-ring binders for the reader or those who come after to decide what to do with.

This website does not pretend to offer a how-to directive. Rather, I believe the suggestive/exhaustive rhythm of reflections/resources format is more appropriate coming from a solo practitioner in this post-Christianity setting. The intention is to be descriptive of what I have found helpful rather than prescriptive of what others should do. This website, then, is a work in progress from one interim pastor trying to make sense of the practice of intentional interim ministry in an ever changing context while availing oneself of the wider collective wisdom. This ever changing context is changing even more with COVID-19. I suggest that this suggestive/exhaustive rhythm of reflections/resources format will be even more important going forward. The reader is invited to share reflections and resources.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lowell Bolstad – Interim Pastor  
May 18, 2020 – 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination

