

# Interim Ministry Resources

## Chapter 5 Governance

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## Reflections and Resources

### 1) Multi-point parishes

As of 4/15/2020, I have served (1) two-point parish in an installed pastorate for 10+ years as well as (10) two-point parishes, (3) three-point parishes, and (1) four-point parish in interim assignments. I expect that there will be more multi-point parishes in the future as congregations explore ways to attain financial sustainability. These pastorates involve their own satisfactions and frustrations. Each congregation must be tended to as well as the relationship(s) between/among them.

#### Resources

##### [PPT]A Resource for Persons Considering Forming a Multiple Point Parish

While forming a multiple-point parish is complex, there is much to be said for the process. If undertaken with a spirit of adventure and discovery, the congregations involved can learn much about themselves and each other. Secondly, the sharing of a pastor and important congregational programming can make scarce resources go farther with regards to mission and ministry. The most important factor in determining an effective multiple point parish is the strength of the relationship upon which it is built. As a result, considerable upfront and intentional time should be devoted to relationship building. Then that relationship needs to be maintained through regular and effective communication that focuses on the actual members of the parish's congregations as its audience.

<http://www.eandsynod.org/news/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Forming-Multipoint-Parishes.pdf>

<http://storage.cloversites.com/easternnorthdakotasynod/documents/ELCA%20MultiPointResource-1.pdf>

[Images for Resources for Forming a Multiple Point Parish](#)

#### Breaking out of Survival Mode

Three small congregations being served by two retired pastors, six miles apart. No, it's not a math problem—it was the situation that prompted three congregations to think about the future of their ministries, cooperatively.

[http://www.mnys.org/breaking\\_out\\_of\\_survival\\_mode/](http://www.mnys.org/breaking_out_of_survival_mode/)

[Images for Breaking out of Survival Mode](#)

[Images for Three small congregations being served by two retired pastors, six miles apart](#)

#### Challenges Facing The Area Parish By Dan DeBlock :: Interim Ministry Association

What is an area parish? Although churches are more often simply called congregations and have no geographic boundaries, in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America congregations are called parishes if four or more congregations are organized together under the care of a pastoral staff. Area parishes have been used most often to group rural congregations that are often small and or declining. The purpose of grouping congregations together is to help congregations that cannot afford a full-time pastor. In most cases, the hope is to avoid closing the congregation.

<https://www.imaelca.org/challenges-facing-the-area-parish-by-dan-deblock/>

<https://www.imaelca.org/challenges-facing-the-area-parish-part-2-by-dan-deblock/>

[Images for Challenges Facing The Area Parish By Dan DeBlock :: Interim Ministry Association](#)

<https://www.imaelca.org/author/dandeblock1/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/pub/dir/Daniel/Deblock>

[Images for Dan DeBlock, interim ministry](#)

#### Church Collaboration: How Congregations Can Work Together for Mission

Option 2: **Parish** Model

[http://www.churchcollaboration.com/Parish\\_model.htm](http://www.churchcollaboration.com/Parish_model.htm)

[Images for Church Collaboration: How Congregations Can Work Together for Mission Parish Model](#)

### 2) When a congregation can no longer afford a full-time pastor

I have been serving congregations living on the edge throughout my ministry, but, following the economic downturn of 2008, this matter has taken on new urgency. The congregations facing the most difficult trauma are those clinging to the notion of “wanting our own pastor.”

My response comes in the following ways:

1. Listen to the laments.
2. Pray to God for discernment.
3. Listen to what God is calling the congregation to be and to do.
4. Encourage a proactive mission outreach.
5. Raise a partnership in the Gospel.
6. Look for ways to do more with less.
7. Invite people to prayerfully consider their options.

When an assistant to the bishop asked me to offer to congregation leadership the option of synod staff coming in to ask the question: “How can neighboring churches cooperate in ministry?” one of the ways I framed the offer to congregation leadership was to speak of the spectrum of polity in denominations. On one end of the spectrum, a Roman Catholic bishop may simply realign or close congregations. I related how a Roman Catholic bishop recently had put one priest in charge of three congregations in the area.

#### Resources

[Archdiocese to close 20 churches, merge others | Star Tribune](#)

In a dramatic move sure to stir deep emotions in Roman Catholic parishes across the Twin Cities and beyond, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis will formally announce plans Saturday to close about 20 churches and merge many parishes as it grapples with shrinking budgets, changing demographics and a dwindling number of priests. The plan, part of the largest reorganization in the archdiocese's 160-year history, was shared with priests and parish workers on Friday. Congregants will [learn](#) the specifics at weekend masses.

<http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/105086499.html>

[Images for Archdiocese to close 20 churches, merge others | Star Tribune](#)

[http://www.bishop-accountability.org/news2010/09\\_10/2010\\_10\\_16\\_French\\_Archdioceseto.htm](http://www.bishop-accountability.org/news2010/09_10/2010_10_16_French_Archdioceseto.htm)

<http://www.startribune.com/catholic-church-reorganization-plan-draws-anger-sorrow/105108919/>

#### West St. Paul church's 150th anniversary may be its last – TwinCities.com

Parishioners at St. Michael's Catholic Church in West St. Paul were planning a celebratory dinner this weekend to mark the church's 150th anniversary.

Then they read a message from their pastor in the Aug. 28 church bulletin. The Rev. James Adams wrote that the church's financial situation was dire, a merger with Our Lady of Guadalupe in St. Paul was likely, and the sale of the St. Michael property was possible.

<http://www.twincities.com/2016/09/23/west-st-paul-churchs-150th-anniversary-may-be-its-last/>

[Images for West St. Paul church's 150th anniversary may be its last – TwinCities.com](#)

<https://www.twincities.com/2016/11/04/st-michael-catholic-church-in-west-st-paul-to-hold-its-final-mass/>

<http://www.startribune.com/st-michael-s-in-west-st-paul-prepares-for-last-mass/403068536/>

On the other end, I related a conversation with a woman whose congregation had disaffiliated from the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin of the ELCA. Their Call Committee checked out a website to get names of candidates and then waded through the resumes. In other words, for better or worse, they were on their own.

#### Clergy Connect – Lutheran Coalition for Renewal (CORE)

*Lutheran CORE makes no representation concerning the accuracy of any information on this list, nor of the qualifications of applicants responding to a listing here. This is a free bulletin board service. Both congregations and applicants are responsible for doing their own due diligence research. We urge congregations to secure criminal background checks on all candidates for ministry positions and to confirm information including references on any application.*

Are you a pastor or church professional looking for a confessing church?

Are you a member of a congregation looking for a confessing pastor or church professional?

A free bulletin board service ClergyConnect brings together confessing congregations with discipleship workers capable of discerning Law and Gospel who are seeking a salaried call. If you are a discipleship worker trying to discern whether God might be calling you to one of these positions, please drop the congregation a line to begin a mutual process of discerning your call to the position. If you are open to His work, the Holy Spirit is just as alive and active through this process as through any other.

Congregational search committees are asked to submit church name, location, description of the position and the congregation, and contact information. Vacancies can be emailed to [info@lutherancore.org](mailto:info@lutherancore.org) and are posted for six months unless we are otherwise notified. Please notify us when a position is filled.

<http://www.lutherancore.org/who-we-serve/clergy-connect/>

[Images for Clergy Connect – Lutheran Coalition for Renewal \(CORE\)](#)

I then stressed how the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin of the ELCA is more centrist in that the synod staff believes in partnership.

Walking together for the sake of mission in God's world

The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin is one of 65 synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are comprised of 199 congregations, over 93,000 members, and over 300 clergy and rostered leaders.

Synod means walking together, which describes our interdependent ministry relationship as we support mission partners, carry out synodical and churchwide initiatives, provide for education events and leadership training, respond to disaster and emergency needs, and heed the call to be a church engaged in all the world.

[Learn more about our synod.](#)

[Northwest Synod of Wisconsin | Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#)

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

<https://www.facebook.com/nswi/>

[Images for Northwest Synod of Wisconsin | Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#)

Congregation leaders of 2 congregations (one of which I was serving under a letter of agreement) took the initiative to invite leaders from 3 neighboring congregations (one of which I was serving on a contract basis) for a conversation about their options amidst the call process. The two presidents sent out the following letter:

Greetings,

This is an invitation from (name) Lutheran in (name) and (name) Lutheran in (name). This invitation is being extended by the presidents of these two congregations. We got our heads together and thought it would be a good idea to convene a meeting

of our sister congregations which are in various states of the call process at roughly the same time. The intent of the meeting is to:

1. Get to know the leadership of each of the congregations.
2. Share expectations of calling a pastor.
3. Learn from each other.
4. Explore any possible collaborations.

This will be a very laid-back discussion with no predetermined outcome other than gaining a shared understanding of our situations. The thought is that each congregation could send 1, 2, or 3 representatives from the Congregation Council. This way the size of the meeting is more conducive to a free-flowing discussion.

One of the congregations I was serving later convened a gathering of leaders of 5 Lutheran congregations and 2 Presbyterian congregations. Congregations in the local Methodist circuit were also interested in the process but not yet present at the gathering. The meeting was also attended by myself and another pastor, an assistant to the bishop, and the director for evangelical mission (DEM). The leader of one of the congregations led the conversation by involving participants in three matters: individual introductions, decision making process in each congregation, and imagining what God is calling each congregation to be and do. Then the director of evangelical mission asked the leaders to carry to their congregations an exercise of **accomplish-preserve-avoid** and come back to the next meeting with the summaries. The congregations I served came up with the following lists:

#### Accomplish – Preserve – Avoid

The Congregation Council at its April 8 meeting worked on an exercise called *Accomplish – Preserve – Avoid* as requested by Director of Evangelical Mission (DEM) Rev. Lori Skow-Anderson from the NW Synod of WI at the March 25 cooperative ministry gathering at (name) in anticipation of the next area cooperative ministry gathering on April 30 at the (name) Church in (name). Following is a compilation of the visioning process:

#### Accomplish

Call a Minister

Continue to involve our youth of all grade levels in the activities of the church life. Send these children to camp and have them participate more in worship

Have better attendance at worship

Spread the word of God; bring the Gospel to life for young and old

To help each other: Physically, Mentally, Monetarily – food, clothing, shelter

#### Preserve

Our welcoming atmosphere and fellowship with members and visitors alike

Continue with the wonderful music provided by our music ensemble and the children

Lutefisk!

Outreach to the community by continuing to support the food pantry, prayer shawls, cancer caps and driving for the elderly

Women of the ELCA and the Cemetery Association

Good food

#### Avoid

Conflict

Letting anyone fall through the cracks on not being asked to be involved

Apathy

The “we’ve always done it that way” attitude

Judging instead of witnessing

Out casting anyone

#### Accomplish – Preserve – Avoid

The Congregation Council at its April 21 meeting worked on an exercise called *Accomplish – Preserve – Avoid* as requested by DEM Rev. Lori Skow-Anderson from the NW Synod of WI at the March 25 cooperative ministry gathering in anticipation of the next area cooperative ministry gathering on April 30 at the (name) Church in (name). Following is a compilation of the visioning process:

#### Accomplish

Maintain and increase membership

Increase Sunday School

Shared ministry

Calling a full-time pastor

Addition on the church  
Our mission in faith  
Try new ideas  
Address local issues of poverty and separated families

#### Preserve

Church history  
Traditions of worship  
Friendliness and togetherness  
Summer park service  
Kaffe Lag  
Integrity  
Vacation Bible School

#### Avoid

Losing our identity  
Being complacent  
Conflict  
Upsetting people  
Doing more than we can afford  
Duplicity  
Instability  
Losing members

The DEM went through this exercise with the above-mentioned congregations together with representatives from 3 Methodist congregations. She then began a conversation about how cooperative ministries might look and asked the congregations to work on different scenarios to bring to the next meeting. She also invited them to an event called *Life Together: How to Form Cooperative Ministries*.

#### **Life Together: How to Form Cooperative Ministries - Northwest Synod of Wisconsin**

Congregations in our synod are talking with each other about how they can continue to do the work God has given them to do. Often the conversations are started because a congregation can no longer afford a full-time pastor. Guest speaker Rev. Julie A. K. Anderson has spent most of her life as a lay and ordained minister working with cooperative models of ministry. For seven years she has been the associate pastor of a team of ministers who serve five congregations called Winds of the Prairie Ministry ([www.winds of the prairie.org](http://www.winds of the prairie.org)) Her Doctor of Ministry project is looking at best practices learnings and opportunities that cooperative ministry creates.

Wednesday, May 14, 7-9 pm - Luther Park Bible Camp, Chetek, WI - Call 715-859-6810 to register - No Cost  
Sponsored by the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

"Pastors, congregational presidents & church leaders, if you are concerned about the future of your congregation, if you wonder how you will be able to continue your ministry with diminishing resources, please join us for this conversation about churches working together."

Rev. Laurie Skow-Anderson - Director of Evangelical Mission/Assistant to the Bishop - NW Synod of WI

"It is always a good time to talk about how a congregation is the church through its mission and ministry in the context in which it resides. Together we look for ways to be supportive of each other and look for opportunities to cooperate with each other in ministry. This cooperation comes in many different forms as a commitment to help each other better utilize the resources we are given."

Rev. Julie A.K. Anderson - Winds of the Prairie Ministry - [www.windsoftheprairie.org](http://www.windsoftheprairie.org)

[http://www.nswwi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/life\\_together\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.nswwi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/life_together_brochure.pdf)  
[info@nswwi.org](mailto:info@nswwi.org)

[Images for Life Together: How to Form Cooperative Ministries - Northwest Synod of Wisconsin](#)

#### **Resources**

Life Together: Stages of Cooperative Ministry

Contact Rev. Julie A. K. Anderson [jaka4mky@hotmail.com](mailto:jaka4mky@hotmail.com) for an electronic copy.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/pastor-julie-a-k-anderson-84491130>

[Images for Life Together: Stages of Cooperative Ministry](#)

#### **SouthWest Iowa Ministries**

Southwest Iowa Ministries (SWIM) is a shared ministry of five congregations.

<http://swimwebsite.weebly.com/>

## [Images for SouthWest Iowa Ministries](#)

### **Tri-County Ministry**

Formed in 1992, Tri-County Ministry (TCM) is an ecumenical parish made up of one Presbyterian and six Lutheran congregations. The cooperative ministry of these PCUSA and ELCA congregations has broadened the opportunities of our members to serve our communities and beyond in the name of Jesus Christ. Through the years, TCM has been an intern site, especially for students wishing to focus on rural ministry. For several years, TCM sponsored the annual Seminary on the Prairie, a continuing education event open to all clergy, seminary students, and laity. TCM serves as an example of innovative rural ministry on the prairie of North Dakota.

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

[Images for Tri-County Ministry](#)

### **Unitedinchristlutheranparish**

The United in Christ Lutheran Parish was established in November 2000. Today the parish consists of four congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

### **About Us**

<https://unitedinchristlutheranparish.org/index.php/about-us/about-us>

<https://www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org/index.php/affiliations/little-norway-lutheran-church>

<https://www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org/index.php/affiliations/concordia-lutheran-church>

[Images for United in Christ Lutheran Parish](#)

The following is a rough draft of three possible scenarios I presented to the Congregation Councils of the congregations I served.

### **Scenarios for Cooperative Ministry**

#### **Scenario 1**

Ten congregations find ways to cooperate in various ways as follows but not limited to: worship, music, youth, education, VBS, fellowship, mission, and others.

#### **Resources**

##### **Confirmation Kick Off with James Hersch**

We are excited to invite you to join us for an evening with renowned musician James Hersch on Wednesday, September 11, from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. in the Worship Center! As we celebrate the start of our fall programs, we are thrilled to welcome James Hersch as our guest musician. James has a rare mixture of musical talent, humor, and sensitivity that allows him to create songs that speak to what is common in all of us. James' performance allows his listeners to experience his music through intimate images which confront and celebrate the human condition. Learn more about James at [www.reachwithme.com](http://www.reachwithme.com) Along with Trinity's CrossWord Youth Band, James will lead our worship service and perform his inspirational music. We will gather to connect and celebrate our faith. All are welcome to join us for Worship with James Hersch.

##### **September 2013 newsletter - Trinity Lutheran Church**

[http://www.trinity-ec.org/newsletters/newsletter\\_2013\\_09.pdf](http://www.trinity-ec.org/newsletters/newsletter_2013_09.pdf)

<https://www.facebook.com/reachwithme/>

[Images for Confirmation Kick Off with James Hersch](#)

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##### **Vacation Bible School**

Vacation Bible School is a joint effort by several churches in the area. VBS is typically held that week after school is out and is held at the elementary school. This is an important ministry to the kids of this area. 2013 marked the 20th year that (name) Church has been part of this joint effort. Thanks to all who help prepare and pray for this important week.

Here are the 2013 statistics.

174 kids registered

25 different church represented

31% of enrollment unchurched or indicated no home church

32 teen and adult helpers

18 adult leaders - including 5 pastors

28 Bibles were given to students that did not have one

Thank you for supporting this ministry and for praying.

##### **New Life Alliance Church - Vacation Bible School**

[http://www.thelogchurch.org/site/cpage.asp?cpage\\_id=180060243&sec\\_id=180013196](http://www.thelogchurch.org/site/cpage.asp?cpage_id=180060243&sec_id=180013196)

[Images for New Life Alliance Church - Vacation Bible School](#)

#### **Scenario 2**

Ten congregations find ways to cooperate in various ways as follows but not limited to: worship, music, youth, education, VBS, fellowship, mission, and others.

Those congregations who can afford to call their own pastor do so, while those who cannot contract for pastoral services.



## Resources

### Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – ELCA Resource Repository

Policy and Procedures Related to the Availability of Ordained Ministers  
Between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Church Bodies with  
Which a Relationship of Full Communion Has Been Established

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Policies\\_Procedures\\_Roster\\_Mgmt.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Policies_Procedures_Roster_Mgmt.pdf) Page 54

[Images for Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – ELCA Resource Repository](#)

## Two Churches

Bethlehem entered into a contractual agreement with Augustana in Elizabeth in 2002 for pastoral services. This relationship between a large urban congregation and a small rural congregation is unique and has given both congregations insights into the larger church body. Bethlehem's pastoral team shares responsibilities as outlined by the Letter of Agreement (which includes worship leadership, preaching, visitation, confirmation, youth ministry, and administration). The two congregations celebrate their relationship with an annual joint worship service and pot luck picnic.

### Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Welcome

<http://www.bethlehemff.org/welcome.html>

[Images for Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Welcome](#)

## Scenario 3

Ten congregations find ways to cooperate in various ways as follows but not limited to: worship, music, youth, education, VBS, fellowship, mission, and others.

Ten congregations served by a staff of rostered and other qualified leaders.

## Resources

### [PDF]At Risk to Risking Mission: A Guide for Congregations and Their Future

Preface	From at Risk to Risking Mission Congregations
Section I	Survey Questionnaire: Do We Need to Change
Section II	Worksheet on Congregation Sustainability
Section III	Assessment of Options Worksheet
Section IV	Suggested Options for Ministry

<http://mittensynod.org/docs/RiskingMission.pdf>

[Images for At Risk to Risking Mission: A Guide for Congregations and Their Future](#)

### Cooperative Ministries in the 21st Century - General Board

As we continue in the twenty-first century, what are the emerging trends for the church and its mission and ministry? And how does cooperative parish development help the church address these trends?

The short answer is that cooperative parish ministry can be an important instrument in helping congregations relate to emerging trends in the new century. We are in a time of change in the church. Loren Mead has pointed out that the day of the church culture labeled "Christendom" is over. We understand that the mission of the church is now at our doorstep, not "over there."

Today, we are in a period of rapid change. Established patterns in the organized church are being challenged, and voices for change are strong. The church faces many challenges and opportunities at this time. Will we be prepared for them?

<http://www.gbod.org/lead-your-church/leadership-development/resource/cooperative-ministries-in-the-21st-century>

[Images for Cooperative Ministries in the 21st Century](#)

### [PDF]cooperative ministry - Hinton Rural Life Center

The idea known as cooperative ministry or cooperative parish has been around for many years. It has been implemented in many settings ranging from isolated rural smaller congregations to major metropolitan communities. It has been used both as a way to organize a few churches in one community and also as a way of doing ministry across whole annual conferences.

The results have varied from place to place. There have been and are wonderful successes, and there have also been dismal failures and frustrations. However, in spite of this history of mixed results, cooperative ministry is still a valid way of thinking about and doing ministry in almost any context. Some of us believe that it is the most hopeful and promising way of going about ministry within the United Methodist connection.

<http://www.hintoncenter.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/uploads/cooperative.pdf>

<https://www.hintoncenter.org/resources/>

<https://www.hintoncenter.org/ministries/>

[Images for cooperative ministry - Hinton Rural Life Center](#)

## Coordinating Council

### Purpose

To give guidance, and oversight to the Cooperative Ministry.

### Representation

Two voting members from each congregation.

## Resources

### Alternative Pastoral Models by C. Jeff Woods » Alban at Duke Divinity School

The traditional pastoral model is built upon a set of very expensive assumptions that include three years of post-bachelor education, a building owned by the congregants, and a full-time compensation package supplied by a single source of income. Increasingly, congregations are unable to afford this model, but still desire excellent pastoral ministry. The pastoral models described below offer alternatives to the traditional pastoral model, primarily by expanding the sources of income for the pastoral minister. Each of the models detailed seeks to provide a full-time compensation package for a sufficiently trained pastor through multiple sources of income. Virtually all of these models have been around for quite some time, although some may seem somewhat new conceptually and others simply re-named for clarity.



### Alban at Duke Divinity School » Alternative Pastoral Models

<https://alban.org/archive/alternative-pastoral-models/>

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/230489.C\\_Jeff\\_Woods](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/230489.C_Jeff_Woods)

Images for C. Jeff Woods, author

Images for Alternative Pastoral Models

[http://www.abc-usa.org/what\\_we\\_believe/staff-directories/general-secretary/jeff-woods/](http://www.abc-usa.org/what_we_believe/staff-directories/general-secretary/jeff-woods/)

<http://americanbaptists2015.weebly.com/testimonial---c-jeff-woods.html>

<https://www.faithandleadership.com/multimedia/c-jeff-woods-going-the-well>

<https://www.facebook.com/cjeff.woods>

<https://alban.org/category/strategic-planning/>

<https://alban.org/category/renewal-vitality/>

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

<https://alban.org/archive/crossing-the-threshold-how-a-presbyterian-church-and-an-independent-synagogue-share-space/>

<http://albanroundtable.wordpress.com/2010/10/06/1640/> Crunch Time in the Small Church | albanroundtable

### Dating the Presbyterians - ECF Vital Practices

Trinity is just one of hundreds of urban congregations trying to make its way in a world in which changing culture and economies of scale require do-or-die gumption. We have no idea whether or not we will become a new model of urban ingenuity – an Episcopal-Presbyterian community that functions like a hybrid or simply two congregations sharing space, or neither.

We do know the opportunity arose because of everything else we have been doing along the way to make our buildings pay for themselves so that our contributions can fund ministry, mission, and program. One thing does in fact, lead to another.

*The Rev. R. Cameron (Cam) Miller is rector at Trinity Episcopal Church in Buffalo, New York.*

<http://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/article/267/dating-the-presbyterians>

<http://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/64/death-and-resurrection>

Images for ECF Vital Practices

### Facing Decline, Finding Hope: New Possibilities for Faithful Churches [Jeffrey D. Jones Director of Ministry Studies, Phyllis Tickle]

Church today isn't the same as it was fifty years ago—or even ten years ago. In spite of the powerful stories of turn-around churches with skyrocketing memberships, the difficult reality is that most congregations are getting smaller. Jeffrey D. Jones asks brave questions for congregations facing this reality—what if membership growth isn't the primary goal for a church? How can churches remain vital, even with declining attendance?

*Facing Decline, Finding Hope* is an essential resource to help congregations confront their shrinking size while looking towards the hopeful reality that God is calling them to greater faithfulness. The book draws on biblical and theological resources, as well as contemporary leadership studies, to help leaders—both clergy and laity—set aside a survival mentality and ask new questions to shape ministry more attuned to today's world.

*Facing Decline, Finding Hope* is a powerful book for leaders who want to honestly assess the size of their church and plan for faithful, invigorating service regardless of whether membership numbers are up or down.

<http://www.amazon.com/Facing-Decline-Finding-Hope-Possibilities/dp/1566997321>

<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/24942472-facing-decline-finding-hope>

<https://alban.org/2015/01/30/jeffrey-d-jones-new-questions-for-a-new-day/>

[http://www.ants.edu/pdf/sp15\\_cmle645s.pdf](http://www.ants.edu/pdf/sp15_cmle645s.pdf)

<https://www.christiancentury.org/review/books/can-we-revitalize-our-dying-church-should-we>

<https://www.amazon.com/Jeffrey-D.-Jones/e/B001JS2UUK>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/13825610.Jeffrey\\_D\\_Jones\\_Director\\_of\\_Ministry\\_Studies](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/13825610.Jeffrey_D_Jones_Director_of_Ministry_Studies)

Images for Jeffrey D Jones Director of Ministry Studies

Images for Facing Decline, Finding Hope: New Possibilities for Faithful Churches [Jeffrey D. Jones Director of Ministry Studies, Phyllis Tickle]



<https://www.amazon.com/Phyllis-Tickle/e/B001IGLRSY>  
[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1434.Phyllis\\_A\\_Tickle](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1434.Phyllis_A_Tickle)  
[Images for Phyllis Tickle](#)

#### Finding Leaders at All for Part-Time and Rural Parishes

If the above disadvantages discourage seminary graduates from accepting full-time positions in rural and small town congregations, the difficulty in finding clergy for congregations in these locations is exacerbated by the fact that a substantial number can afford only one part-time pastoral position. This crescent reality has led regional leaders to use a variety of solutions to get ordained leadership for these congregations.

**Congregational Research Resources - Hartford Institute for Religion Research**  
[http://hrr.hartsem.edu/denom/judicatories\\_research\\_lummisrpt4.2.html](http://hrr.hartsem.edu/denom/judicatories_research_lummisrpt4.2.html)  
[Images for Congregational Research Resources - Hartford Institute for Religion Research](#)  
[Images for Finding Leaders for Part-Time and Rural Parishes](#)

#### Getting creative: Tough times call for clever measures and ministry - The Lutheran Magazine

Jennifer Dyer Boyd enthusiastically embraced her new call as pastor of [Trinity Lutheran](#) in Brewster, N.Y., with gratitude and delight, right down to the new deficit the church was facing.

She wasn't surprised to learn of the budget problems shortly after arriving. "I would've been more surprised if we weren't facing a deficit," she said. "That's the reality of the church right now."

Boyd is right — that is the reality for more than half of the [ELCA](#)'s roughly 10,000 congregations. Many have 80 or fewer worshipers per week, budgets of less than \$100,000, or more imminent financial issues, said Ruben Duran, [ELCA](#) program director for new congregations. He describes these congregations as operating in "maintenance mode," either barely making it or facing an uncertain future. Other churches are in serious decline and may close in the next few years, he said.

The increased expenses of maintaining and operating old buildings and paying a pastor's salary and benefits in the wake of dwindling stewardship are causing congregations to rethink how they operate. Some are developing creative solutions, while others aren't sure what to do and pray for a miracle.

[http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article\\_id=10292](http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=10292)  
[Images for Getting creative: Tough times call for clever measures and ministry - The Lutheran Magazine](#)  
<https://www.facebook.com/Trinity-Lutheran-Church-Brewster-NY-160570420670756/>  
<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>  
<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

#### How to Maintain Church Health in a Declining Population County – The Parish Paper

Declining county population leads to declining membership in its religious congregations—which lead to rising median age levels in those counties and congregations. That rising median age of a church's members often leads to bad habits, ill health, and the congregation's eventual death. To build better congregational health, begin by building better habits.

<http://www.gadisciples.org/clergy/ParishPaper/November%202012.pdf>  
<http://mennowdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/2012-11.pdf>  
[http://www.episcopalhawaii.org/uploads/2/5/4/8/25486559/10\\_p\\_p\\_--11-2012--maintain\\_church\\_health\\_in\\_dec\\_population\\_county.pdf](http://www.episcopalhawaii.org/uploads/2/5/4/8/25486559/10_p_p_--11-2012--maintain_church_health_in_dec_population_county.pdf)  
<http://www.wisconsinumc.org/connections/conference-news/the-parish-paper> November 2012 - "How to Maintain Church Health in a Declining Population County"  
[Images for How to Maintain Church Health in a Declining Population County – The Parish Paper](#)  
<https://www.theparishpaper.com/free-resources>  
<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

#### [PDF]How To Minister Effectively in Family, Pastoral, Program, and Corporate Sized Churches

##### Part II: [When Membership Declines](#)

There are times when, no matter how capable, clergy cannot reverse the downward slide of congregational membership. The reasons may be simply demographic: at times, certain areas of the country become depressed and begin to decline in population. In these areas, the older people may stay, but younger workers need to move elsewhere to find work. What then are the parish dynamics when a congregation becomes smaller? What do clergy moving into those congregations need to pay attention to when the membership shrinks to the next size?

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54c7d7ede4b03a45e09cd270/t/5aa00b43652dea8c73c46299/1520438089615/HowToMinisterEffectivelyInFamilyPastoralProgramandCorporate-SizedChurches.pdf>  
Discerning Your Congregation's Future: A Strategic and Spiritual Approach by Roy M. Oswald, Robert E. Frierich  
<https://4b2hrderdaoklyfu2n1ah3eku-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Roy-M-Oswald-bio.pdf>  
<https://www.amazon.com/Roy-M.-Oswald/e/B001K8KQ1O>  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/152452.Roy\\_M\\_Oswald](https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/152452.Roy_M_Oswald)  
[Images for Roy M. Oswald](#)

Appendix D

### Leading the Comeback Church: Help Your Church Rebound from Decline [David F. Nixon]

David F. Nixon led struggling churches to viability after major decline, crisis, or plateau. Six times, he overcame impossibilities in churches where others shook their heads and walked away. In *Leading the Comeback Church*, you'll discover survival skills essential to anticipating, experiencing, leading, and surviving the turnaround church experience. You will learn how to: Lead their church off of a plateau. Develop a strategy for growth. Overcome financial challenges. Break attendance barriers. Focus on spiritual growth. And much more!

<http://www.amazon.com/Leading-Comeback-Church-Rebound-Decline/dp/0834121026>

<http://www.amazon.com/Leading-Comeback-Church-Rebound-Decline/product-reviews/0834121026>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Leading\\_the\\_Comeback\\_Church.html?id=3mUCAAAACAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Leading_the_Comeback_Church.html?id=3mUCAAAACAAJ)

<https://www.amazon.com/David-F.-Nixon/e/B001KIFY2U>

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/582977.David\\_F\\_Nixon](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/582977.David_F_Nixon)

[Images for Leading the Comeback Church: Help Your Church Rebound from Decline \[David F. Nixon\]](#)

### North Star vision: Clustering helps rural Minnesota ministries survive and thrive - The Lutheran Magazine

In the mid-1990s, members of Our Redeemer Lutheran didn't know how long their church doors would remain open. With about 20 active members, the Puposky, Minn., congregation struggled to call a pastor. There weren't enough teens for a youth group. Members felt alone and isolated.

Times have changed. Last summer members gutted the church, updated its wiring and refurbished the altar. The church also serves as a community center, where neighbors gather for an annual harvest festival and a day of games in February. Our Redeemer now is focused on mission, not on just surviving.

"We've learned you don't sit there and give up," says Darlene Pearson, a parishioner since 1949. "We're doing outreach.

We're looking for larger community involvement and praying about it."

[http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article\\_id=2524](http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=2524)

[Images for North Star vision: Clustering helps rural Minnesota ministries survive and thrive - The Lutheran Magazine](#)

### Options for Struggling Congregations

Many churches come to a time in their congregational life where the question of sustainability or viability is raised. At this crucial juncture, it is important to look at a wide range of options and to prayerfully discern what direction God is calling the congregation. In the information that follows, your church's leadership can look at strategies congregations in similar circumstances have taken. There is no "right or wrong" answer but rather the goal is to be faithful to the situation facing your congregation and the unique setting of your ministry. It is always helpful to have a person from your judicatory or an outside consultant work with you through this process.

Whatever path you consider, we hope you will surround your discerning process with prayer and listen for God's voice in the midst of your deliberations.

### MACUCC: Options for Struggling Congregations

<http://www.macucc.org/pages/detail/2245>

[Images for Options for Struggling Congregations](#)

### Small churches and their presbyteries face decisions - The Presbyterian Outlook

From 1984 to 2005 — in a little more than two decades — the number of PC(USA) churches with 100 members or fewer jumped by almost 25 percent, from 4,171 to 5,191. From 2002 to 2005, in just three years, the number of small churches (with 100 members or fewer) increased by 187, while the number of big ones (500 members and up) dropped by 100. So, the picture is this: lots of small but valued Presbyterian churches are scattered across the land. The report concluded the problem was not a dearth of ministers — "contrary to conventional wisdom, we do not have a shortage of ministers in the PC(USA)," it states. But many of these congregations cannot afford to hire a full-time pastor.

Although minimum salaries for pastors vary from presbytery to presbytery, a common rule-of-thumb is that a congregation probably needs an annual budget of at least \$100,000 to be able to afford to call a pastor, have money for mission, and take care of "just the basic stuff of keeping the building up," said Fortel, who also has been the PC(USA)'s associate for mission support working with committees on ministry. (She's leaving that position to become an interim minister in Indiana.)

"The reality is that small churches can seldom match the compensation offered to pastors by larger congregations," the report states. "Although the terms of call are not the only factor in a minister or candidate's decision to accept a call to a particular congregation, financial considerations do play a part. Some candidates and ministers are so burdened with educational debt that they are unable to accept a call to a congregation where the compensation is lower than what they are offered elsewhere."

<http://pres-outlook.org/2006/11/small-churches-and-their-presbyteries-face-decisions/>

[Images for Small churches and their presbyteries face decisions - The Presbyterian Outlook](#)

### Transitional Ministry Today: Successful Strategies for Churches and Pastors edited by Norman B. Bendroth

11 Hospice Care for **Struggling Congregations**

Page 163

Gretchen J. Switzer

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1566997518>

[Images for Transitional Ministry Today: Successful Strategies for Churches and Pastors edited by Norman B. Bendroth 11 Hospice Care for Struggling Congregations](#)

<https://www.amazon.com/Transitional-Ministry-Today-Successful-Strategies/dp/156699750X>

<http://rowman.com/isbn/9781566997669/transitional-ministry-today-successful-strategies-for-churches-and-pastors>

## Transitioning Structures for Congregational Size

- Transitioning for Decline

<http://malyonleadership.org/305/>

[Images for Transitioning Structures for Congregational Size • Transitioning for Decline](#)

## Options . . . What Options? Facing Questions of Congregational Future

Walking Together

A Congregational Resource Event

Rev. Amy Odgren, assistant to the bishop and director for evangelical mission, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; Rev. Bonnie Cain, Nazareth Lutheran Church, Withee; Rev. Ann Spindt Henschel, district superintendent, Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church

In a church culture of declining membership, limited financial resources, and a lack of clear missional direction, it can seem overwhelming to imagine a vibrant future. Some congregations have found new life in forming ministry partnerships and shared ministry cooperatives with ELCA neighbors and ecumenical partners. Come and wrestle with questions of where to begin – how are options for ministry imagined? Learn how shared ministry can release new potential for struggling congregations.

[http://www.nwswi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/program\\_book\\_3.16.13.pdf](http://www.nwswi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/program_book_3.16.13.pdf)

Page 5

[Images for Facing Questions of Congregational Future](#)

## Rising from the Ashes: A Story of Uniting as One through Death and Resurrection

Peace of Pigeon Falls Commissioners and Rev. Amy Odgren, assistant to the bishop and director for evangelical mission, NW Synod of Wisconsin

After a devastating fire destroyed the Pigeon Creek Lutheran Church building in Pigeon Falls, they found themselves under the same roof of their parish partner, Evangelical Lutheran, of the same community. Come and hear how suffering through change, loss and sacrifice led to an historical decision to become a newly formed congregation. This story of hope is an inspiration for all who yearn for vibrancy within their own congregation. It is a story of collaboration and partnership. Learn how new life sprouts from surrender, risk and trust.

[a congregational resource event - Northwest Synod of Wisconsin](#)

[http://www.nwswi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/program\\_book\\_3.16.13.pdf](http://www.nwswi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/program_book_3.16.13.pdf)

Page 5

[Images for Peace Lutheran Church of Pigeon Falls](#)

## Unconventional Wisdom: Left Behind - Alban Institute

If you are discouraged with your congregation and wondering whether it is time to exercise the exit option, it may help to know about some things you can do that can improve the odds—for you and for the congregation. It helps, for instance, simply to realize that like many others “left behind,” you may be better suited to **maintaining a congregation** than to reviving one. There is nothing wrong or shameful about this, and it can be extremely helpful to be conscious of it, and to accept the limits of your role.

<https://alban.org/archive/unconventional-wisdom-left-behind/>

[Images for maintaining a congregation](#)

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

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

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

<https://www.facebook.com/albaninstitute/>

<http://www.elizabethpresbytery.org/Resource%20Center%20ON%20THE%20WEB/Alban%20Institute%20Resources%202012.pdf>

<https://alban.org/about-alban/congregations-magazine/>

1 ½ years after I moved on from that assignment, the following article appeared in the regional newspaper.

## United in spirit: Rural congregations link up for long-term survival | Leader-Telegram

Unable to find pastors, officials from two rural Lutheran churches — Big Drywood and English — decided to meet at a local restaurant.

Representatives from three additional Lutheran houses of worship — churches in Thorp, Stanley and Gilman — also were invited.

“We were all looking (for pastors), but nobody had anybody,” said Chris Stein, a member of the English Lutheran Church of Bateman’s church council, “so we decided to put our heads together.”

Somehow word got out about the group, and officials from five more rural churches — one Lutheran, two Methodist and two Presbyterian — expressed interest in taking part, he said.

Before any decisions could be made, pastors began accepting calls to some of the churches, including English Lutheran.

Rather than disband, the group continued to meet and organized as the United in Christ Ministry consortium.

<http://www.leadertelegram.com/News/Front-Page/2015/12/12/United-in-spirit.html>

[Images for United in spirit: Rural congregations link up for long-term survival | Leader-Telegram](#)

A workshop was presented at the Walking Together event.

## LIFE TOGETHER: AREA MINISTRIES

Chris Stein, United in Christ Ministry

How did 10 congregations from 3 different denominations come to work together? Come and learn how to negotiate the rough waters of working together!

View the web page for Walking Together details. - Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

[http://www.nwswi.org/news\\_and\\_events/Walking\\_Together.phtml](http://www.nwswi.org/news_and_events/Walking_Together.phtml)  
[info@nwswi.org](mailto:info@nwswi.org)

Images for LIFE TOGETHER: AREA MINISTRIES

[Images for 10 congregations from 3 different denominations come to work together](#)

### 3) Rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic or strategically realigning to be good stewards?

Ever since the economic downturn of 2008 and the decisions on [PDF] A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, there have been more congregation disaffiliations, closings, downsizings, shared ministry agreements, and mergers than I have seen since I started in the pastoral ministry in 1980.

Will the ELCA Be Gone in 30 years? - Faith+Lead

DWIGHT ZSCHEILE SEPTEMBER 5, 2019

New projections forecast just 16,000 in worship across the entire ELCA by 2041. Why is this happening and what can be done?

According to projections from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) Office of Research and Evaluation, the whole denomination will have fewer than 67,000 members in 2050, with fewer than 16,000 in worship on an average Sunday by 2041. That's right: according to current trends, the church will basically cease to exist within the next generation.

<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/decline/>

<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/tag/future-of-the-church/>

Images for Will the ELCA Be Gone in 30 years? - Faith+Lead

[Images for church will basically cease to exist within the next generation](#)

Sometimes, in my more anxious moments, I get the feeling that this activity may simply be so much scrambling on a sinking ship.

#### Resources

rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic - Wiktionary

Verb

[rearrange](#) the [deck chairs](#) on the [Titanic](#)

1. (idiomatic) To do something [pointless](#) or [insignificant](#) that will soon be [overtaken](#) by [events](#), or that [contributes](#) nothing to the solution of a current problem.

[http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/rearrange\\_the\\_deck\\_chairs\\_on\\_the\\_Titanic](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/rearrange_the_deck_chairs_on_the_Titanic)

[Images for rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic](#)

#### Re-Arranging the Deck Chairs: How the Church has become the Titanic

One of the lasting images of the Titanic Disaster is one that no one can confirm as actual, but lives on as a sad and poignant metaphor. It is the image of someone frantically re-arranging the furniture on the sinking Titanic. Linguistic experts have traced this idiom back to the 1960's but cannot find evidence of it prior. Since then, however, it has become the symbol of any failing organization that is trying to fix the problem in superficial changes that will make no difference at all. As several recent surveys reveal, the Church is one organization that seems to be living out this idiom. This is especially true in the Church's efforts to keep its youth, who are fleeing the church in droves.



<http://www.kirbasinstitute.com/2013/09/re-arranging-the-deck-chairs-how-the-church-has-become-the-titanic/>

[Images for Church has become the Titanic](#)

#### Sinking of the RMS Titanic - Wikipedia

*Titanic* received six warnings of sea ice on 14 April but was travelling near her maximum speed when her lookouts sighted the iceberg. Unable to turn quickly enough, the ship suffered a glancing blow that buckled her [starboard](#) (right) side and opened five of her sixteen [compartments](#) to the sea. *Titanic* had been designed to stay afloat with four of her forward compartments flooded but no more, and the crew soon realized that the ship would sink. They used [distress flares](#) and radio ([wireless](#))



messages to attract help as the passengers were put into [lifeboats](#). In accordance with existing practice, *Titanic*'s lifeboat system was designed to ferry passengers to nearby rescue vessels, not to hold everyone on board simultaneously; therefore, with the ship sinking rapidly and help still hours away, there was no safe refuge for many of the passengers and crew. Compounding this, poor management of the evacuation meant many boats were launched before they were completely full. Thus, when *Titanic* sank, over a thousand passengers and crew were still on board. Almost all those who jumped or fell into the water drowned within minutes due to the effects of [hypothermia](#). [RMS Carpathia](#) arrived on the scene about an hour and a half after the sinking and rescued the last of the survivors by 09:15 on 15 April, some nine and a half hours after the collision. The disaster caused widespread outrage over the lack of lifeboats, lax regulations, and the unequal treatment of the three passenger classes during the evacuation. Subsequent inquiries recommended sweeping changes to maritime regulations, leading to the establishment in 1914 of the [International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea](#) (SOLAS), which still governs maritime safety today.



*Untergang der Titanic* ("Sinking of the Titanic") By Willy Stower, 1912

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinking\\_of\\_the\\_RMS\\_Titanic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinking_of_the_RMS_Titanic)  
[Images for Sinking of the RMS Titanic](#)

#### Ten Lessons Learned from the Titanic Disaster

The Titanic was a disaster of epic proportions back on April 15, 1912. Not only did more than 1,500 people lose their lives, but the sinking of the "unsinkable" ship has stayed in the collective memories of people worldwide since that date more than 100 years ago. Below are 10 lessons learned from the Titanic disaster as outlined by emergency management expert Regina Phelps:

[http://www.disaster-resource.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1663](http://www.disaster-resource.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1663)

[Images for Ten Lessons Learned from the Titanic Disaster](#)

<https://thepreachersword.com/2016/04/15/4-lessons-learned-from-the-titanic/>

<https://www.ehstoday.com/safety/five-safety-lessons-learned-sinking-titanic>

<https://www.familyadventureproject.org/10-lessons-from-a-sinking-ship-marking-titanics-anniversary/>

[Images for lessons from a sinking ship marking titanics anniversary](#)

<https://www.techrepublic.com/blog/10-things/10-project-management-lessons-from-the-titanic-disaster/>

[Images for project management lessons from the titanic disaster](#)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1291331/> Disaster prevention: lessons learned from the Titanic - NCBI - NIH

[Images for Disaster prevention: lessons learned from the Titanic](#)

<https://www.nbcnews.com/science/10-causes-titanic-tragedy-620220>

#### Titanic Quotes - BrainyQuote

<https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/titanic>

[Images for titanic quotes](#)

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/titanic>

<http://www.titanicuniverse.com/titanic-quotes-and-sayings/1067>

I dare not share this anxiety with members because, as the saying goes, "Who wants to join a sinking ship?"

#### Turnaround | TBSC consulting

It is an unfortunate fact of business that poorly performing companies often reach the tipping point. At the tipping point company management has failed and, if anything, the situation is getting worse. The company is performing so poorly that the prospect of internally driven or even consultant-supported performance improvement is essentially zero. At the same time, the possibility of attracting a new management team to the failing company also is low; **who wants to join a sinking ship?** In any case, turning around a failing company requires skills that are different than your typical business manager.

<http://www.tbsc.ge/performance-improvement/turnaround>

[Images for who wants to join a sinking ship?](#)

So, in my less anxious moments, I frame the context that these new ways of living out the mission of God in the current context are faithful to the Great Commission. Discernment is needed to make sure that these decisions are made for the right reasons.

After writing the original post, I am revisiting this post in the middle of the **Wisconsin's Coronavirus 'Stay-At-Home' Order March 25 through April 24** in which "Crowds of 10 or larger are specifically banned at weddings, funerals and church services. People who violate

the order could face up to 30 days in jail, or a fine of up to \$250.” It is hard to know at this time, but it may be safe to say that the projections **Will the ELCA Be Gone in 30 years? - Faith+Lead** DWIGHT ZSCHEILE SEPTEMBER 5, 2019 may need to be recalibrated. After writing the above update, I can say that my assignment ended on 4/15 and the assignment I was scheduled to start on 4/16 fell through, and so I ended up on leave from call watching how most congregations in this synod continue to lock out their congregants from in-person services of worship while many of the Evangelicals and the Roman Catholics have opened the doors to their churches. I think those Evangelical and Roman Catholic congregations stand a chance to stay afloat, but I am not so sure about those in the ELCA.

#### 4) Should a smaller church simply merge with the larger church?

An interim pastor serving a two-point parish couldn't figure out why the open country congregation didn't close their doors and urge its members to go to church at the village congregation.

I admit there are times when a small congregation does not possess the critical mass to continue. The open country church located down the road from my birthplace in Montana has been closed for years. My cousin, who lives next to the closed church, plays the keyboard for a Community of Christ church in a neighboring town.

Contraction = Subtraction. People invariably fall through the cracks or disburse to other places in a merger. A merger is more of a holding pattern than a growth strategy.

Smaller = Greater. The smaller the congregation the greater the opportunities for participation, and the smaller the congregation, the greater importance each member is to the whole.

**Blues Brothers - Everybody Needs Somebody - YouTube**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUgavzoYKZI>

**Images for Blues Brothers - Everybody Needs Somebody**

**Celtic Thunder Heritage - "A Place in the Choir" - YouTube**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqm-S9J1s\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqm-S9J1s_k)

**Images for Celtic Thunder Heritage - "A Place in the Choir"**

#### 5) Sharing a pastor

A congregation had been used to having their own pastor and a half-time church secretary. But when the average worship attendance dropped from 122 to 72 in four years with a corresponding decline in receipts, that level of staffing no longer became a given. Following is a proposal I made for sharing a pastor as well as a proposal for a church secretary position:

Please find attachments

Proposal for Sharing a Pastor

Proposal for a Church Secretary position as written elaborations on the oral presentation made at the 5/21 Congregation Council meeting as a part of Affirmations/Considerations of the pastor's report.

The presenting situation for these proposals is as follows:

1. 5/11 letter to the congregation from the council president – “Our general fund offerings have been covering 50% of our regular monthly budgeted expenses.”
2. The bishop related to me at the 4/21 Interim Ministry Gathering at the synod office that (two neighboring congregations) would not be receiving a new seminary intern.
3. The seminary intern pastor related to me prior to the 5/17 concert that the congregations contacted the bishop and were advised to wait to see what happens.

#### Proposal for Sharing a Pastor

##### *congregation*

Baptized	268
Confirmed	120
Average Attendance	33

##### *congregation*

Baptized	404
Confirmed	306
Average Attendance	72

##### *congregation*

Baptized	95
Confirmed	0
Average Attendance	30

**Find a Congregation - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

<http://www.elca.org/tools/FindACongregation>

**Images for Congregation - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

#### Suggested Formula for Financial Sustainability

10	Larger Church
40	Operating Expenses



## 50 Staff Compensation

100

### Goals

- Good stewardship
- Work together
- Area outreach

Location	Average Attendance	Worship	Compensation
<u>(name)</u>	33	8am	20%
<u>(name)</u>	72	9:30am	60%
<u>(name)</u>	30	11am	20%

### Arrangement

Letter of Call with (congregation) with pastor compensated by (congregation).

Letter of Agreement for pastor to be shared with (two neighboring congregations). 20% + 20% to be paid to congregation.

Length – two years with option of continuing or discontinuing at that time.

### Proposal for a Church Secretary position

#### Suggested Formula for Financial Sustainability

10	Larger Church
40	Operating Expenses
50	Staff Compensation

### Goal

- Do more with less to support the life and mission of this congregation.

### Options

1. Thursday and Friday 10 hours
2. As needed flex time 8-12 hours

*Postscript: After I left, the congregation partnered with one of the two smaller neighboring congregations, while the other small neighboring congregation partnered with another larger congregation.*

## 6) Indirect motivation

A joint parish secretary related to me that a former interim pastor told the Congregation Council of the smaller of the 2 congregations that he believed the congregation was dying and did not have a future. She said the council got so mad that they determined to prove him wrong. I do not recommend this kind of unsolicited advice, but it did have the effect of indirect motivation.

### Preaching and Worship in the Small Church by William Willimon, Robert L. Wilson

Donald Sheldon's dilemma illustrates the enigma of the small church. These congregations need pastors but can afford only modest salaries. The success of a minister is determined by his or her ability to move to larger congregations. **In a society that values growth and size, the small church remains the same; it does not grow and it refuses to die.** In continues year after year, seeming to change little, if at all.

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1579105955>

Page 18

<https://www.amazon.com/Preaching-Worship-Church-William-Willimon/dp/1579105955>

<http://wipfandstock.com/preaching-and-worship-in-the-small-church.html>

<https://www.amazon.com/William-H.-Willimon/e/B001IGHNA0>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/10467.William\\_H\\_Willimon](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/10467.William_H_Willimon)

[Images for William Willimon, author](#)

[Images for Preaching and Worship in the Small Church by William Willimon, Robert L. Wilson](#)

## 7) Conversation about multi-point parish arrangements

I attended a conversation about multi-point parish arrangements sponsored by the synod staff of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin on 8/31/2016. It came at an opportune time because I had started an assignment at a two-point parish on 7/10 and one of the Congregation Councils had indicated on 8/15 a desire to realign. To make a long story short, I requested and received forms [info@nswi.org](mailto:info@nswi.org) which I adapted. I provided a proposed letter of agreement for one congregation and a proposed shared ministry agreement for the other congregation. These documents can be found in Chapter 10. Constitution 3 Bylaws Resolutions.

### Chapter 20. PARISH AUTHORIZATION.

Sample Letter of Agreement for Pastoral Ministry

Sample Shared Ministry Agreement

### You're Invited

Congregations who are in a multi-point parish arrangement or are thinking about entering into a parish arrangement with one or more other congregations are invited to join the synod staff for this conversation event.

Purpose:

Conversation with those who are already living into their parish agreement. What have they learned?  
Walk through a sample parish agreement.  
Implications for the call process. Ministry Site Profiles – one or multiple?  
Financial questions of all kinds.  
Your questions!

Where: Trinity Lutheran Church, Eau Claire

When: August 31, 2016 at 6:30pm

Who: Rostered Leaders and Lay Leaders of the parish or congregations

RSVP to Liz Bartsch with the number of people attending by August 15. [lbartsch@nswi.org](mailto:lbartsch@nswi.org) or 715.859.6810

Elizabeth Bartsch

Assistant to the Bishop-Administration

*Hebrews 11: 1* Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

944 24 1/4 Street, Suite 2, Chetek, WI 54728

office: [715-859-6810](tel:7158596810) fax: [715-859-6812](tel:7158596812)

[www.nswi.org](http://www.nswi.org)

Among other things, the synod staff responded to questions about a Sample Ministry Agreement Worksheet and a Letter of Agreement for Pastoral Ministry. Both of these documents are available from:

Elizabeth Bartsch - Assistant to the Bishop-Administration [lbartsch@nswi.org](mailto:lbartsch@nswi.org) [715-859-6810](tel:7158596810) [info@nswi.org](mailto:info@nswi.org)

## 8) Why a cooperative ministry?

Leadership in the congregations put together a rationale for forming a parish agreement. I started an assignment to help facilitate the arrangement a few months after its formation. I was given the document along with the annual report and other items.

There is strength in numbers.

This strength allows for congregations to remain viable doing God's ministry where they are.

Sharing of resources helps us look into the future of what God has planned for us. The ministry opportunities, because congregations are viable, are endless.

Sharing also makes us good stewards of our time, talents, and resources.

Shared ministry helps the pastors be good stewards as well as they collaborate visitation, worship, education, and more.

In a parish, when a staff member leaves the team, there is still structure and stability in place during the transition.

With an anticipated shortage or ordained pastors in the ELCA, having a parish with more people involved and more varied staff possibilities possibly will give us more options for obtaining new staff as we need them.

## Resources

### Cooperative Parish Ministry

"Local churches, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, may enhance their witness to one another and to the world by showing forth the love of Jesus through forms of mutual cooperation." Paragraph 206, The Book of Discipline, 2000

#### Cooperative Parish Ministry

Cooperative Parish Ministry is an expression of the connectional nature of the United Methodist Church in which two or more churches work together in a formal arrangement to share at least one staff member and strengthen the ministry of all participating churches. No longer just a rural model of ministry, it is also suitable for suburban and urban settings as well as arrangements containing churches from two or more of these settings. Cooperative parish ministry demonstrates good stewardship, features gift-based ministry and is an ideal training environment.

#### Report Of Conference Table #6 – Cooperative Parish Ministry

[http://www.flumc.com/cooperative\\_parish/report\\_ct6.htm](http://www.flumc.com/cooperative_parish/report_ct6.htm)

[Images for Cooperative Parish Ministry](#)

### FACTORS AFFECTING SHARED MINISTRY IN MULTIPLE-POINT CHARGES IN THE EAST OHIO CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The major conclusion of the study was the ineffectiveness of linking small membership churches together solely for economic reasons. A larger vision for shared ministry is needed for multiple-point charges.

[PDF] [abstract factors affecting shared ministry in multiple-point charges in the east ohio conference on the united methodist church](#)

<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1227&context=ecommonsatsdissertations>

[Images for SHARED MINISTRY IN MULTIPLE-POINT CHARGES](#)

[PDF] [Geographical Parishes - Northeastern Iowa Synod](#)

Why form a geographical parish?

Mission, modernization and survival are among the reasons that rural churches pursue cooperative ministries, known as geographical parishes. Entering into a geographical parish — in which churches share any combination of pastoral staff, contractual agreements, or government — is a way for rural churches to modernize and transform, so that they can continue to meet the needs of their congregations — religious, Christian education, fellowship, historical family roots and community.

<http://www.neiasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/GeoParish-flier-2-17.pdf>  
[Images for Geographical Parishes – Northeastern Iowa Synod](#)

## 9) Sharing or merging?

I ate at the local café each Tuesday afternoon for their senior discount special meatloaf supper. One week, I saw a poster on the bulletin board advertising a rummage sale and lunch that Saturday at a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregation 9 miles away. I looked on their website to get directions and discovered that the congregation was a merger of 3 congregations.

### Trinity Lutheran Church - LCMS, Prentice WI - Home

Welcome to Trinity. In 1967, three local churches merged and built a new church along Highway 8 just outside Prentice WI. Trinity Lutheran Church is a part of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in the North Wisconsin District.

<https://trinitylutheranprentice.weebly.com/>

[Images for Trinity Lutheran Church - LCMS, Prentice WI](#)

[http://www.apg-wi.com/price\\_county\\_review/paywall/trinity-lutheran-of-prentice-to-celebrate-years/article\\_a67d1f08-9ed7-11e7-a58a-8bed10ad64a2.html](http://www.apg-wi.com/price_county_review/paywall/trinity-lutheran-of-prentice-to-celebrate-years/article_a67d1f08-9ed7-11e7-a58a-8bed10ad64a2.html)

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/575405289884390421/> In 1977, Rev. Ronald P. Krug accepted a call to Trinity Lutheran – LCMS, Prentice, WI.

I bought a food processor for \$20 and ordered a bowl of chili for \$5. Then, I took in the first game at the girls' softball tournament. The 4 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America congregations I was serving at the time had entered into a shared ministry agreement the previous summer. I brought this insight up at the Congregation Council meeting of the village congregation the following Monday evening as a part of transition dynamics.

One of the reasons I go to community events at local congregations, such as a rummage sale or church supper, is to gain admittance into churches I might not otherwise have occasion to learn more about such congregations and their place in the community. This occasion helped me to see how different sets of congregations make different choices in how to work together.

## 10) Retired pastor contracts with more than one congregation

I served a three-point parish where one of the congregations requested to be released from the shared ministry agreement for financial reasons. I contacted a neighboring retired pastor serving a small congregation and asked if he would be interested in serving this congregation also. He replied in the affirmative. A member of the transition task force asked if it was possible to contract for pastoral services without having to enter a shared ministry agreement. I asked this question in my monthly report to synod staff and received the following reply:

First, to answer your question in your monthly report about whether or not a congregation can contract services with a retired pastor who is already under contract with another congregation – the answer is yes. Both are part time, and it is up to the pastor to make sure he can handle what is being asked for. And they do not have to form a parish agreement. They can simply negotiate service times, and then they are good to go.

## 11) To yoke or unyoke

While much of the attention is being paid on cooperative ministry these days, and rightly so, there are some situations where congregations might be better served by unyoking. I served one two-point parish with a town church and an open country church. The town church eventually went on its own after I left and did well. The other congregation was served by a synodically authorized minister until it eventually closed. I served another two-point parish where the larger congregation experienced growth under the new pastor after I left only to run into a plateau when the larger congregation could not bring itself to unyoke from the smaller church. The larger congregation wanted to offer two services of worship with a variety of worship styles but was not able to do as long as the congregation remained yoked to the smaller congregation. I served another open country congregation going through difficult times, where the idea was considered to yoke with a smaller congregation to benefit both. The bishop believed the congregation possessed potential and wanted the congregation to stand alone. The bishop was right, and the congregation thrived under the leadership of the new pastor.

### [PDF] Yoked Congregations

This form is to be used where two or more congregations are “yoked” and calling a pastor together.

[http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/2067/yoked\\_ministry\\_information\\_formPDF.pdf](http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/2067/yoked_ministry_information_formPDF.pdf)

[Images for Yoked Congregations](#)

<https://congregationalcorner.wordpress.com/2016/08/18/yoked-congregations-well-muscled-and-powerfully-built/>

<http://www.uua.org/growth/multisite/ways/yoked-congregations>

<https://www.macucc.org/strugglingcongregations> Option: Yoking

<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/mid-councils/congregations/> [Process for Evaluating Yoked Churches](#)

[Sharing Pastor from Whitewater Valley Presbytery\(PDF\)](#)

<https://pres-outlook.org/2012/07/assembly-acts-on-polity-issues-regarding-clergy-abuse-yoked-congregations-and-church-property/>

[http://www.presbyteryofsd.org/files/7215/0333/0189/yoked\\_church\\_information\\_form.pdf](http://www.presbyteryofsd.org/files/7215/0333/0189/yoked_church_information_form.pdf)  
<http://www.glpby.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Final-Agreement-for-yoking-10-11-16.pdf>  
<https://www.vnews.com/Etna-Baptist-Church-brings-in-a-new-minister-4688973> Valley News - How 'Yoked' Hanover  
Congregations Found a New Pastor

## 12) Covenant or contract?

The movement by consenting parties toward shared ministry is sometimes compared to attraction – dating – commitment – engagement – wedding. Where the metaphor breaks down for me is that this shared ministry is not a covenant in which both consenting parties pledge “until death do us part.” The movement toward shared ministry may result in a Shared Ministry Agreement or a Letter of Agreement for Pastoral Services by consenting parties, but neither agreement (contract) purports to be “until death do us part.” Fortunately, there are other metaphors to describe the movement of consenting parties to shared ministry.

### Resources

[PDF] [cooperative ministry - Hinton Center](#)

Cooperative Parish Developmental Model

Stages of Parish Life

Hinton Center ~ Models for Ministry © 2004 ~ Adapted from a design developed by J. Karl Jones Hinton Center, PO Box 27, Hayesville, NC 28904 ~ (828)389-8336 ~ [www.hintoncenter.org](http://www.hintoncenter.org) [info@hintoncenter.org](mailto:info@hintoncenter.org)

<https://www.hintoncenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/hinton-center-cooperative.pdf>

Page 8

[Images for cooperative ministry - Hinton Center](#)

### The Phases of a Cooperative Parish Ministry

The five phases of cooperative parish development are: exploratory/preparatory, probe, structuring, operating/maturing, and evaluation/recycle.

<https://assembly.uca.org.au/images/stories/papers/parishministry.pdf>

[Images for Phases of a Cooperative Parish Ministry](#)

## 13) Proposal and counter-proposal

There are different ways to do collaborative ministry. The executive committee of the Congregation Council for one congregation asked to meet with the executive committee of the Congregation Council of another congregation. The committee from the open country congregation proposed a shared ministry agreement to the committee of the congregation in the neighboring city. The committee of the city congregation declined but counter-proposed an assimilation model for collaborative ministry in which the vice president offered, “You are welcome to come join us if you want.” This counter-proposal was taken back to the Congregation Council of the open country congregation, which declined. The pastors of the respective congregations continued to attend the community ministerial and take part in an ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve service of worship as well as a Good Friday service of worship.

### Resources

[Church Collaboration Home](#)

How Congregations Can Work Together for Mission

<http://churchcollaboration.com/>

<http://www.churchcollaboration.com/absorption.htm>

[Images for Congregations Can Work Together for Mission](#)

[PDF] [Final draft Shared Ministry Agreement - Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church-Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church – Shared Ministry Memorandum of Understanding](#)

<http://www.our-redeemers.com/uploads/1/3/3/1/13317308/sharemin.pdf>

[Images for Shared Ministry Memorandum of Understanding](#)

[PDF] [Guidelines for the Merger and Assimilation of Churches – Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy](#)

If a smaller membership church wishes to surrender the use of its building and decides to combine its membership with a larger congregation and the church receiving the smaller congregation remains basically the same, that is, in location, program, name and pastoral leadership, that process is an **assimilation** not a merger. In that case, the guidelines for the process are different than those for a merger (see Guidelines for Assimilations).

<http://www.glpby.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Mergers-and-Assimilations-policy.pdf>

[Images for Guidelines for the Merger and Assimilation of Churches](#)

## 14) Endings and new beginnings

I served a two-point parish, which ended a shared ministry agreement amicably.

From the Pastor

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,

Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home. *(name)*

*(name)* passed the proposed Letter of Agreement with *(name)* on January 22. *(name)* passed the proposed Letter of Agreement at their annual meeting on February 12. The agreement will go into effect April 1. I have offered to stay on at *(name)* on a ½ time basis for the time being.

According to the history

After Pastor (name) left, Pastor (name) came to serve. He was installed on December 8, 1918. Pastor (name) lived in (name). The parish now consisted of (name), (name), and (name). Pastor (name) had been installed as pastor at (name) in 1917. Due to his efforts, (name), together with (name) and (name), became a self-supporting parish.

We give thanks for this partnership in the gospel and pray for God's guidance into the future. As your interim pastor, I want to assure you that I am working diligently to affect a smooth transition. The Transition Task Force and Congregation Council is working with the Assistant to the Bishop to explore options for the future to provide Word and Sacrament ministry at (name).

Sincerely in Christ,

Pastor Lowell Bolstad

#### Shared Ministry to End

(name) in (name) has made the decision to realign with (name) in (name) for financial reasons.

"It's official, both (name) in (name) and (name) in (name) have agreed to work together beginning (date)! (name) in (name) voted at their annual meeting on (date), and today (name) in (name) voted at their annual meeting. I will continue to serve as pastor at (name) but will now also serve as pastor part time at (name). Excited to see what God has in store!"

Pastor (name) facebook

We at (name) of (name) will miss our partnership with them but wish them the very best!

Our doors are always open to members of (name). You may be leaving, but you won't be forgotten. Beginning (date), Pastor (name) from (name), (name) will conduct services at (name) in (name) at 8:30am. This means (name) will no longer be our full-time organist as she can't be two places at once. She has been playing for congregation for close to 30 years. To say we will miss her is an understatement. Our gratitude to her for all the years she made us a part of her Sunday mornings.

(name) Council

(date) will mark the end of the joint parish relationship between (name) in (name) and (name) in (name). Churches in general have seen a decline in membership and we are not immune to this trend. As we at (name) faced the reality of our financial situation, the opportunity of working with (name) in (name) had to be considered. It is with sadness that we end our approximately century-long partnership with (name). Even though our formal relationship will be over, we have formed lasting friendships and memories. I have no doubt we will continue to support each other in Christian fellowship and look forward to seeing familiar faces at various dinners and events in the future. I wonder where the church in general will be in another one hundred years. Just as the disciples continued after Jesus' resurrection, we will step forward with appreciation for the past and hope in God's guidance for the future. We can cherish and appreciate the efforts of all who have worked over this past century to sustain (name) and (name) and we ask God's blessing for both churches as we move forward.

With fondness, (name),

(name) Council President

#### 15) Congregation Closing

I was collecting materials for the call process in one parish. I was handed copies of a Congregation Vitality Questionnaire that members filled out before I came. One piece of paper was folded up several times. When I opened it up, I discovered that no marks had been made on any of the questions. At the bottom simply was the comment, "Please don't close our church!"

#### Resources

[PDF] [A Resource for the Closing of Congregation - Lower Susquehanna Synod](#)

Our purpose is not to close congregations. Rather, we want to help congregations that have acknowledged their mortality to think through their options, and to understand that in some situations, closure can be a faithful and life-giving decision. The purpose of this manual is to offer encouragement for congregations that are wondering about their continued sustainable, and to provide practical guidance to congregations that are considering closure.

[https://www.lss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/congregations/congregation-policies/Closing\\_Congregations.pdf](https://www.lss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/congregations/congregation-policies/Closing_Congregations.pdf)

[Images for Resources for the Closing of Congregation](#)

<https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/closing-a-congregation-as-an-act-of-faithfulness/>

[http://synodresourcecenter.org/admin/transition/closing/0001/saying\\_goodbye.html](http://synodresourcecenter.org/admin/transition/closing/0001/saying_goodbye.html)

<https://www.episcopalcafe.com/top-ten-things-to-remember-when-closing-a-church/>

<http://nswi.org/leadership/closing-your-congregation>

<http://www.lacrosseareasy.org/resources-for-ending-ministries> A Resource for Holy Closure

[As churches close in Minnesota, a way of life fades | StarTribune](#)

The toll of declining church attendance is evident across the state, including at La Salle Lutheran, above.

<http://www.startribune.com/as-minnesota-churches-close-a-way-of-life-fades/486037461/>

[Images for As churches close in Minnesota, a way of life fades | StarTribune](#)



### Eight Signs Your Church May Be Closing Soon – Thom Rainer

There are eight clear signs evident in many churches on the precipice of closing. If a church has four or more of these signs present, it is likely in deep trouble. Indeed, it could be closing sooner than almost anyone in the church would anticipate.

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/05/eight-signs-church-may-closing-soon/>  
Images for Eight Signs Your Church May Be Closing Soon – Thom Rainer  
<http://thomrainer.com/2017/01/10-major-trends-churches-2017-rainer-leadership-290/> #7  
<http://thomrainer.com/2017/03/urgent-church-nine-changes-must-make-die/>  
<https://thomrainer.com/2017/08/dying-churches-die/>  
<http://thomrainer.com/2012/12/31/thirteen-issues-for-churches-in-2013-issues-1-6/> #3  
<https://thomrainer.com/2013/04/autopsy-of-a-deceased-church-11-things-i-learned/>  
<http://thomrainer.com/2016/08/four-types-churches-will-soon-die/>  
Images for thom rainer (author)

### Empty Houses: A Pastoral Approach to Congregational Closures by Michael K. Jones (Author)

"Empty Houses" is a resource that can help a congregation decide whether or not to close. "Empty Houses" provides a pastoral approach for leaders and parishioners faced with the difficult work of living out their decision.

<https://www.amazon.com/Empty-Houses-Pastoral-Approach-Congregational/dp/1554300223>  
[http://www.michucc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=217&Itemid=603](http://www.michucc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=217&Itemid=603)  
<http://uccfiles.com/pdf/legacyworkbook-bib.pdf>  
<https://www.thedead-beat.com/MichaelKJones.html>  
<https://www.thriftbooks.com/a/michael-k-jones/240541/>  
[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/189904.Michael\\_K\\_Jones](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/189904.Michael_K_Jones)  
Images for Michael K. Jones (Author) Congregational Closures  
Images for Empty Houses: A Pastoral Approach to Congregational Closures by Michael K. Jones (Author)

### Ending with Hope: A Resource for Closing Congregations [Beth Ann Gaede]

"Why is it we do funerals so well but often balk at even recognizing the death of a congregation? Couldn't we do grief ministry and funerals as well for social groups as we do for individuals?" challenges Gilson Waldkoenig, in his seminary classes. Waldkoenig, associate professor of church in society at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, contributes his special insights on the subject of church endings, in this unique and important book. *Ending with Hope* grows out of the understanding that although closing a congregation is in many ways about dying, it can also be about new life. Closing a congregation does not have to be about failure but can be about redirecting resources for new ministry.

Contributors represent eight denominations and include more than a dozen pastors, lay leaders, judicatory staff, and others who have "been there"—who have helped congregations through the painful closing process. Resources include models for assessing whether a congregation should close; reflections on members' and pastors' experiences during closing; case studies; guidance for deciding what to do with a building; suggestions for selecting and preserving documents and artifacts; rituals for healthy closings; a survey of historical trends regarding closings; and other helpful materials.

<http://www.amazon.com/Ending-Hope-Resource-Closing-Congregations/dp/156699263X>  
<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781566992633/Ending-with-Hope-A-Resource-for-Closing-Congregations>  
<https://alban.org/archive/a-resurrection-story/>  
<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1566995167>  
<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/contributor/2052/Beth+Ann+Gaede>  
<http://atfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/03/How-to-Get-Published.pdf>  
[http://www.goodreads.com/author/list/445996.Beth\\_Ann\\_Gaede](http://www.goodreads.com/author/list/445996.Beth_Ann_Gaede)  
Images for Beth Ann Gaede, editor ending with hope  
Images for Ending with Hope: A Resource for Closing Congregations [Beth Ann Gaede]

### FINISHING WITH GRACE: A Guide to Selling, Merging, or Closing Your Church by Linda M. Hilliard (Author), Reverend Gretchen J. Switzer (Author)

Thousands of churches close yearly, affecting tens of thousands of the faithful. Reasons for church closures run from aging congregations to conflict, and from dwindling funds to pastoral betrayal. Such churches need help determining how to proceed. *Finishing with Grace* is the guide to navigating congregational transition. It offers practical help for dealing with your church's building, staff, money and belongings, while also delving into the spiritual and emotional facets of dramatic change in the church.

<https://www.amazon.com/FINISHING-GRACE-Selling-Merging-Closing/dp/1609102843>  
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/finishing-with-grace-linda-m-hilliard/1028963421>  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Finishing-with-Grace-A-Guide-to-Selling-Merging-or-Closing-Your-Church/463900240343076>  
<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/book-summaries/hilliard-and-switzer-finishing-with-grace.html>  
<http://www.emailyourweightaway.com/finishing-with-grace-2/>  
<http://www.finishingwithgrace.com/>  
[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6058156.Gretchen\\_J\\_Switzer](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6058156.Gretchen_J_Switzer)  
Images for Reverend Gretchen J. Switzer (Author) closing your church  
Images for FINISHING WITH GRACE: A Guide to Selling, Merging, or Closing Your Church by Linda M. Hilliard (Author), Reverend Gretchen J. Switzer (Author)



## 5 Good Reasons A Church Should Close - Carey Nieuwhof

Every time I hear of a church that's closing, my heart sinks. Despite the voices of all of the critics, I really do believe the local church is a beacon of light in a world that's increasingly dark. In light of the fact that I have a strong bias toward seeing churches grow and flourish, are there ever reasons a church should close? Sadly, I think there are.

<https://careynieuwhof.com/5-good-reasons-a-church-should-close/>

[Images for Reasons A Church Should Close – Carey Nieuwhof](#)

## [PDF] Rethinking Transitional Ministry - Amazon Web Services

Changing practical realities also dictate different models of transitional ministry. Margaret Bain, a United Church of Canada pastor and current president of the board of IMN notes that many congregations are looking more toward reinventing themselves. Others are exploring **closing** their doors and need a skilled interim to help them through that process, while others are going through a process of amalgamation, pooling resources, and sharing a common vision with another local church. Other interim specialists can help lead a congregation through healing after clergy sexual or financial misconduct.



[http://macucc.s3.amazonaws.com/71BBE2C7B9B049B0883D51809D9A1E82\\_Rethinking%20Transitional%20Ministry.pdf](http://macucc.s3.amazonaws.com/71BBE2C7B9B049B0883D51809D9A1E82_Rethinking%20Transitional%20Ministry.pdf) Page 6

<https://alban.org/archive/rethinking-transitional-ministry/>

<https://www.amazon.com/Transitional-Ministry-Today-Successful-Strategies/dp/156699750X>

<http://haltonpres.org/featured-story/rev-margaret-bain-champion-of-transitional-ministry>

<http://imnedu.org/interim-transitional-education/>

<http://imnedu.org/imn-membership/board-of-directors/>

[Images for Margaret Bain, a United Church of Canada](#)

<https://brantfordexpositor.remembering.ca/obituary/margaret-bain-1079554250>

Farewell to Margaret Bain By Les Robinson, IMN President July 24, 2020. Contact [crystal@imnedu.org](mailto:crystal@imnedu.org)

## Saying Good-bye: Pastoral Care to Those Whose Congregation is Closing

[http://synodresourcecenter.org/admin/transition/closing/0001/saying\\_goodbye.html](http://synodresourcecenter.org/admin/transition/closing/0001/saying_goodbye.html)

[Images for Pastoral Care to Those Whose Congregation is Closing](#)

## Should We Consider Closing Our Church? | The Parish Paper

This year ten out of every 1,000 congregations will close their doors for the last time. Across the U.S., this means that more than 3,500 churches go out of business annually. Surprisingly, the average congregational mortality rate of one percent surfaces as among the lowest for any type of organization.<sup>1</sup> That fact is little comfort for the members, pastoral leaders, and communities who witness the death of a beloved spiritual community.

An economically viable church has enough financial and human resources to keep up its current programming, staffing, and building maintenance without depleting savings or endowments. But viability is not the same as church vitality. Strong churches enthusiastically pursue their mission, move forward based on their unique calling, and do so with abundant joy. In short, some churches remain viable but are not vital. Likewise, many new churches show great vitality but are not yet able to be financially self-sustaining. Congregations that lack viability and exhibit anemic vitality inevitably slide toward downsizing, merger, or final dissolution.

## MACUCC: The Parish Paper: Should We Consider Closing Our Church?

<http://www.macucc.org/blogdetail/455198> The Parish Paper: Should We Consider Closing Our Church?

<https://www.theparishpaper.com/back-issue/should-we-consider-closing-our-church>

<https://vbmb-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/P-P-11-2014-Should-We-Consider-Closing-Our-Church.pdf>

<http://www.wisconsinumc.org/connections/conference-news/the-parish-paper> November 2014 - "Should We Consider Closing Our Church?"

[Images for Should We Consider Closing Our Church? | The Parish Paper](#)

## The last Sunday: When it's time for a church to close | The Christian Century

On an average day in the United States, nine churches close their doors for good.

This isn't often talked about, partly because it's not exactly breaking news. Church professionals know the trends: church membership and religious affiliation are declining. Relatively few churches are growing.

It's particularly hard to talk about your own church's demise. It's not easy to say what sometimes needs to be said: "It's time for our church to close."

<http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2014-12/last-sunday>

[Images for The last Sunday: When it's time for a church to close | The Christian Century](#)

<http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2014-12/final-gifts>

<https://www.christiancentury.org/magazine>

## **Toward the Better Country: Church Closure and Resurrection by L. Gail Irwin (Author) David C. Schoen (Foreword)**

The pews of many mainline churches are clearly not as full as they used to be. While committed Christians are trying everything they can to keep their churches open and thriving, history has shown that no local church is meant to live forever in its current form. Like people, churches are born, live and breathe, fulfill their missions, and pass away. And recent history shows that more churches will be closing or re-shaping their ministry in the near future.

*Toward the Better Country* tells about the grief stages, discernment processes and creative options explored by lay leaders, pastors and regional leaders who have dealt with this sensitive time in the life cycle of a church. These are woven in with the author's own experience of leading a church through steep decline toward closure.

This resource, based on interviews with over thirty lay, clergy and judicatory leaders, offers healthy, practical ways for congregations to move through the terrain of loss, discern God's path for their future and pass on their legacies to emerging ministries. It can be used for personal reflection, leadership training, or in discernment groups in local churches. Scripture readings and questions for conversation are included at the end of each chapter, along with a list of additional resources for churches struggling with decline.

<https://www.amazon.com/Toward-Better-Country-Closure-Resurrection/dp/1625642318>

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/20609534-toward-the-better-country>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1625642318>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Toward\\_the\\_Better\\_Country.html?id=in4NBQAAQBAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Toward_the_Better_Country.html?id=in4NBQAAQBAJ)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Toward-the-Better-Country-Church-Closure-and-Resurrection/689692584414454>

<http://preachingandpondering.blogspot.com/2014/07/book-review-gail-irwins-toward-better.html>

[http://www.michucc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=217&Itemid=603](http://www.michucc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=217&Itemid=603)

<https://www.christiancentury.org/contributor/gail-irwin>

<https://www.christiancentury.org/contributor/gail-irwin?type=All&page=1>

[https://www.christiancentury.org/contributor/gail-irwin?type=blog\\_post&page=2](https://www.christiancentury.org/contributor/gail-irwin?type=blog_post&page=2)

<https://freelancepastor.wordpress.com/>

<http://lgailirwin.com/about-gail-irwin/>

<http://immanuelucc-kaukauna.org/>

[http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy\\_url/11076/David-Schoen-s-Bio.pdf?1418436805](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy_url/11076/David-Schoen-s-Bio.pdf?1418436805)

<http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/team-leader/>

[Images for L. Gail Irwin \(Author\) church closure](#)

[Images for David C. Schoen \(Author\) church closure](#)

[Images for Toward the Better Country: Church Closure and Resurrection by L. Gail Irwin \(Author\)](#)

[Addition to this post on 6/12/2020]

I recall that the first guideline in 2020 to slow the spread of COVID-19 recommended no gatherings over 250 people. I breathed a sigh of relief because none of the 3 congregations I was serving at the time involved that many people. The next guideline to come out recommended no gatherings over 50 people. I breathed a sigh of relief because none of the 3 congregations I was serving at the time involved that many people. The next guideline **15 Days to Slow the Spread | The White House** recommended no gatherings over 10 people. Because the congregations I served at the time averaged between 10 and 50, I could no longer breathe a sigh of relief. The president of 1 congregation informed me on St. Patrick's Day of the decision made by the presidents of the 3 congregations to forego gatherings for services of worship on Sundays and Lenten services the next 2 weeks, and I gave messages recorded on video and uploaded on Facebook. Then came **Wisconsin's Coronavirus 'Stay-At-Home' Order March 25 through April 24** with its provisions that "crowds of 10 or larger are specifically banned at weddings, funerals and church services and people who violate the order could face up to 30 days in jail, or a fine of up to \$250."

My interim assignment ended after Easter on 4/15, the assignment I was scheduled to start 4/16 fell through, and I began a period of time on leave from call. On 4/17, **Evers Extends Wisconsin Stay-at-Home Order Until May 26**. On 4/23, the Wisconsin Council of Churches released **Returning to Church – Wisconsin Council of Churches** which stated "that returning to church will have to happen in phases." The document also included [Recommended Reading/Viewing](#).

It was then that I began to realize talk of closing churches could come sooner rather than later for some congregations, and such a realization gained greater specificity when I read the following article:

### **Will the church financially survive the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**Bill Wilson predicts that up to one-third of U.S. churches could be out of business by 2025.**

He points to LifeWay Research that says 5% of U.S. churches will close within the year because of the pandemic. That's five times the average closure rate for churches, according to The Christian Century magazine.

<https://faithandleadership.com/will-church-financially-survive-covid-19-pandemic>

## **16) Parsonage or housing allowance?**

Invariably, I run into settings or hear of situations where the congregation/parish sells the parsonage and gives a housing allowance to the pastor. Then, the congregation/parish must pay the housing allowance, and the ministry spending plan ends up out of balance. The congregation/parish often spends the money from the sale of the parsonage on this and that, and soon the money is gone. Now, the rule of thumb I suggest for congregations/parishes is, especially in smaller communities, if a congregation/parish owns a parsonage, hang onto it. Following the economic downturn of 2008, pastors also may be better off in a parsonage than in an owned house that the pastor may or may not be able to sell when desiring to move, especially in smaller communities. In addition, when congregations in smaller communities sell the parsonage and the pastor must look for housing, invariably a pastor may find it difficult to find suitable housing in the community and so secures housing in a larger community and commutes from outside the community.



## Resources

### Beware! Parsonage for Sale

One of the *most* frequent—but unknown—content issues in conflict is the *sale of the parsonage*.

Though approximately two-thirds of all congregations have sold their parsonages to enable the pastor to have his own home, the remaining one-third may soon face that decision.

Given the mutual benefits of pastor-owned homes to both congregations and pastors, one might think that the sale of a parsonage would simply be an exchange of compensation for the pastor, a releasing of maintenance burden for the congregation, and a viable alternative for both.

But don't be deceived. A parsonage is *more* than just a parsonage. It is...

[http://www.ministryhealth.net/mh\\_articles/019\\_beware\\_parsonage\\_for\\_sale.html](http://www.ministryhealth.net/mh_articles/019_beware_parsonage_for_sale.html)

[Images for Parsonage for Sale](#)

### [PDF]Housing for Your Pastor: Parsonage or Housing Allowance?

Across our denomination, this difficult question is being asked often out of genuine concern for the pastor's dilemma at retirement, when he or she has no savings built up for a retirement home. The question becomes even more difficult to answer with the shift in the nation's economy and in each local economic situation. While there is no absolute, authoritative answer, the following list of advantages and disadvantages, which have become apparent to pastors and churches through actual experience, is offered to stimulate careful thinking and evaluation.

<http://www.ecfa.org/Documents/HousingForYourPastor.pdf>

[Images for Housing for Your Pastor: Parsonage or Housing Allowance?](#)

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/1980/spring/80l2054.html> A Parsonage or Housing Allowance: Which Is Better? By Manfred Holck, Jr.

<http://fliphtml5.com/funa/ypqw/basic> Parsonage or Housing Allowance? - A Document by the Florida Conference Cabinet - The Florida Annual Conference

## 17) When two congregations both own parsonages

I served 2 congregations in a bridge interim assignment after the 2 entered into a shared ministry agreement. The larger congregation in the village owned their parsonage while operating with a solo pastorate. The open country congregation owned their parsonage while being the larger of the two congregations with another congregation in a shared ministry agreement. The shared ministry agreement for the village and open country congregations originally stated:

### V. Property

- c. The parsonage used by the minister will be rented from the respective congregation based on a fair rental value determined by the parish council in relation to the agreed upon allocation of share expense (65% (name); 35% (name)).

It was understood that as the interim pastor I would use the parsonage of the larger village congregation, but in calling a pastor the pastor would be encouraged to choose the parsonage of the larger village congregation but could indicate a preference. Four months into the agreement the treasurer at the open country congregation raised questions about this arrangement. When a member of the Parish Council from the larger congregation began to think about the consequences if the pastor indicated a preference for the parsonage in the country, he determined that there would be certain complications in the congregation if the pastor not only chose not to reside in their parsonage but if their congregation had to pay 65% of the fair rental value. So, the Parish Council at a meeting the next week decided to delete V.c. and go with the following items already in the agreement:

### IX. Expenses: Shared expenses are determined by the parish council and may include:

- c. Telephone
- f. Housing expenses

## 18) Can an interim pastor insist on a housing allowance when a parsonage is provided?

Congregations I have worked with oftentimes insist that an installed pastor live in the parsonage. But, what about an interim pastor who chooses to commute and insists on a housing allowance? The generally accepted practice in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin is that the interim pastor accepts the previous total compensation package. Health benefits may differ for instance, but the congregation(s) can be assured that the compensation will not exceed what was previously paid. Many of the congregations I have served, particularly in

town and country settings, are doing all they can to pay the pastor without having to come up with an additional housing allowance while the parsonage stands empty during the interim.

## 19) Parsonage Guidelines

Pets in the parsonage has been a presenting issue in various assignments I have served. The larger issue is parsonage guidelines. Some members of parsonage committees possess a background in managing property rentals, but most do not.

### Resources

#### Are pets allowed in the United Methodist parsonage?

The issue of a clergyperson keeping pets in a parsonage is not delineated by the Book of Discipline. Particular Annual Conferences may have a policy established regarding pets in a parsonage.

This is most likely the subject of negotiation and mutual understanding between the Pastor and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. Understandably, the church wants the parsonage to be taken care of. Most Annual Conference parsonage policies state that damage caused to the parsonage by the Pastor or Pastor's family that is not part of regular wear and tear is the responsibility of the Pastor to fix/compensate.

However, every PPRC should consider the quality of life benefits for the Pastor and family by allowing pets in the parsonage.

For many, pets are part of the family. Keeping your Pastor's family happy keeps the Pastor happy, which translates into the quality of work that the Pastor does leading your church.

[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Are Pets allowed in the United Methodist parsonage](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Are_Pets_allowed_in_the_United_Methodist_parsonage)

[Images for Are pets allowed in the United Methodist parsonage?](#)

#### [PDF] Clergy Housing Handbook Parsonages

Suggested guidelines and a view of parsonage life from an "operational," best practices, well-being and to promote well-being, healthy pastor-parish relations, and stewardship perspectives.

<http://xntdnn.azurewebsites.net/Portals/13/Slte%20Migration/Clergy%20Housing%20Handbook.pdf>

[Images for Clergy Housing Handbook Parsonages](#)

#### [PDF] Parsonage Guidelines

A parsonage is a home provided by the congregation for its pastors. It is to be an aid in the carrying out of ministry. In its care of the church, the congregation will want to provide a good home. The guidelines on the following pages are a way to help both pastor and congregation. Following them will help the congregation become aware of needed improvements and let it know if a synod-wide standard has been achieved. It will be in a position to become aware of abuses of the parsonage property.

[www.ewaldsynod.org/images/Parsonage\\_Guideline.pdf](http://www.ewaldsynod.org/images/Parsonage_Guideline.pdf)

[Images for Parsonage Guidelines](#)

<https://www.umcsc.org/PDF/clergyresources/Miscellaneous/PARSONAGEGUIDELINES.pdf>

[https://www.neumc.org/files/forms/cc\\_parsonage\\_guidelines.doc](https://www.neumc.org/files/forms/cc_parsonage_guidelines.doc)

#### The Parsonage at Spring Creek

The Parsonage at Spring Creek offers four furnished air-conditioned bedrooms that share a common bathroom. Linens for bed and bath are provided. The building has secure 24-hour keyed access. There is no smoking or pets allowed.

<http://www.loveincgreaterhershey.org/TheParsonageGuestInfo.html>

[Images for Parsonage at Spring Creek](#)

## 20) Don't be that guy/gal

The patriarch of the congregation came to the parsonage while I was moving in. Among other things, he owned and managed rental property. He recounted issues with the former pastor around the parsonage. Through the years, I have heard similar complaints.

## 21) Why not have the pastor pay the utilities at the parsonage?

A Parish Council president floated the idea of paying the pastor enough so that the pastor could pay the utilities to avoid second guessing by members. I pointed out the "allowance for the pastor to pay for the utilities." Upon further research, he realized there are tax benefits to the congregation and pastor for the utilities being paid by the congregation and withdrew the suggestion.

#### [PDF] 2018 Minimum Standards for Compensation and Benefits - Amazon S3

##### 2. Parsonage

##### a) Electric/Gas/Water/Sewer

When a parsonage is provided to the pastor, all utility costs and repairs are paid by the church. It is recommended that the congregation pay directly for the parsonage utilities because current tax law and Portico Benefit Services rules make such payment advantageous to both the congregation and the pastor. OR in other instances when a parsonage is provided, the congregation may choose to grant an allowance for the pastor to pay for the utilities.

The standard for this is \$2,400 annually. The annual costs should be reviewed to be sure this is in line with actual expenses for the utilities

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.cloversites.com/0a/0a854394-3a19-4d9f-b1ae-f93021508921/documents/Amended\\_2018\\_salary\\_standards\\_rev.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.cloversites.com/0a/0a854394-3a19-4d9f-b1ae-f93021508921/documents/Amended_2018_salary_standards_rev.pdf) Page 6

[Images for allowance for the pastor to pay for the utilities](#)

## 22) Renting the parsonage at below fair rental value?

A congregation, whose pastor was granted a housing allowance, allowed a single mother and her children to live in the otherwise unused parsonage for approximately half of the fair rental value. The justification for keeping the tax exemption was that they considered this to be a "mission" to a family who could not otherwise afford such a dwelling. I pointed out that what a congregation may consider a "mission" is not necessarily what the tax code allows.

### Resources

#### [PDF] Maintaining your Church's Property Tax Exemption

##### The Basics

It is important to understand that property tax exemptions are based on use; to qualify the property must be exclusively used to conduct the exempt activity. The property tax exemption provided under RCW 84.36.020(2) is available for real and personal property owned by a nonprofit recognized religious denomination used exclusively for religious worship and related church purposes. A maximum of five acres of real property is eligible for exemption. This maximum acreage could include a parsonage, convent, caretaker residence, and parking. Unoccupied land included within the five acres may not exceed 1/3 of an acre.

- **Parsonage:** a residence owned by a church that is occupied by a licensed or ordained clergy person designated for a particular congregation and responsible for conducting their regular worship services. A parsonage does not need to be contiguous to the church to qualify for exemption.

NOTE: "Regular services" means religious services that are conducted on a routine and systematic basis at prearranged times, days, and places.

[http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/Prop\\_Tax/PropertyTaxExmptChurch.pdf](http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/Prop_Tax/PropertyTaxExmptChurch.pdf)

[Images for Church's Property Tax Exemption](#)

#### [PDF] Module 5 - Exempt Property - Minnesota Department of Revenue

The Minnesota Supreme Court concurs that the test for determining entitlement of church owned property for a tax exemption is whether the property is devoted to, and reasonably necessary for accomplishment of church purposes.

[http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/local\\_gov/prop\\_tax\\_admin/education/ptamannual\\_module5.pdf](http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/local_gov/prop_tax_admin/education/ptamannual_module5.pdf)

[Images for Exempt Property - Minnesota Department of Revenue](#)

From my perspective, the closest thing to "mission" status is benevolent low-income housing, but the congregation cannot claim to be a benevolent association classifying an otherwise unused parsonage as a low-income housing project.

#### Wisconsin Property Tax Exemptions: A Guide for Determining Exemption Status

##### (4a) BENEVOLENT LOW-INCOME HOUSING.

##### 70.11(4a)

(a) Property owned by a nonprofit entity that is a benevolent association and used as low-income housing, including all common areas of a low-income housing project. Property used for a low-income housing project, including other low-income housing projects under common control with such project, and exempt under this subsection may not exceed 30 acres necessary for the location and convenience of buildings or 10 contiguous acres in any one municipality.

#### [PDF] wisconsin property tax exemptions - Wisconsin Association of Assessing Officers

[http://www.waao.org/Committees/Exemption/Exemption\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.waao.org/Committees/Exemption/Exemption_Guide.pdf)

[Images for Wisconsin Property Tax Exemptions](#)

## 23) Parsonage open house

Many members had never been inside the parsonage of their congregation, so, at one assignment, I hosted a parsonage open house on a Saturday afternoon. Some members brought refreshments. At another assignment, I suggested that the members of the Property Committee show the parsonage next door to the village church right after a service of worship while I was headed to the open country church for a service of worship. At still another assignment, I left before the Call Committee received the names of candidates, so I suggested that the Congregation Council host an open house at the parsonage while nobody was living there.

#### Bailey Parsonage Open House - Grace United Methodist Church

It's been about four months since we moved into the new parsonage at 913 E. Bailey Rd. I cannot begin to express how wonderful this has been for our family. Before this house became our home, it had quite a makeover. With the landscape now complete, we would love to invite you to come and see our home during an Open House on Sunday July 10, 1-4pm.

<https://www.peopleofgrace.org/blog/bailey-parsonage-open-house>

[Images for Parsonage Open House](#)

<http://www.lancasterumc.org/event/parsonage-open-house/>

<http://theloftla.org/event/parsonage-open-house/>

<http://www.roundhillcommunitychurch.org/parsonage-open-house>

<https://alexandriaumc.org/event/parsonage-open-house/>

<http://www.parkavenueumc.org/events/event/parsonage-open-house/>



## 24) How much longer for the clergy housing allowance and parsonage?

### Clergy housing allowance - Wikipedia

In the United States, the rental value of a home furnished to, or the rental allowance paid to, a minister of the gospel is not included in the minister's taxable income if certain conditions are met.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clergy\\_housing\\_allowance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clergy_housing_allowance)

[Images for Clergy housing allowance](#)

### The Parsonage - Wikipedia

A parsonage is a type of clergy house.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Parsonage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Parsonage)

[Images for parsonage](#)

Clergy houses are typically owned and maintained by a church, as a benefit to its clergy. The practice exists in many denominations because of the tendency of clergy to be transferred from one church to another at relatively frequent intervals. Catholic clergy houses in particular may be lived in by several priests from a [parish](#). Clergy houses frequently serve as the administrative office of the local parish as well as a residence; they are normally located next to, or at least close to, the church their occupant serves.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clergy\\_house](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clergy_house)

[Images for clergy house](#)

In this post-Christendom era, is it simply a matter of time before the tax exemption for the clergy housing allowance and parsonage is overturned? If nothing else, the very question serves as a cautionary note for clergy and congregations to use the exemptions respectfully. At the same time, it raises the larger issue of depending on public support.

## Resources

### Clergy Tax-Free Housing Allowance Ruled Unconstitutional

(RNS) A federal judge has [ruled](#) that an Internal Revenue Service exemption that allows clergy to shield a portion of their salary from federal income taxes is unconstitutional.

The clergy housing exemption applies to an [estimated](#) 44,000 ministers, priests, rabbis, imams and others. If the ruling stands, some clergy members could experience an estimated 5 to 10 percent cut in take-home pay.

The suit was filed by the Wisconsin-based [Freedom from Religion Foundation](#) on grounds that the housing allowance violates the separation of church and state and the constitutional guarantee of equal protection. The group's founders have said that if tax-exempt religious groups are allowed a housing subsidy, other tax-exempt groups, such as FFRF, should get one, too.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/25/clergy-tax-free-housing-unconstitutional\\_n\\_4339673.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/25/clergy-tax-free-housing-unconstitutional_n_4339673.html)

<http://www.churchlawandtax.com/blog/2014/january/justice-department-appeals-wisconsin-clergy-housing.html>

[Images for Clergy Tax-Free Housing Allowance Ruled Unconstitutional](#)

### Housing Allowance: Rick Warren giveth, will Ed Young taketh away?

And, no, Rick Warren didn't originate the housing allowance, but he was the catalyst for the federal law passed a decade ago that made it a bit smoother for us. Ed Young? He has a pretty spiffy house in Houston that is or was on the market for over \$2 million, and Tom Rich of SBC Jax Watchdog puts a hefty figure on what his housing allowance comes to, a quarter million dollars or so. Rick Warren giveth, so how does Ed Young cause it to be taketh away?

<http://sbcplodder.blogspot.com/2012/08/housing-allowance-rick-warren-giveth.html>

[Images for Housing Allowance: Rick Warren giveth, will Ed Young taketh away?](#)

<http://fbcjaxwatchdog.blogspot.com/2012/07/ed-youngs-8000-sf-mansion-on-market-in.html>

### Ministers can Continue Using the Housing Allowance Per Court Ruling – ThomRainer.com

This ruling is very positive for those who take housing allowances. Though we cannot predict what challenges may come in the future, ministers certainly can take the allowance now without fear of reprisal from the Internal Revenue Service.

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/11/ministers-can-continue-using-housing-allowance-per-court-ruling/>

[Images for Ministers can Continue Using the Housing Allowance Per Court Ruling – ThomRainer.com](#)

<http://religionnews.com/2014/11/13/court-rejects-atheists-demand-tax-clergy-housing/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/11/thoughts-on-the-court-ruling-on-the-ministers-housing-allowance/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/09/update-ministers-housing-allowance/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/09/13/update-ministers-housing-allowance/>

<http://thomrainer.com/category/church-finance/housing-allowance/>

<https://thomrainer.com/2012/12/five-things-you-should-know-about-pastors-salaries/>

<http://mbfoundation.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2014-The-Ministers-Salary.pdf>

<http://www.lifeway.com/Article/pastor-ministry-housing-allowance-tax-mistakes>

[http://peterlumpkins.typepad.com/peter\\_lumpkins/2013/11/thoughts-on-the-court-ruling-on-the-ministers-housing-allowance.html](http://peterlumpkins.typepad.com/peter_lumpkins/2013/11/thoughts-on-the-court-ruling-on-the-ministers-housing-allowance.html)

<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 \(author\)](#)



## [PDF] Minister's Tax Guide - AG Financial Solutions

### SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

Current Status of the Parsonage and **Housing Allowance** Exclusions

<http://www.agfinancial.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Tax-Guide-AGFS-2017.pdf>

[Images for Parsonage and Housing Allowance Exclusions](#)

### Special Privileges and Church Vitality - Alban

Leaving aside for now the constitutional question, I would like to hear us talk among ourselves about whether public support—including the **clergy housing allowance**—actually helps or hurts us in accomplishing our purposes.

#### Alban at Duke Divinity School » Special Privileges and Church Vitality

<https://alban.org/archive/special-privileges-and-church-vitality/>

[Images for Special Privileges and Church Vitality - Alban](#)

<https://www.amazon.com/Ministry-Money-Clergy-Friends-Lifestyle/dp/1566992613>

<https://www.amazon.com/Governance-Ministry-Rethinking-Board-Leadership/dp/1566993709>

<http://danhotchkiss.com/publications/>

<https://alban.org/category/renewal-vitality/>

<https://alban.org/category/money-finance/>

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

### 10 Key Points from the Housing Allowance Ruling | Church Law & Tax

What churches and clergy must know now about the decision in Wisconsin.

<http://www.churchlawandtax.com/cltr/2014/january-february/10-key-points-from-housing-allowance-ruling.html>

[Images for Housing Allowance Ruling](#)

### The Clergy Housing Allowance | A Single Eye

Bottom line, I don't think our tax-free housing allowance will last much longer. We've got to learn how to live off of the same rules as our laity.

<http://asingleeye.wordpress.com/2013/11/24/the-clergy-housing-allowance/>

[Images for tax-free housing allowance for clergy](#)

### The Unconstitutionality of the Parsonage Exemption - Forbes

The parsonage exemption is analogous to *Texas Monthly* and distinguishable from *Walz*. It is not broadly applied but given only to the religious. Secular organizations and employees that are similarly situated are not extended this benefit. In the words of one Justice, "the Establishment Clause value suggests that a State may not give a tax break to those who spread the gospel that it does not also give to others who actively might advocate disbelief in religion." *Id.* at 26 (White J., concurring). It is hard to imagine a more blatant violation of constitutional principles than the parsonage exemption.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2012/03/20/the-unconstitutionality-of-the-parsonage-exemption/>

[Images for Unconstitutionality of the Parsonage Exemption - Forbes](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2017/10/07/clergy-housing-tax-break-ruled-unconstitutional-again/#1b0c517726fd>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2018/02/16/appeals-filed-on-ruling-that-exemption-of-clergy-housing-allowances-is-unconstitutional/#6becc0a27487>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2017/10/15/clergy-housing-tax-exemption-the-times-square-of-religion-and-taxation/#38ed13651fee>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2017/12/23/tax-free-housing-benefits-for-clergy-will-be-safe-for-the-present/#3e0d9b507fd0>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2017/02/10/clergy-housing-tax-break-seen-as-unconstitutional/#57de2f0d4156>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2017/01/31/decision-on-clergy-housing-tax-benefit-coming-this-summer/#6dce7ff639a4>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2017/09/27/book-review-taxing-the-church-by-edward-zelinsky/#e8eedc03a0dd>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2016/12/15/becket-fund-helps-clergy-intervene-in-parsonage-lawsuit/#100f47792c54>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2014/11/20/seventh-circuit-kicks-parsonage-can-down-the-road-some-commentary/#318f8bd72519>

A ruling on clergy housing allowance came out on 11/13/2014.

#### Ruling on Clergy Housing Allowance

From: Bishop Rick Hoyme [mail to: [merry@nwsynod-wisconsin.ccsend.com](mailto:merry@nwsynod-wisconsin.ccsend.com)] On Behalf of Bishop Rick Hoyme

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2014 8:45 AM

To: [pastorbolstad@tds.net](mailto:pastorbolstad@tds.net)

Subject: Ruling on Clergy Housing Allowance

We received this good news from Portico regarding the recent ruling on the clergy housing allowance. November 13, the U.S. Court of Appeals, 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit, acted to preserve the housing allowance exclusion for clergy, following a year-long legal challenge from the Freedom from Religion Foundation. Rather than rule on the issue of constitutionality, the Court

determined that the Foundation lacked standing to challenge the housing allowance exclusion and returned the case to the U. S. District Court of Western Wisconsin with instructions to dismiss the lawsuit.

Earlier this year, Portico and the ELCA joined with the Church Alliance, representing a cross-denominational coalition of church benefit plans, to file an “amicus” brief that urged the court to uphold the constitutionality of the housing allowance exclusion. Portico is pleased by the Court’s favorable decision, given the value that clergy housing allowance brings to so many of our plan members.

More information about the ruling: <http://www.church-alliance.org/federal-court-rules-housing-allowance>

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
[www.nwswi.org](http://www.nwswi.org)

Another ruling came out on 10/7/2017 on the clergy housing allowance.

### 5 Takeaways from the Clergy Housing Allowance Ruling

What a recent ruling might mean for pastors.

<http://www.churchlawandtax.com/blog/2017/october/wisconsin-court-parsonage-allowance-violates-establishment.html>

[Images for Clergy Housing Allowance Ruling](#)

I received an email on 5/1/2019 from Portico Benefit Services - A Ministry of the ELCA, which gave an update on the latest court ruling.

### Key Legal Victory for Clergy Housing Allowance

March 31, 2019

On March 15, 2019, in response to the latest court challenge to the long-standing clergy housing allowance exclusion set forth in section 107(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, the U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously upheld the exclusion’s constitutionality in *Gaylor v. Mnuchin*.

An earlier lower federal district court decision had sided with a Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) lawsuit arguing that section 107(2) was a unique benefit for ministers and, therefore, unconstitutional. That suit was the latest in a series of suits brought by this organization to promote the constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

<https://myportico.porticobenefits.org/about-us/news/2019/3/31/key-legal-victory-for-clergy-housing-allowance>

[Images for Key Legal Victory for Clergy Housing Allowance](#)

<https://factsand Trends.net/2019/03/18/court-rules-in-favor-of-pastors-housing-allowance/>

### 25) Bring a matter to a vote only when it is believed the vote will pass resoundingly

A ministry site profile included the following:

- b. The most significant conflict in your congregation in the last 20 years and what the congregation has learned from that conflict.

In October of 2003, our churches reviewed the possibility of selling the parsonage and providing a housing allowance for the current pastor. The proposal was narrowly defeated with some antagonism created between the pastor and a few members. We learned that we can disagree on issues and still maintain our Christian family.

I suggest an additional lesson can be learned that is applicable, not only to this matter, but other matters which might be considered for a vote. It is better not to bring a matter to a vote than to bring a matter to a vote and risk the kind of “antagonism” that resulted in the above scenario.

### 26) The rest of the story

When I went to work at H & Builders in Ames, Iowa during the late 1960s and early 1970s, my dad would listen to Paul Harvey over the noon hour as we ate our meals out of our lunch pails. This broadcaster was known for the name of his broadcast...

#### The Rest Of The Story - Paul Harvey - YouTube

Excerpts from Nov 22 & 26th 1963

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng11P1J4iYM>

[Images for The Rest Of The Story - Paul Harvey - YouTube](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPOizT9Wzdl> Paul Harvey THE REST OF THE STORY #1 - Old Time Radio Intriguing History! - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRT964eDtyk> Paul Harvey " The rest of the story " – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdMI45rIJDE> The Rest of the Story - American Flag – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng11P1J4iYM> The Rest Of The Story - Paul Harvey – YouTube

#### The Rest of the Story - Wikipedia

The Rest of the Story was a Monday-through-Friday radio program originally hosted by Paul Harvey.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Rest\\_of\\_the\\_Story](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rest_of_the_Story)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul\\_Harvey%27s\\_The\\_Rest\\_of\\_the\\_Story](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Harvey%27s_The_Rest_of_the_Story)

[Images for Paul Harvey The Rest of the Story images  
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul\\_Harvey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Harvey)

Fast forward 45+ years, I read the minutes of a Congregation Council meeting of a congregation I began serving on an interim assignment.

(names) asked the council for the Youth Group Funds of \$916.68 to be used toward the upcoming Youth trip to (name). These funds were being held for the Youth Group (which has been inactive for many years) and a check will be issued to (name) for the Youth to use.

The rest of the story, as told to me by the president of the Congregation Council, is that the patriarch of the congregation as a member of the Congregation Council and his wife as a visitor to the meeting and speaking as the head of the Women of the ELCA argued against giving the funds to the youth for the event because they contended that the youth and the parents had not done enough to earn the money. The arguments became so vociferous that the president abruptly adjourned the meeting. The president, whose wife took the minutes as council secretary, wanted me to come to the next meeting, but it was before my official start date and I declined. I heard later from another source he canceled the meeting because he heard that the patriarch was still upset about the decision. Which brings up the question, "How much information should be included in the minutes of the Congregation Council meetings?" Some minutes only record the essentials,

#### How To Write Effective Meeting Minutes with Templates and Examples

- Don't try to capture it all – you can't keep up if you try to write down the conversation verbatim, so be sure to simply (and clearly) write (or type) just the decisions, assignments, action steps, etc.

<https://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-meeting-minutes>  
[Images for Write Effective Meeting Minutes](#)

while other minutes tell the deliberation that went into the decision.

#### How to Write Church Meeting Minutes | Bizfluent

One of the most challenging aspects of minute-taking is to determine how much detail to record. The Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission suggests recording the main points of the discussions leading to decisions, as well as the alternatives considered and a summary of why the committee chose one alternative over the others. The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability suggests that the board establish a policy about details that is consistent regardless of the individual secretary. It suggests including enough detail to show that the board was prudent, but not so much that the minutes read like a novel.

<https://bizfluent.com/how-7844547-write-church-meeting-minutes.html>

One of the most persistent problems a meeting secretary faces is how to record accurately a half-hour discussion of a problem within the minutes. Obviously, the entire discussion cannot, and often need not, be transcribed. Careful listening and careful note-taking (as noted below) will be helpful to the secretary as he/she later writes a succinct record, eliminating unnecessary details.

<http://www.mbhistory.org/why-how-minutes.pdf>  
[Images for Church Meeting Minutes](#)

#### 27) Choice of words

The former pastor sent a letter to the parish at a volatile time in which he urged, "Let us take time to pray and listen and pray and listen some more. Asking what is God calling us to do?" In the concluding paragraph he wrote, "We are on the precipice, the edge, of something big, the devil has seen that and is now, at the end of our 40 days, attacking us when we are weak, just like he tried with Jesus." He went on to say, "If you want to fight, don't fight each other, fight for the church of Christ, fight for the community, fight for compromise, so we can go forward and live into the future God has for us." His detractors read the word devil and interpreted that to mean he was speaking of them. Instead of a "cooling off period" he was asking for, his detractors became even more inflamed, so the pastor left 5 months later.

#### Write Wisely: Word Choice and Impact - Scripted

Word choice is an important part of any type of writing—especially content writing. Selecting precise words will help you increase the impact you create on your audience.

<https://www.scripted.com/writers/speak-wisely-word-choice-impact>  
[Images for Write Wisely: Word Choice and Impact - Scripted](#)

#### 28) Pastor's office hours

A Congregation Council member stopped by the church every once in awhile to (in his words) "make sure I was working on the job and not sleeping on the couch." He would then sit down and talk for a few minutes and then often go to the bowling alley on Main Street to play cards. Expectations regarding pastor's office hours vary from congregation to congregation. Increasingly, though, in this age of post-Christendom, it can no longer be assumed that "one can simply open the doors, and they will come in." Add to that, electronic communication is replacing face to face and the telephone. It is more likely that a pastor needs to go where the people are, and so I've

found keeping strict office hours to be less important. At the same time, particularly in multi-point parishes, office hours - for instance Wednesday 9am-noon - give the satisfaction to some members that the pastor shows up at the church between Sundays.

## Resources

### 5 Reasons Pastors Need to Get Out of the Office - ChurchLeaders

I think there are a number of places that will be far more effective for ministry to take place. There are several questions I think you should really think through:

Where will people feel most comfortable to open up?

Where will people feel safe?

Where are the people? After all, it's hard to minister to people if there aren't people!

How can you best provide an example to the church that ministry isn't about a building?

<http://www.churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/163259-luke-geraty-5-reasons-pastors-need-to-get-out-office.html>

[Images for Pastors Need to Get Out of the Office](#)

### How Protestant Pastors Spend Their Time | The Exchange

A [new study coming out of Lifeway Research](#) shows that "Protestant pastors in America are working long hours, sometimes at the expense of relationships with church members, prospects, family and even the Lord." The uber-fast folks at [The Christian Post](#) has [already reported on the story](#).

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2009/december/how-protestant-pastors-spend-their-time.html>

[Images for How Protestant Pastors Spend Their Time | The Exchange](#)

### Pastor's office hours: Time to cut back? | Ministry Matters™

In the age of smartphones and being able to reach pastors almost anywhere (also not the healthiest of things) why do churches feel the need for their pastors to be secluded in a room in a building when life is happening all around the community? Who does that benefit? Who are office hours for, anyway? I'm inclined to think that office hours are more for the already-church members than anyone else. But, serving in a small church, I can go days without seeing anyone in my office.

<http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/5373/pastors-office-hours-time-to-cut-back>

[Images for Pastor's office hours: Time to cut back? | Ministry Matters™](#)

### Seven Reasons to Consider Not Requiring Office Hours for Ministerial Staff by Sam Rainer – ThomRainer.com

I've never liked the idea of requiring office hours for pastors and ministry staff. Ministry demands a "go" mentality. It's hard to go when you have to sit at a desk all day.

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/07/seven-reasons-consider-not-requiring-office-hours-ministerial-staff/>

[Images for Seven Reasons to Consider Not Requiring Office Hours for Ministerial Staff by Sam Rainer – ThomRainer.com](#)

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/12/01/nine-issues-regarding-pastors-office-hours/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/09/rainer-leadership-258/> Why You Should Consider Not Requiring Office Hours for Ministerial Staff

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/07/how-many-hours-must-a-pastor-work-to-satisfy-the-congregation/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/08/the-pastors-work-week-rainer-on-leadership-017/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/07/how-many-hours-does-a-pastor-work-each-week/how-many-hours-does-a-pastor-work-each-week/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/07/how-many-hours-must-a-pastor-work-to-satisfy-the-congregation/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/08/the-pastors-work-week-rainer-on-leadership-017/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/07/how-many-hours-does-a-pastor-work-each-week/how-many-hours-does-a-pastor-work-each-week/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/06/eight-indicators-pastors-expected-ministry/> #2

<http://www.lifeway.com/pastors/2014/07/10/what-effective-pastors-do-with-their-time/>

[Images for thom rainer \(author\)](#)

## 29) Leave the car behind

Whenever possible, I walk to church from the parsonage or apartment. Two reasons. One, walking is good exercise. Second, certain busybodies like to keep tabs by seeing where the car is parked. If possible, I leave the car in the garage with the door shut.

### 77 best Busybody Quotes images on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/bubblec0610/busybody-quotes/>

[Images for Busybody Quotes on Pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/bubblec0610/busybody-quotes/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/fitcamp1/busy-bodies/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/jesstinir/busybody/>

[Images for busybody pinterest](#)

## 30) Automobile allowance

I attended a Joint Council meeting in which the governing body was considering the compensation worksheet for a seminary graduate being nominated for the position of installed pastor. Most of the figures were straightforward according to the Minimum Standards for Compensation and Benefits, but the governing body debated the automobile allowance for 45 minutes.

When a pastor resides in a parsonage next to the one church being served, automobile allowance is straightforward. But, when a pastor is given a housing allowance to serve two or more congregations, automobile allowance is more complicated to compute church

business miles driven. The governing body finally put down an estimated amount and left the specifics to be determined at a later meeting with the candidate, assistant to the bishop, and Parish Council (Executive Committees from both Congregation Councils).

### [\[PDF\] 2018 Minimum Standards for Compensation and Benefits - Amazon S3](#)

#### III. REIMBURSED PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

##### A. AUTOMOBILE ALLOWANCE (Recommended: lease/purchase or IRS mileage rate)

###### 1. Lease/Purchase Vehicle

It is recommended that a parish consider a purchase or lease arrangement of an automobile provided for the rostered leader for congregational business. An arrangement may also be made for private use by the rostered leader with reimbursement of mileage to the congregation.

###### 2. IRS Mileage Rate

The most equitable way of reimbursement for congregational business travel when the car is owned by the individual, not the congregation, is to use the mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. For the current rate, type "mileage" into the search bar at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Under present tax structure, if the congregation does not provide a vehicle, this is the fairest and best way for the individual to be reimbursed.

###### 3. Lump Sum Allowance

If the congregation and rostered leader choose to have a lump sum travel allowance, then the rostered leader must, by tax law, keep careful record of church business miles driven and report these to a congregation officer. This should be done also to keep the congregation informed of the pastor's need as to the amount of this allowance, as well as for reporting to the Internal Revenue Service.

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.cloversites.com/0a/0a854394-3a19-4d9f-b1ae-f93021508921/documents/Amended\\_2018\\_salary\\_standards\\_rev.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.cloversites.com/0a/0a854394-3a19-4d9f-b1ae-f93021508921/documents/Amended_2018_salary_standards_rev.pdf)

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[Images for Minimum Standards for Compensation and Benefits Pastors Northwest Synod of Wisconsin](#)

[Images for REIMBURSED PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES](#)

#### Resources

##### [Clergy Mileage Reimbursement or Auto Allowance](#)

Auto reimbursement plans or auto allowances should be sufficient to cover all church-related expenses. The IRS is increasingly requiring accurate records (including odometer readings, mileage, date and time, etc.) to support auto expenses claimed as church-related travel. A paper spreadsheet, or even a phone app, like MileBug, can be used to track mileage.

<https://www.clergytaxnet.com/3296-2/>

[Images for Clergy Mileage Reimbursement or Auto Allowance](#)

##### [Professional Expenses - Summit Tax & Accounting](#)

Question:

What kind of records do I need to keep of my ministry miles and other ministry expenses?

Answer:

Ministers need to keep a written log of their ministry miles. This is a must with both the Accountable and Non-accountable plans. Your mileage log should have the following information: date, odometer reading at the beginning of the trip, odometer reading at the end of trip, business miles driven for the day and place and purpose of the trip (read Publication 463 Travel, Entertainment, Gift, and Car Expense). *Reminder: if you are driving a church-owned vehicle for both church business and personal use, you must keep a log with personal miles as well and turn this into the church. This is taxable income that goes in Box 1 of the W-2. The minister needs to keep receipts for ministry-related expenses with a note of who, what, when and why. The Internal Revenue Service will not allow deductions without receipts.*

[Back to Top](#)

Question:

Are the miles I drive back and forth to church for services and to work deductible?

Answer:

Multiple trips between your residence and your work location are all non-deductible commuting miles. The distance between your residence and your first business stop of the day and/or your last business stop of the day are all non-deductible commuting miles.

[Back to Top](#)

<http://www.summittaxaccounting.com/professional-expenses.html#PE-08>

[Images for Clergy Professional Expenses](#)

##### [7 Top Minister Tax Deductions - Free Church Accounting](#)

Note: Commuting miles (distance from the minister's residence to the church or nonprofit organization) is not an allowable tax-free business expense. If you reimburse for commuting miles, you will need to include and report the total amount on the minister's W-2.

<http://www.freechurchaccounting.com/minister-tax-deductions.html>

[Images for Minister Tax Deductions](#)



### 31) Help pull the wagon

One Congregation Council president often came up with memorable quips. Once, when lamenting how some of the members were standing back, criticizing actions of congregation leadership, and waiting for others to do the work, he said, "We need people who will help pull the wagon. Too many people just want to sit in the wagon."

#### Two Pictures that Perfectly Capture the Rise and Fall of the Welfare State – Forbes.com

The welfare state reaches a point-of-no-return when the number of people riding in the wagon begins to outnumber the number of people pulling the wagon.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/beltway/2011/07/15/two-pictures-that-perfectly-capture-the-rise-and-fall-of-the-welfare-state/#7273733617d9>

[Images for people riding in wagon outnumbers people pulling the wagon](#)

### 32) Don't make promises you can't keep

The previous pastor alerted me to the fact that one member of the Congregation Council volunteered for efforts but did not follow through. The council gave this member the benefit of the doubt when the member volunteered to be the financial secretary. Then, after a month, she said she really didn't volunteer for the position and wanted to give it up. After that, even those who defended her agreed that she had missed too many meetings and had not followed through in this important position of trust and had to be asked to resign.

#### Resources

Don't make promises if you can't keep them | Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/dont.make.promises>

[Images for don't make promises if you can't keep them](#)

#### How to Avoid Making Promises You Can't Keep: 3 Steps

It can be pretty difficult when you make a promise then realize ten minutes later that it's impossible to keep - and if you break promises, the results can make people find it hard to trust you again even with small things. So here is a guide on how to avoid making any promises you can't carry through.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Avoid-Making-Promises-You-Can%27t-Keep>

[Images for Avoid Making Promises You Can't Keep](#)

#### Promises Quotes - BrainyQuote

<https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/promises>

<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/promises.html>

[Images for promise quotes](#)

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/promises>

<https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Promises>

[www.wiseoldsayings.com/promises-quotes/](http://www.wiseoldsayings.com/promises-quotes/)

<https://becauseisaidiwould.com/promisepromises/>

<https://www.yourtango.com/2018311267/best-promise-quotes-about-commitment>

[Images for promise-quotes-about-commitment](#)

<https://www.askideas.com/65-best-promise-quotes-and-sayings/>

[www.quoteagarden.com/promises.html](http://www.quoteagarden.com/promises.html)

[www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/promise.html](http://www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/promise.html)

<http://positivewriter.com/8-of-the-most-inspiring-quotes-youll-ever-read-i-promise/>

<https://www.christianquotes.info/top-quotes/16-glorious-quotes-promises-god/>

#### Top 8 Things I've Learned While Being Mentored by Carey Nieuwhof

##### 1. PROMISE ONLY WHAT YOU CAN DELIVER

<http://youngchurchleaders.org/2016/04/20/top-7-things-ive-learned/>

[Images for Top 8 Things I've Learned While Being Mentored by Carey Nieuwhof 1. PROMISE ONLY WHAT YOU CAN DELIVER](#)

#### What Does the Bible Say About Keeping Promises? - OpenBible

[http://www.openbible.info/topics/keeping\\_promises](http://www.openbible.info/topics/keeping_promises)

[Images for Bible and Keeping Promises](#)

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2015/06/26/top-7-bible-verses-about-keeping-promises/>

<https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Bible-Verses-About-Keeping-Promises/>

<https://www.ourdailyjourney.org/2015/09/25/keeping-promises/>

[http://biblehub.com/topical/k/keeping\\_promises.htm](http://biblehub.com/topical/k/keeping_promises.htm)

#### What should I do when someone breaks a promise?

With all of that emotion swirling around, I'm probably not going to be able to keep the [Core Commitments](#) to perceive more than seeking to be perceived, to ask for help, and to never do anything dumb on purpose. Before I do anything, I need to calm down. So, the first thing I do is whatever will help me calm down: go to the gym and work out, have a cup of tea, ask someone for help, or take a walk.

When you arrive at work, I [Check In](#) with you, and then say,



<http://www.simplerulesandtools.com/2012/12/04/what-should-i-do-when-someone-breaks-a-promise/>  
[Images for What should I do when someone breaks a promise?](#)

### 33) Expect the unexpected

Just when I think I know what to expect,  
I remind myself to expect the unexpected.  
Invariably, the unexpected happens  
when I think I know what to expect.

[expect the unexpected - Wiktionary](#)

Verb[[edit](#)]

[expect the unexpected](#)

1. Do not be [surprised](#) by [unusual](#) events. Anything might happen.

[https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/expect\\_the\\_unexpected](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/expect_the_unexpected)

[Images for expect the unexpected](#)

[Images for Do not be surprised by unusual events. Anything might happen.](#)

### 34) Should Congregation Council be obligated to patronize members' businesses?

A member recounted a family no longer coming to church. "*(name)* owns an implement business. The council decided to buy a lawnmower from the other implement dealer. I would've quit too," he asserted.

As a general rule, I encourage support of local businesses particularly in smaller communities rather than automatically going to the big box store in the city. Where it gets sticky is when one member does not get the business.

### 35) Conflicts of interest

In one setting, the organist became the president and vowed to advocate for a decreased pastor compensation package. In another setting, music directors held positions on the Congregation Council and the Personnel Committee. The former supported the interim pastor, while the latter opposed the interim pastor. In still another setting, a church secretary volunteered to serve on the Call Committee. And in another setting, the church secretary served on the call committee. In another setting, the president's wife worked as the church secretary. In still another setting, all 3 organists served on the Parish Council as well as one of the custodians.

An interim ministry colleague related how the husband of the church secretary was the president of the Congregation Council and how that situation became complicated. In another congregation, I heard about, the church secretary's husband agreed to be the president because, "Nobody else was willing to." The president then acted to terminate the position of the church administrator who worked in the office next to the church secretary as a budgetary move while the pastor was out of town. In another setting, a church secretary showed up at a meeting of the Joint Council to deliberate a proposed compensation package for the new pastor and strongly objected to how much pastors get compensated by asserting, "Nobody else makes this kind of money around here." The list could go on and on. This matter takes education, as many times people are oblivious to a conflict of interest. Making a change will only work if there is a critical mass of congregation leadership open to addressing the situation. Otherwise, an interim pastor may end up taking the fall. If possible, I suggest looking at the issue apart from the personalities to draft a policy.

### Resources

[Church Administration: Programs, Process, Purpose \[Robert Bacher, Michael Cooper-White\]](#)

Appendices

A. [Conflict of Interest](#) Certification

<http://www.augsburgfortress.org/education/academic/churchadministration/thebook.jsp>

<http://store.fortresspress.com/store/product/2687/Church-Administration>

For discussion questions on this book go to [www.augsburgfortress.org/education/academic/churchadministration/](http://www.augsburgfortress.org/education/academic/churchadministration/)

<http://www.amazon.com/Church-Administration-Programs-Process-Purpose/dp/0800637429>

[Images for Church Administration: Programs, Process, Purpose \[Robert Bacher, Michael Cooper-White\]](#)

[Images for Conflict of Interest Certification](#)

### Concepts Unwrapped | Conflict of Interest - YouTube

Conflict of interest arises when we have incentives that conflict with our professional duties and responsibilities in ways that cause harm to others and to society.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnRpMQvW\\_ow](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnRpMQvW_ow)

[Images for Conflict of Interest - YouTube](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WQEYKP\\_v\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WQEYKP_v_Q) What Is The Meaning Of Conflict Of Interest? - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1lYsZGOfm> Conflict of Interest - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ko0Et4UTxZ8> Ethics Defined: Conflict of Interest - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0HRc-WdJns> What is a Conflict of Interest? - YouTube

### [PDF] Conflict of Interest Policy

Model [Congregation] Operational Ethics Policy

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Sample\\_Congregation\\_Ethics\\_Policy.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Sample_Congregation_Ethics_Policy.pdf)

[Images for Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

### Conflict of interest - Wikipedia

A conflict of interest (COI) is a situation in which a [person](#) or [organization](#) is involved in multiple [interests](#) ([financial](#), [emotional](#), or otherwise), one of which could possibly [corrupt](#) the motivation of the individual or organization.

The presence of a conflict of interest is independent of the occurrence of [impropriety](#). Therefore, a conflict of interest can be discovered and voluntarily defused before any [corruption](#) occurs. A widely used definition is: "A conflict of interest is a set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgment or actions regarding a primary interest will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest."<sup>[1]</sup> *Primary interest* refers to the principal goals of the profession or activity, such as the protection of clients, the health of patients, the integrity of research, and the duties of public office. *Secondary interest* includes not only financial gain but also such motives as the desire for professional advancement and the wish to do favors for family and friends, but conflict of interest rules usually focus on financial relationships because they are relatively more objective, fungible, and quantifiable. The secondary interests are not treated as wrong in themselves but become objectionable when they are believed to have greater weight than the primary interests. The *conflict* in a conflict of interest exists whether or not a particular individual is actually influenced by the secondary interest. It exists if the circumstances are reasonably believed (on the basis of past experience and objective evidence) to create a risk that decisions may be unduly influenced by secondary interests.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflict\\_of\\_interest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflict_of_interest)

[https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Conflict\\_of\\_interest](https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Conflict_of_interest)

[Images for conflict of interest](#)

### Constitutions - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - ELCA

#### †S8.16. Conflicts of Interest

†S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of **potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops**:

- a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
- b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.18.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.
- c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synod bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).

<https://www.elca.org/About/Churchwide/Office-of-the-Secretary/Constitutions> [2019 Constitution for Synods](#)

[Images for potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops](#)

### Controlling Conflicts of Interest - Alban Institute

It is much easier to address conflicts before they arise than afterward. A written policy helps leaders avoid conflicts of interest and handle them appropriately. The policy should define conflicts of interest and make disclosure of them an annual routine. Such a practice makes it easier for members to disclose conflicts that arise later, when the board takes up an issue that affects them. The policy needs to make it clear that every board member has a duty to raise conflict-of-interest concerns, and that the board itself (excluding those affected by the potential) will decide whether disclosure, recusal, or resignation is the right response.

<https://alban.org/archive/controlling-conflicts-of-interest/>

<https://alban.org/archive/conflicts-of-interest/>

[Images for Controlling Conflicts of Interest](#)

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

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

### ECFA Governance Toolbox Series No. 3 – Conflicts of Interest

Addressing Board and Organizational Conflicts of Interest: Avoiding Trouble, Trouble, Trouble With Related-Party Transactions

<https://www.ecfa.org/Content/Governance-Toolbox-Series-3>

[Images for ECFA Governance Toolbox Series No. 3 – Conflicts of Interest](#)

### mission endowment fund - ELCA Resource Repository

#### **Avoid conflicts of interest**

The members of the mission endowment fund committee, and the congregation as a whole, must avoid all conflicts of interest, investing the fund with an impartial third party. As matters of public trust and good business practice, and to maintain these funds for their intended use, the congregation should never "borrow" from the principal for other purposes. The same

independent review board or auditor should inspect the mission endowment fund along with other congregational accounts, as the mission endowment fund is simply another account within the congregation.

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/How\\_to\\_Create\\_a\\_Mission\\_Endowment\\_Fund.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/How_to_Create_a_Mission_Endowment_Fund.pdf)  
[Images for Avoid conflicts of interest](#)

#### Operational Ethics Policy

Ethics policies are designed to help persons understand fiduciary duties and address **conflicts of interest** or appearance of conflicts. It is important to consult with your legal and financial advisors when adopting a business ethics policy.

[Why do we need Ethics Policies?](#)

[Congregation Operational Ethics Policy](#)

**Sample Policies - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Sample\\_Congregation\\_Ethics\\_Policy.pdf?\\_ga=1.243994053.1369135611.1445914398](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Sample_Congregation_Ethics_Policy.pdf?_ga=1.243994053.1369135611.1445914398)

[Images for Operational Ethics Policy](#)

So, you are a staff employee who also happens to be a member of the church?

- 1) Elected roles in the church. When you were hired as a staff employee, you become ineligible to serve on session or an elected position within the church. This is primarily to avoid the creation of a **conflict of interest**. As a staff person, to serve on the governing board of the church or in an elected position, places you in a more influential position than other staff, supervisors, or even the pastors. In particular, serving on session, you will be asked to make decisions that influence the personnel, budgeting, salaries, and evaluations of other staff, which would not be appropriate.

**Staff employee/church member dual relationship information (PDF)**

<http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/midcouncil-resources/staffmember-churchmember.pdf>

[Images for avoid the creation of a conflict of interest](#)

**The Diocese of Fargo and Its Affiliates' Statement of Code of Conduct**

**Conflicts of Interest.** Church workers shall avoid putting themselves in a position that might present a conflict of interest, since the existence, or even the appearance, of a conflict of interest can call into question one's integrity and professional conduct.

<http://www.fargodiocese.org/files/pdf/vicar/fargodio-codeconduct.pdf>

Page 15

[Images for integrity and professional conduct](#)

**TOP 25 CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUOTES | A-Z Quotes**

<http://www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/conflict-of-interest.html>

[Images for conflict of interest quotes](#)

While reviewing constitutions for the synod, I came across the effort of one congregation to address this matter.

This Congregation Council shall insure that its members refrain from introducing business before the Congregation Council or voting upon measures or proposals in which they have a **personal or professional interest**. Members shall inform the council in a timely manner of any such **conflicts** that affect them. Participation and discussion or debate on a measure by a member with a conflict of interest shall not be prohibited so long as the conflict and its nature and extent is closed to the council.

Personally, I like to watch for conflicts of interest on the larger stage as being instructive.

#### Resources

**Beware conflicts of interest | TED Talk | TED.com: Dan Ariely**

<http://www.ted.com> In this short talk, psychologist Dan Ariely tells two personal stories that explore scientific conflict of interest: How the pursuit of knowledge and insight can be affected, consciously or not, by shortsighted personal goals. When we're thinking about the big questions, he reminds us, let's be aware of our all-too-human brains.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_ariely\\_beware\\_conflicts\\_of\\_interest](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_beware_conflicts_of_interest)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_ariely\\_beware\\_conflicts\\_of\\_interest/up-next](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_beware_conflicts_of_interest/up-next)

[Images for Beware conflicts of interest | TED Talk | TED.com: Dan Ariely](#)

**Bill Gates and his coronavirus conflicts of interest**

**Bill Gates**, the billionaire who founded **Microsoft** and, along with his wife, the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**, just called for a complete and utter shutdown and quarantining of the entire American nation, saying the spottiness of some states doing it and some states not has put all in coronavirus jeopardy.

This — from the guy who's poised to make some cool millions in the market chaos of recent weeks.

This — from the guy who practically controls policy at the **World Health Organization**.

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/apr/2/bill-gates-and-his-coronavirus-conflicts-of-intere/>

Foundations can invest their assets with little oversight, and they can utilize these same companies to implement their charitable purpose. From Gates's position, investment strategy and philanthropic investments are part of an integrated effort to maximize the benefit of their resources. But it leads to the potential for a disturbing **conflict of interest**.

<https://nonprofitquarterly.org/is-the-gates-foundation-out-of-control/>

This chapter explores the origins of philanthrocapitalism and addresses its increasing influence on global health governance and decision-making. It examines the functioning and priorities of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in order to explore how the alignment of corporate interests and philanthropic investment may be having adverse effects on health policy. It looks at the efforts of the proponents of philanthrocapitalism to challenge progressive tax measures that could generate government revenues earmarked for global health. Finally, the chapter suggests that a focus on conflicts of interest could be a useful starting point for the mobilisation of health specialists who are concerned about the influence of the Gates Foundation on health policy, but who have thus far had difficulty, as a result of the immense scale of the Foundation's influence, in highlighting some of its controversial policies.

[https://www.ghwatch.org/sites/www.ghwatch.org/files/D3\\_0.pdf](https://www.ghwatch.org/sites/www.ghwatch.org/files/D3_0.pdf) D3 | conflicts of interest within philanthrocapitalism  
[Images for conflicts of interest within philanthrocapitalism](#)

#### Networks ignore Clinton Foundation conflict-of-interest issues in 95% of coverage: Report

A meticulous new study finds that major broadcasters appear to be shielding Hillary Clinton and her campaign for the White House, even as questions about her family foundation continue to emerge.

"The Clinton Foundation has been such a source of conflict during the 2016 presidential election that print media outlets and even some Democrats said the Clinton family should actually leave the foundation," wrote Alatheia Nelson, an analyst for [Newsbusters.org](#). She pointed out in a new [report](#) that even the liberal Minnesota Star Tribune advised voters to be concerned about the "appearance of a conflict of interest" as Mrs. Clinton continues her bid for the presidency.

This is not the case with ABC, NBC and CBS, the big three broadcast networks. The networks virtually ignored the conflict-of-interest aspect in 95 percent of their stories, according to Ms. Nelson, who analyzed 62 network news stories about the Clinton Foundation that appeared from Aug. 9 to Sept. 9.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/sep/21/networks-ignore-clinton-foundation-conflict-of-int/>

[Images for Networks ignore Clinton Foundation conflict-of-interest issues in 95% of coverage: Report](#)

<http://www.newsbusters.org/blogs/business/alatheia-nielsen/2016/09/20/networks-ignore-clinton-foundation-conflict-interest-95>

<http://www.startribune.com/it-s-past-time-to-shut-down-the-clinton-foundation/391459681/>

[Images for it-s-past-time-to-shut-down-the-clinton-foundation](#)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/30/opinion/cutting-ties-to-the-clinton-foundation.html?ref=opinion&mtrref=hotair.com&assetType=opinion&r=0>

<http://www.bigstory.ap.org/article/82df550e1ec646098b434f7d5771f625/many-donors-clinton-foundation-met-her-state>

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2016/08/25/president-clinton-foundation-would-enter-ethical-uncharted-waters/89329140/>

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/some-democrats-press-clinton-to-end-ties-to-foundation-1472600643>

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bernie-sanders-clinton-foundation\\_us\\_57cc50d2e4b0a22de0966b57](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bernie-sanders-clinton-foundation_us_57cc50d2e4b0a22de0966b57)

### 36) Run the meeting

One president of a Congregation Council gave new meaning to the term run the meeting.

Most presidents I have worked with invite others to make a motion by stating, "I would like to entertain a motion..." This president did not bother with such an invitation but often made the motion himself by stating, "I move that...." I wanted to know what Roberts Rules of Order had to say:

#### Resources

##### Can the president (or chair) move a motion at a meeting? | Master of Meetings

*Andrea from Koroop in Victoria, Australia has asked: "Can the president move a motion at a meeting? What law is this held under?"*

The short answer is yes. The longer answer is that a wise chair will only move certain motions from the chair.

<http://masterofmeetings.com/index2/can-the-president-or-chair-move-a-motion-at-a-meeting>

[Images for Can the president \(or chair\) move a motion at a meeting?](#)

##### Robert's Rules of Order, Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ

Question: Can a president make a motion or second a motion?

Answer: It depends. In a board meeting of fewer than 12 members (unless you have rules to the contrary), a president can make motions, second motions, discuss motions, and vote on motions. In a general membership meeting, the president is to remain impartial; he or she should not make a motion or second it.

[http://westsidetoastmasters.com/resources/roberts\\_rules/chap18.html#prs8](http://westsidetoastmasters.com/resources/roberts_rules/chap18.html#prs8)

[Images for Robert's Rules of Order, Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ](#)

I also inquired of the synod parliamentarian and received the following reply:

Yes, if the President is a voting member of the Council. In a large gathering, like the Synod Assembly, the presiding officer does not make or second motions, but in a smaller gathering, like a Council meeting, it is allowed.

However, if the President is making or seconding motions because the other members are reluctant to do so, then the Council should look at why that is so. Is the President putting forward motions that the others disagree with? Do the other members not understand the role of motions? Do they not understand their own role on the Council?

Beyond what Roberts Rules of Order says, the question can be asked, "What are some good ways to run a meeting?"

## Resources

### How to Run a Good Meeting | Center for Participatory Change

Most people don't like meetings. They say they are boring, go on too long, and don't get anything done. And often that's the truth. So, to have a good meeting, you need to make it interesting, keep it on track, and make sure something gets done. Here are eight steps toward making your next meeting a success.

<http://www.cpcwnc.org/resources/toolbox/how-run-good-meeting>

[http://www.gretchenrubin.com/happiness\\_project/2009/07/14-tips-for-running-a-good-meeting/](http://www.gretchenrubin.com/happiness_project/2009/07/14-tips-for-running-a-good-meeting/)

[Images for How to Run a Good Meeting | Center for Participatory Change](#)

### How to Run a Meeting - Harvard Business Review

Why have a meeting anyway? Why indeed?

<https://hbr.org/1976/03/how-to-run-a-meeting>

<https://hbr.org/2015/07/the-condensed-guide-to-running-meetings>

<https://hbr.org/product/how-to-run-a-meeting/76204-PDF-ENG>

<https://www.amazon.com/Meeting-Harvard-Business-Review-Classics-ebook/dp/B012TN056E>

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/18406656-running-meetings>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2244.Harvard\\_Business\\_School\\_Press](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2244.Harvard_Business_School_Press)

[Images for How to Run a Meeting - Harvard Business Review](#)

<https://hbr.org/2015/03/how-to-run-a-great-virtual-meeting>

[Images for How to Run a Great Virtual Meeting - Harvard Business Review](#)

<https://hbr.org/2016/04/what-everyone-should-know-about-running-virtual-meetings>

<https://hbr.org/2014/12/getting-virtual-teams-right>

<https://www.amazon.com/Running-Virtual-Meetings-20-Minute-Manager/dp/1633691497>

[Images for Running-Virtual-Meetings-20-Minute-Manager](#)

### How to Run a Meeting Like Google - Businessweek

In a shop like Google (GOOG), much of the work takes place in meetings, and her goal is to make sure teams have a firm mandate, strategic direction, and actionable information, while making participants feel motivated and respected. Mayer's six keys to running successful meetings follow:

<http://www.businessweek.com/stories/2006-09-26/how-to-run-a-meeting-like-google>

[Images for How to Run a Meeting Like Google - Businessweek](#)

<http://99u.com/articles/7220/how-to-run-your-meetings-like-apple-and-google>

<https://www.getminute.com/how-to-run-a-meeting-like-google-apple-amazon-and-facebook/>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2006-09-26/how-to-run-a-meeting-like-google>

<https://goodmenproject.com/guy-talk/run-meetings-like-google-fiff/>

<http://www.businessinsider.com/googles-rules-for-a-great-meeting-2014-9>

[Images for /googles-rules-for-a-great-meeting](#)

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-run-meeting-like-google-apple-amazon-facebook-martijn-aurik>

<http://paulsohn.org/how-to-run-a-meeting-like-google/>

<https://content.wisestep.com/run-meetings-like-apple-google-tips/>

<https://lifehacker.com/5437156/run-effective-google-style-meetings-by-focusing-on-data-not-politics>

<http://99u.adobe.com/articles/25075/run-your-meeting-like-a-boss-lessons-from-mayer-musk-and-jobs>

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/kevin-kruse/run-a-meeting-like-a-pro\\_b\\_8704124.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/kevin-kruse/run-a-meeting-like-a-pro_b_8704124.html)

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/work/15-secrets-running-meetings-like-the-worlds-top-innovative-companies.html>

[Images for running-meetings-like-the-worlds-top-innovative-companies](#)

### How to Run a Meeting That Matters - Forbes

I identified four tactics that came up repeatedly in my research on how to run a meeting effectively.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2015/11/16/how-to-run-a-meeting-that-matters/#763d3ecb324f>

[Images for How to Run a Meeting That Matters - Forbes](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesleadershipforum/2014/02/05/seven-steps-to-running-the-most-effective-meeting-possible/#2cacd2797a61>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ianaltman/2017/04/25/how-to-run-a-successful-meeting-that-isnt-a-time-suck-and-doesnt-feel-like-groundhog-day/#33ed31e3728e>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/neilpatel/2015/04/16/my-6-techniques-for-running-successful-meetings/#1aee8e956951>

[Images for techniques-for-running-successful-meetings](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/donyaeger/2017/02/15/four-ways-to-make-your-team-meetings-matter/#465d8bae4d5c>

[Images for make-your-team-meetings-matter](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/brianscudamore/2016/06/15/10-simple-ways-to-have-more-productive-meetings/#50df33d71daf>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackzenger/2017/12/09/a-meeting-everyone-likes-ways-to-achieve-this-impossible-dream/#70cddb7352cb>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/glennllopis/2012/12/17/5-ways-to-lead-a-meeting-make-30-decisions-in-30-minutes/#4b9e3cb97882>



### How to Run an Effective Meeting (with Examples) - wikiHow

Productive, valuable, and engaging meetings require a clear goal, an open dialog, and a strong leader. This will ensure that each meeting runs smoothly and effectively - saving you and your team members time and money!

<http://www.wikihow.com/Run-an-Effective-Meeting>

Images for How to Run an Effective Meeting (with Examples)

<http://nswi.org/epic/epic-2020> Running an Effective Meeting

<http://www.inc.com/guides/2010/08/how-to-run-effective-meeting.html>

<http://www.israelgalindo.com/Resources/Church/Howtorunaneffectivemeeting.pdf>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-to-run-an-effective-meeting/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/guides/business/how-to-run-an-effective-meeting>

<https://blog.asana.com/2017/12/run-effective-meetings-agenda-tips/>

<https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/openforum/articles/how-to-run-an-effective-meeting-a-small-business-guide/>

<http://www.dummies.com/careers/project-management/ten-tips-for-running-an-effective-meeting/>

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/pam-stucky/how-to-run-an-effective-meeting-e\\_b\\_7674004.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/pam-stucky/how-to-run-an-effective-meeting-e_b_7674004.html)

<http://www.thedistilledman.com/run-effective-meetings/>

<https://www.quickbase.com/blog/tips-for-running-effective-meetings>

<https://www.lynda.com/Project-tutorials/How-run-effective-meetings/424947/486881-4.html>

<https://www.pluralsight.com/courses/run-effective-meetings>

[www.businessinsider.com/best-tips-efficient-meeting-office-2017-6](http://www.businessinsider.com/best-tips-efficient-meeting-office-2017-6)

<https://meetingtomorrow.com/content-library/how-to-run-an-effective-meeting>

<https://www.liquidplanner.com/blog/run-effective-meeting-lessons-pixar-apple-amazon/>

Images for run-effective-meeting-lessons-pixar-apple-amazon

[www.fisttofive.com/blog/2017/5/15/tips-for-running-an-effective-meeting](http://www.fisttofive.com/blog/2017/5/15/tips-for-running-an-effective-meeting)

<https://www.creativeblog.com/netmag/how-run-effective-meetings-6146924>

[www.diycommitteeguide.org/resource/running-effective-meetings](http://www.diycommitteeguide.org/resource/running-effective-meetings)

<https://meetingking.com/w-w-d-w-b-w-how-to-run-an-effective-meeting/>

<https://www.sendsteps.com/en/how-to-run-an-effective-meeting/>

<http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/cd/other/fs9729.pdf> How to Organize and Run Effective Meetings - University of Nevada

<https://straighttalk.hcltech.com/how-run-effective-meeting>

<https://www.nmu.edu/organizations/running-effective-meeting>

<http://www.agiftofinspiration.com.au/stories/leadership/10%20tips.shtml> 10 tips for creating and running effective meetings

<http://donnacardillo.com/articles/runameeting/> How to Run an Effective Meeting | Donna Cardillo, RN

<https://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/cd/other/fs9729.pdf> [PDF]how to organize and run effective meetings - University of Nevada

<http://projectmanagementhacks.com/meeting-tips/> 7 Habits of Highly Effective Meetings

<https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkil/RunningMeetings.htm> Running Effective Meetings - How to Be a Meeting Host by MindTools

<http://govleaders.org/meetings.htm> 6 Golden Rules on How to Hold Effective Meetings - Meeting Rules

<http://modernmeetingstandard.com/the-modern-meeting-standard/> How to Run an Effective Meeting - Modern Meeting Standard

<https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/curriculum-teaching-strategies/how-to-run-a-meeting/> How to Run an Effective Meeting:

Agendas and Protocols That Work

<http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkil/RunningMeetings.htm> Running Effective Meetings - Mind Tools

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5IUyseptlc> How to Run an Effective Meeting - Tutorial - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nsgqc8sBlk> Running Effective Meetings - YouTube

Images for Running Effective Meetings - YouTube

<https://www.thebalance.com/effective-meetings-produce-results-before-the-meeting-1918729>

<https://www.briantracy.com/blog/leadership-success/improve-meeting-management-and-management-skills-for-effective-meetings/>

### Running Board Meetings: How to Get the Most from Them [Patrick Dunne]

"Not only on target, it's also amusing. A rare combination." -- Professor Jay Lorsch, Harvard Business School

<https://www.amazon.com/Running-Board-Meetings-Most-Them/dp/0749449748>

Images for Running Board Meetings: How to Get the Most from Them [Patrick Dunne]

### [PDF]Running Church Meetings Skillfully and Carefully – Faith Formation Learning Exchange.net

Running a successful meeting in a church setting takes a lot of work on the part of the chairperson and the participants.

Everyone needs to do preparation work, everyone needs to be engaged in the meeting, and everyone needs to do follow-up work. Meetings do not effectively serve their purposes if these three things don't happen. It is the role of the chairperson to assure that they happen. When they do happen, people feel like their leaders are both competent and caring and participants also feel like they are making significant and meaningful contributions to the community by sharing their time and talent.

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Images for Running Church Meetings Skillfully and Carefully – Faith Formation Learning Exchange.net

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### 13 best Running an effective meeting images on Pinterest

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Images for Running an effective meeting on Pinterest

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### 37) Matthew the Tax Collector and Simon the Zealot

I am more familiar with Matthew the Tax Collector than Simon the Zealot. In fact, I did not pay much attention to the latter until I accepted a new assignment in the middle of Lent where the previous pastor had been using a series called At the Crossroads. The character that came up for Palm Sunday was Simon the Zealot. It occurred to me that Jesus called both a collaborator and a nationalist to be disciples and to transfer their loyalties to a higher cause.

#### At the Crossroads - Lenten Series Kit Product/Goods: Creative Communications

Many of those involved in the story of the Passion of Christ came to a crossroads and had to decide which way to go. Some chose well, some did not, and the stories of each of these experiences at various crossroads helps us to know what to do and what not to do when we encounter similar crossroads in our own lives. In the end, each service in the series reveals in some way how Christ and his cross help us to decide which path is in line with God's will for us.

<http://www.creativecommunications.com/Products/CRDU/at-the-crossroads--lenten-series-kit.aspx>

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Images for At the Crossroads - Lenten Series Kit Product/Goods: Creative Communications

### 38) Team of Rivals

I admit I have not read the Illustrated. 916pp. Simon & Schuster. \$35 book, but the point is not lost on me when I wonder how to lead a Congregation Council or other leadership group of seemingly disparate personalities. I bought a copy at Goodwill for \$7.99 and hope to look through the book at some point to learn more.

#### Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln by Doris Kearns Goodwin (Author)

Acclaimed historian Doris Kearns Goodwin illuminates Lincoln's political genius in this highly original work, as the one-term congressman and prairie lawyer rises from obscurity to prevail over three gifted rivals of national reputation to become president.

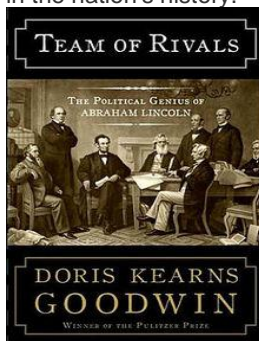
On May 18, 1860, William H. Seward, Salmon P. Chase, Edward Bates, and Abraham Lincoln waited in their hometowns for the results from the Republican National Convention in Chicago. When Lincoln emerged as the victor, his rivals were dismayed and angry.

Throughout the turbulent 1850s, each had energetically sought the presidency as the conflict over slavery was leading inexorably to secession and civil war. That Lincoln succeeded, Goodwin demonstrates, was the result of a character that had been forged by experiences that raised him above his more privileged and accomplished rivals. He won because he possessed an extraordinary ability to put himself in the place of other men, to experience what they were feeling, to understand their motives and desires.

It was this capacity that enabled Lincoln as president to bring his disgruntled opponents together, create the most unusual cabinet in history, and marshal their talents to the task of preserving the Union and winning the war.

We view the long, horrifying struggle from the vantage of the White House as Lincoln copes with incompetent generals, hostile congressmen, and his raucous cabinet. He overcomes these obstacles by winning the respect of his former competitors, and in the case of Seward, finds a loyal and crucial friend to see him through.

This brilliant multiple biography is centered on Lincoln's mastery of men and how it shaped the most significant presidency in the nation's history.



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[https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/1476.Doris\\_Kearns\\_Goodwin](https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/1476.Doris_Kearns_Goodwin) Images for Doris Kearns Goodwin (Author)  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/1476.Doris\\_Kearns\\_Goodwin](https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/1476.Doris_Kearns_Goodwin) Images for Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln by Doris Kearns Goodwin (Author)

### 39) Trust the wisdom of the group

An interim ministry colleague related his experience that in many leadership groups there are one or two people who often behave in a reactive manner and attract disproportionate attention with their behavior, but this colleague stated that most often the wisdom of the group prevails.

## Resources

### The Wisdom of Crowds by James Surowiecki (Author)

In this fascinating book, *New Yorker* business columnist James Surowiecki explores a deceptively simple idea: Large groups of people are *smarter* than an elite few, no matter how brilliant—better at solving problems, fostering innovation, coming to wise decisions, even predicting the future.

With boundless erudition and in delightfully clear prose, Surowiecki ranges across fields as diverse as popular culture, psychology, ant biology, behavioral economics, artificial intelligence, military history, and politics to show how this simple idea offers important lessons for how we live our lives, select our leaders, run our companies, and think about our world.



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<https://twitter.com/jamessurowiecki?lang=en>

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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTl6u\\_gbilY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTl6u_gbilY) James Surowiecki: The Power of the Collective – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbf7-Pu5Dgk> James Surowiecki - Keynote Speaker @ 21st Century Learning Conference - Hong Kong 2012 – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afIRcqXN8ZA> Big Think Interview with James Surowiecki – YouTube

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[Images for James Surowiecki \(Author\)](#)

[Images for The Wisdom of Crowds by James Surowiecki \(Author\)](#)

### Trust the Wisdom of the Group | group works

Heart

When the path is uncertain, seek intelligence, intuition, and direction from the collective. No matter the problem, with patience and good listening a group usually generates the needed solution, options, or route forward.

[http://groupworksdeck.org/patterns/Trust\\_the\\_Wisdom\\_of\\_the\\_Group](http://groupworksdeck.org/patterns/Trust_the_Wisdom_of_the_Group)

[Images for Trust the Wisdom of the Group](#)

### Who's Most Capable of Making Decisions?

This *learn-analyze-imagine-assess-decide-on-action* process involves each group of stakeholders doing what they do best. If there are appropriate incentives for the crowd (and sometimes that's as simple as recognition and thanks), this process need not be cumbersome, and to some extent it can be automated (members of the 'crowd' can to some extent *self-qualify* by going through an online qualification survey, and step 3 can also be done entirely online). It is course frightening to executives, because it reveals their true, limited value in the decision-making process. In fact, just about anyone can perform the three steps above (they are mostly administrative and facilitative), bringing into question the need for highly-paid executives, and a hierarchical decision-making organizational structure, at all. So, this approach is clearly more amenable to egalitarian, non-

hierarchical organizations. It's also bad news for the consultants and outside experts — they aren't needed in the process at all.

<http://howtosavetheworld.ca/2006/09/21/whos-most-capable-of-making-decisions/>

[Images for Who's Most Capable of Making Decisions?](#)

[Images for learn-analyze-imagine-assess-decide-on-action](#)

#### 40) Paralysis of analysis

I served as an interim associate pastor in a large congregation that had gone through an extensive self-study with a noted consultant at the end of a long-term pastorate. The new installed pastor was fond of using the phrase “paralysis of analysis” when speaking of how it is possible to get so wrapped up in analysis that a congregation is paralyzed to make decisions in moving forward.

#### Resources

##### Analysis paralysis - Wikipedia

Analysis paralysis or paralysis by analysis is an [anti-pattern](#), the state of over-[analyzing](#) (or over-thinking) a situation so that a decision or action is never taken, in effect paralyzing the outcome. A decision can be treated as over-complicated, with too many detailed options, so that a choice is never made, rather than try something and change if a major problem arises. A person might be seeking the optimal or “perfect” solution upfront, and fear making any decision which could lead to erroneous results, when on the way to a better solution.

The phrase describes a situation where the [opportunity cost](#) of [decision analysis](#) exceeds the benefits that could be gained by enacting some decision, or an informal or non-[deterministic](#) situation where the sheer quantity of analysis overwhelms the decision-making process itself, thus preventing a decision. The phrase applies to any situation where analysis may be applied to help make a decision and may be a [dysfunctional](#) element of [organizational behavior](#). This is often phrased as paralysis by analysis, in contrast to *extinct by instinct* (making a fatal decision based on hasty judgment or a gut-reaction).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analysis\\_paralysis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analysis_paralysis)

[Images for Analysis paralysis](#)

##### Analysis Paralysis – YouTube

For those yet to understand or be willing to take more risks around decision making ... it's frustrating and delaying so we're just saying ... get over it and make things happen! Totally aside, Maybe kicking it will also light a fire and get the band to approve the final mixes for Whiners and Losers - the coming Whiners album.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuZyK5rZ3lk>

[Images for Analysis Paralysis – YouTube](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0-nO0WCGJE> How To Overcome Analysis Paralysis - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqFB0oJxgiw> How To Overcome Analysis Paralysis TODAY - YouTube

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PhnHQQYprA> The Cat Meows - Analysis Paralysis (Overthinking) - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiK83NLGeIQ> Analysis Paralysis: The Cure? – YouTube

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSCFreJZ8UKD5Rt3Tq347sA> Analysis Paralysis - YouTube

[Images for Analysis Paralysis - YouTube](#)

##### 48 best Analysis Paralysis images on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/drannlawless/analysis-paralysis/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/valeriemacleod/decision-making-vs-analysis-paralysis/>

[Images for Analysis Paralysis Pinterest](#)

##### How to Overcome the 'Analysis Paralysis' of Decision-Making - Forbes

To help avoid the pitfalls of analysis paralysis, here are five considerations to keep in mind when inundated with so many bright, shiny balls of information:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffboss/2015/03/20/how-to-overcome-the-analysis-paralysis-of-decision-making/>

[Images for How to Overcome the 'Analysis Paralysis' of Decision-Making - Forbes](#)

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Images for overcome fear of making decisions

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/05/02/perfection-paralysis-how-to-step-back-and-stop-overanalyzing-your-work/#6e97b3f941d5>

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### Overcoming the Paralysis of Too Much Analysis

When you are faced with an important decision, it's always a good idea to gather information about the possible options and to use that information to evaluate the possible consequences. Analysis paralysis happens when you spend too much time analyzing that information and second-guessing all those possibilities... when you literally can't make a decision because that excess of information actually prevents you from moving forward.

<http://www.choosingvoluntarysimplicity.com/overcoming-the-paralysis-of-too-much-analysis/>

Images for Overcoming the Paralysis of Too Much Analysis

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<http://www.essetinoconnexions.com/2015/05/21/how-to-handle-analysis-paralysis/>

Images for handle analysis paralysis

<https://www.influenceatwork.com/inside-influence-report/when-expert-advice-creates-analysis-paralysis/>

Images for expert advice creates analysis paralysis

### Paralysis by Analysis in Athletes | Psychology Today

Once we are unconsciously competent, thinking too much may lead to "Paralysis by Analysis" where we struggle to perform activities that we otherwise perform routinely.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/goal-posts/201106/paralysis-analysis-in-athletes>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/goal-posts/201106/paralysis-analysis-part-2>

Images for Paralysis by Analysis in Athletes | Psychology Today

### Urban Dictionary: Analysis Paralysis

Analysis Paralysis is the total inability to reach a decision. Found often in the business and corporate setting. Usually a condition caused by nit picking managers and owners. The primary source is management/owner requests for more information, reports, studies, statistics, evaluations, opinion, and research on a subject.

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Analysis+Paralysis>

Images for Dictionary: Analysis Paralysis

### 41) Support or sabotage?

An interim pastor left for an annual winter vacation, and I was asked to carry out a bridge interim. The former interim pastor interviewed all the council members at the start, and, while I served there, the president stopped into the pastor's study 2-3X a week to check in and the vice-president 1-2X a week. The synod office asked me to take another assignment before the new installed pastor came on board. The former pastor at the new assignment, a member of the Synod Council and otherwise highly thought of in the synod, told me that the Executive Committee had been "hammering on him for two years" so that he finally resigned. I asked to interview each of the council members, but only 2 responded. The president and vice president did not check in with me, but continually checked up on me and checked out complaints. In hindsight, it should not have been surprising that after 4 months I was told I "was not the right fit." A highly regarded interim pastor from a neighboring synod came into the setting, stayed two months, and resigned. The synod staff then recommended a high-profile interim ministry consultant to work with congregation leadership and to advise the third interim pastor with whom the congregation contracted for a year. A fourth interim pastor finished out the 2+ year transition period. Most assignments an interim pastor can look back on with satisfaction, while an assignment every once in awhile an interim pastor simply has to walk away in order to live another day. If there is any consolation, a few colleagues later reflected to me that I had walked into a "perfect storm." In looking back over the interim assignments through the years, I have discovered a general rule of thumb is that, if the president is cooperative, the chances are greatly enhanced of a good working relationship, whereas, if the president adopts a "gottcha" stance, the working relationship will be strained.

## Recommendations of a consultant

A congregation retained the Church Doctor as a consultant to make recommendations on the various areas of life and mission of the congregation (other than the one mentioned above) before I came. These recommendations informed my interim ministry in that congregation. Following are recommendations for spiritual health:

I recommend members of the congregation pray about the attitude they project.

A demand for privileges without responsibilities is an entitlement mentality that is unfair, improper, and undermining to the health, vitality, and spiritual direction of this church. I recommend this type of approach be checked and that people within the congregation be challenged not to tolerate this type of mentality.

I recommend you develop strategies to focus on the fruit of the spirit:

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things. (Galatians 5:22)

I recommend you develop strategies to encourage a respectful followership toward those who have been called to lead you in this congregation.

## Resources

### Applying Systems Thinking and Common Archetypes to Organizational Issues

Exercise: "Support or Sabotage"

[http://www.iseesystems.com/Online\\_Training/course/module6/6-10-3-2-supportex.htm](http://www.iseesystems.com/Online_Training/course/module6/6-10-3-2-supportex.htm)

[http://rockhay.tripod.com/cohort/Congregational\\_Leadership\\_in\\_Anxious\\_Times.pdf](http://rockhay.tripod.com/cohort/Congregational_Leadership_in_Anxious_Times.pdf)

[Images for Applying Systems Thinking and Common Archetypes to Organizational Issues](#)

[Images for "Support or Sabotage"](#)

### Clergy Killers: Guidance for Pastors and Congregations under Attack by G. Lloyd Rediger (Author)

A general sense of entitlement is growing in the church, as well as in society. Church members feel entitled to comfort and privilege. If a pastor does not please them, they feel free to criticize and punish. **The business mentality that pervades the church says if the CEO (pastor) does not produce, he should be fired.** Page 20

[http://books.google.com/books/about/Clergy\\_Killers.html?id=gYAFWibp\\_RwC](http://books.google.com/books/about/Clergy_Killers.html?id=gYAFWibp_RwC)

[http://books.google.com/books?id=gYAFWibp\\_RwC&qid=587e78d3&source=gbs\\_quotes\\_r&cad=6](http://books.google.com/books?id=gYAFWibp_RwC&qid=587e78d3&source=gbs_quotes_r&cad=6)

[Images for sabotage, subverting worthy causes](#)

<https://www.christianbook.com/clergy-killers-guidance-pastors-congregations-attack/g-rediger/9780664257538/pd/57534>

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/257002.G\\_Lloyd\\_Rediger](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/257002.G_Lloyd_Rediger)

<https://www.amazon.com/Clergy-Killers-Guidance-Pastors-Congregations/dp/0664257534>

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/25255349-clergy-killers>

[Images for G. Lloyd Rediger \(Author\)](#)

[Images for Clergy Killers: Guidance for Pastors and Congregations under Attack by G. Lloyd Rediger \(Author\)](#)

### Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times

5. If an individual becomes the lightning rod for people's anxiety and cannot extricate him/herself from that position through self-differentiation (or the environment is so perverse that no one can escape from that position), trying to maintain his or her position or presence in the emotional system is unproductive and as well as painful. Page 10

[http://rockhay.org/cohort/Congregational\\_Leadership\\_in\\_Anxious\\_Times.pdf](http://rockhay.org/cohort/Congregational_Leadership_in_Anxious_Times.pdf)

[Images for Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times](#)

[Images for The sabotage of a process to deal with conflict should be expected.](#)

### Forced Terminations: When a Church Asks a Pastor to Leave

Of course, it's very painful for both church and pastor - and the pastor's family - when a pastor is 'fired', or 'let go'. No one wins when a church feels forced to terminate the services of a minister or staff member. In many instances, not all church members favor the action or the process and tempers flare and often times a church split results. If forced terminations become the "norm" for a church, there is negative witness in the community, and sometimes that church gets a 'name' for crucifying its pastors. Pastoral associations have been known to formally or informally 'black-list' a church that gets this kind of reputation, and that church may find it difficult to find a suitable pastor.

<http://priscillasfriends.org/studies/terminations.html>

[Images for Forced Terminations: When a Church Asks a Pastor to Leave](#)

### General Colin Powell: A Leadership Primer

Lesson 10 "Never let your ego get so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it."

<http://nets.ucar.edu/nets/intro/staff/jcustard/jc-la2004/powell-leadership.pdf>

[Images for General Colin Powell: A Leadership Primer Lesson 10 "Never let your ego get so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it." images](#)

### The Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell

Chapter 3 The Ego Trap

<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/Leadership-Secrets-of-Colin-Powell/Oren-Harari/e/9780071418614>

[Images for The Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell Chapter 3 The Ego Trap](#)

## How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems by Peter L. Steinke (Author)

### Chapter VII Being a Prophet Is Nice Work – If You Can Find a Job

Drawing on the work of Bowen, Friedman, and his own many years' counseling experience, Peter Steinke shows how to recognize and deal with the emotional roots of such issues as church conflict, leadership roles, congregational change, **irresponsible behavior**, and the effect of family of origin on current relationships. Discover why working relationships may be "stuck" in certain behaviors. Psychologically sound, theologically grounded, and practically illustrated with case studies, *How Your Church Family Works* will help you better understand how your congregation works and how to keep it healthy. Featuring a new preface and a fresh redesign, the book is a classic work by one of the most respected names in congregational consulting.

<http://www.amazon.com/Your-Church-Family-Works-Understanding/dp/1566993296>

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781566993296/How-Your-Church-Family-Works-Understanding-Congregations-as-Emotional-Systems>

[http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/49292.How\\_Your\\_Church\\_Family\\_Works](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/49292.How_Your_Church_Family_Works)

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/how-your-church-family-works-peter-l-steinke/1100893156>

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/book-summaries/steinke-how-your-church-family-works-healthy-congregations.html>

<https://divinitymusings.wordpress.com/2010/10/26/how-your-church-family-works/>

<http://www.nvo.com/bartley/nss-folder/termpapers/Pastoral%20-%20My%20Congregation%20as%20an%20Emotional%20System.pdf>

<https://www.christiancentury.org/contributor/peter-l-steinke>

<http://www.biblio.com/peter-l-steinke/author/79032>

<https://www.amazon.com/Peter-L.-Steinke/e/B001JS2ZJG>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/27521.Peter\\_L\\_Steinke](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/27521.Peter_L_Steinke)

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/27521.Peter\\_L\\_Steinke](https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/27521.Peter_L_Steinke)

[Images for Peter L. Steinke \(Author\)](#)

[Images for How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems by Peter L. Steinke \(Author\)](#)

### Pastoral Transitions (When Asked to Leave)

Making a change in pastoral ministry is challenging for any pastor and his family, even when they have chosen the time to make that transition. However, a staff pastor and family who are released from their present ministry and must make a transition to a new place of ministry face a different situation. Thus, the question, "How should a minister respond, act, and live if he is asked to leave his pastoral ministry?"

### How To Transition From a Church Ministry - Enrichment Journal - AG.org

[http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200702/200702\\_000\\_How\\_to\\_Trans.cfm](http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200702/200702_000_How_to_Trans.cfm)

[Images for Pastoral Transitions \(When Asked to Leave\)](#)

### Perfect storm - Wikipedia

A "perfect storm" is an expression that describes an event where a rare combination of circumstances will aggravate a situation drastically.<sup>[1]</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfect\\_storm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfect_storm)

[Images for perfect storm](#)

### Rethinking Transitional Ministry by Norman Bendroth » Alban

#### New Questions

I think we need to grapple with the following questions:

Are there congregations of different sizes that benefit more from interim ministry than others? Or are there situations in which an interim minister is unnecessary?

What issues of transition respond best to interim leadership?

Should there be interim ministers who just serve as "place holders," if churches do not want to do the work?

**Can or should judicatory officials hold congregations accountable for mistreating clergy, having a reputation for conflict, or not doing the necessary work before they call a new pastor by withholding the names of candidates until they do?**

### Alban at Duke Divinity School » Rethinking Transitional Ministry

<https://alban.org/archive/rethinking-transitional-ministry/>

[Images for Rethinking Transitional Ministry by Norman Bendroth](#)

[http://macucc.s3.amazonaws.com/71BBE2C7B9B049B0883D51809D9A1E82\\_Rethinking%20Transitional%20Ministry.pdf](http://macucc.s3.amazonaws.com/71BBE2C7B9B049B0883D51809D9A1E82_Rethinking%20Transitional%20Ministry.pdf)

<https://alban.org/2015/03/06/norman-bendroth-transitional-ministry-today/>

<https://www.amazon.com/Transitional-Ministry-Today-Successful-Strategies/dp/156699750X>

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781566997515/Transitional-Ministry-Today-Successful-Strategies-for-Churches-and-Pastors>

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/23811442-transitional-ministry-today>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1566997518>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Transitional\\_Ministry\\_Today.html?id=Oy7VBQAAQBAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Transitional_Ministry_Today.html?id=Oy7VBQAAQBAJ)

<https://www.christiancentury.org/contributor/norman-b-bendroth>

<https://louisville-institute.org/interviews/norman-bendroth/>

### When to hold 'em... when to fold 'em

A Gathering Voices Post by Beth Pyles – December 10, 2012

I listen to ministers speak about various reasons for leaving a church they serve. Some have left simply because it's time for a fresh start. Some leave as they climb a sort of ladder or better, trajectory of a career or calling path – moving toward a goal, each church a step along the way as well as a ministry in its own right. But far too many move on due to unresolved conflict. What is often common is the silence of the bystanding majority – those who do not agree with what's happening before their eyes but either don't know what to do or lack the wherewithal to do it in the face of **angry opposition**.

But everyone needs allies – even pastors. Not followers, not adherents, not golf buddies, but genuine allies.

I often wonder when such conflicts occur whether those involved stop to consider the collateral damage: PK's who leave the church and never look back, having observed up close and personal the attacks on a beloved parent with no one stepping forward to be their champion. To quote Dr. Martin Weber, "Congregational criticism of pastoral family members portends future attrition of adult children." [Why PKs Leave Church](#)

<http://blog.thethoughtfulchristian.com/2012/12/when-to-hold-em-when-to-fold-em.html>

[Images for When to hold 'em... when to fold 'em](#)

[http://www.lyricsfreak.com/k/kenny+rogers/the+gambler\\_20077886.html](http://www.lyricsfreak.com/k/kenny+rogers/the+gambler_20077886.html)

[Images for kenny+rogers/the+gambler](#)

#### **Why You Should Develop a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (DVD)**

Discusses pastor-parish relations committees as a way of retaining congregational vitality.

<http://www.worldcat.org/title/why-you-should-develop-a-pastor-parish-relations-committee/oclc/231413032>

[Images for Pastor-Parish Relations Committee](#)

#### **42) Secretaries and administrators**

The president of the Congregation Council asked one of the members before a council meeting how her new job was going as an office worker at the area school located in a village with a population of 660 in a county with a poverty rate of 13.7%. She replied that she liked working with the kids but not for the administrators. She went on to give her critique of the principal and superintendent. This council member sat next to the council secretary who was also the compensated church secretary. This church secretary had served at a neighboring congregation many years ago and left under duress. In addition, she had been dismissed at her previous office job at a factory for insubordination and ushered to the door by security. The previous pastor related to me that these two women had been his most vocal critics in the congregation. He wanted to stay longer, but, when they started making deprecatory statements about his family in the community, he decided enough was enough and took another call.

#### **The Democrats are in crisis, too - The Washington Post**

Today's **key fault lines** may be between metropolitan areas and the exurbs and small towns strung along the interstates; **between those who have gone to college and those who have not**; between families who have benefited from the globalized economy and those who have not; and between an anxious, shrinking white majority and the minority groups that within a couple of decades will constitute more than half the population.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-democrats-are-in-crisis-too/2017/10/26/ac195fce-ba8b-11e7-be94-fabb0f1e9ffb\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.61bdd85f4784](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-democrats-are-in-crisis-too/2017/10/26/ac195fce-ba8b-11e7-be94-fabb0f1e9ffb_story.html?utm_term=.61bdd85f4784)

[Images for those who have gone to college and those who have not](#)

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2017/10/27/robinson-with-both-parties-in-crisis-turmoil-is-the-new-normal/>

[Images for robinson-with-both-parties-in-crisis-turmoil-is-the-new-normal](#)

#### **43) Monitor or partner?**

I used the heritage-identity-vision format for conversation around transition dynamics in one parish. When I asked the vision question, "Where is God leading?", one member of the Congregation Council at one congregation brought up complaints about the former pastor and spoke of how her expectations were not being met with present pastoral leadership. The conversation around this question ended with the council concluding that it was their job to make sure that the pastor was meeting the expectations of the congregation.

#### **Resources**

[Monitor | Define Monitor at Dictionary.com](#)

16. to oversee, supervise, or regulate:

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/monitor>

[Images for Monitor | Define Monitor 16. to oversee, supervise, or regulate](#)

#### **Philippians 1:5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ...**

New International Version because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, New Living Translation for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. English Standard Version because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until ...

<http://biblehub.com/philippians/1-5.htm>

[Images for partnership in the gospel](#)

#### **44) Promise of support**

The church history of a congregation described a former pastor as

"a steady pillar of the church during those 18 years. Many of us think of (this pastor) at just the mention of (this congregation). His contributions made over the years have become an important part of our history."

A succession of senior, associate, and interim pastors came and went the following two decades. A long tenured office staffer, for instance, recalled 13 pastors in 16 years. I proposed a Council Covenant Promise of Support. The Congregation Council lived up to the promise of support. A new pastor was called, and the congregation embarked on a building project. As of 6/1/2019, the pastor called in 2010 was still serving, and the congregation called an associate pastor.

#### Council Covenant Promise of Support

We the Congregation Council of (this congregation) promise to regard with respect our pastors and staff and urge all church members to do the same.

Furthermore, we consider it as harmful to the church as a whole for any persons to take it upon themselves to compel a pastor or staff to leave.

Furthermore, we urge in any and all matters of disagreement or grievance to abide by church order given by Jesus Christ.

If your brother sins against you, go to him and show him his fault. But do it privately, just between yourselves. If he listens to you, you have won your brother back. But if he will not listen to you, take one or two other persons with you, so that 'every accusation may be upheld by the testimony of two or more witness,' as the scripture says. And if he will not listen to them, then tell the whole thing to the church. Finally, if he will not listen to the church, treat him as though he were a pagan or a tax collector.

(Matthew 18:15-18)

We ask God to strengthen the partnerships among pastors and staff, congregational leadership, and members of this faith community as we seek to make Christ known.

#### **Resources**

##### **Caring for Your Pastor**

There are a number of long-term ways your congregation can show its love and appreciation for your pastor(s) and demonstrate its respect for their divine calling among you. Here are a few very important things your church can do to provide the ongoing care God expects from you:

<http://www.stevensworldwide.com/ClergyMoveCenter/CaringForYourPastor.aspx>

[Images for Caring for Your Pastor](#)

##### **Covenants in Congregational Life - Episcopal Church Vital Practices for Leading Congregations**

That remarkable story is in keeping with my own experiences over the last forty years of church life. Via witnessing four congregational "splits," several new ministries and the redevelopment of two dying ministries, I have come to respect "covenants" as the essential glue for vital faith communities as well as for those leading ministry revitalization. In my understanding of this ancient concept, "covenant" is both a behavior and a way of being. One of the definitions for "covenant" in the New Oxford American Dictionary is "an agreement that brings about a relationship of commitment between God and his (sic) people." Our Judeo-Christian scriptures make it clear that we attain this "way of being" by vulnerably committing ourselves to a God that longs for relationship. This covenant between us says, "You matter to me. When you show up, keep your word, share your life – these matter to me! In fact, when you don't, I am personally affected." Again, our Scriptures make it clear that the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus actually prefers this mutual vulnerability! As such, we engage a covenanting way of being because we join with God's dreams for all of Creation and we realize that mutual covenanting is the means by which God is made known to us. [1]

<http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/healthy-practices/covenants-in-congregational-life/>

[Images for Covenants in Congregational Life](#)

##### **Leading a Church More Complex than Leading a Business**

Deserving of **support**

When the Apostle Paul listed the hardships he faced—including shipwrecks, imprisonments, and beatings, he added, "Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches" (2 Corinthians 11:28).

Church leaders need our prayers and deserve our support because they have a pressure-packed, difficult assignment. They remain in ministry because they are called of God to serve in the most vital work in the world. While they may whine occasionally about its difficulty, they know the church with all its problems is still the body of Christ on earth; the gates of Hades cannot prevail against it.

<http://www.churchcentral.com/blog/11155/Leading-a-church-more-complex-than-leading-a-business>

[Images for Leading a Church More Complex than Leading a Business](#)

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2016/january/i-ran-successful-business-why-cant-i-run-successful-church-.html>

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2016/july-web-exclusives/5-leadership-essentials.html>

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/books/trainingmotivation/lddev04-30.html>

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57bb6b309de4bb70bc4936cf/t/580a897d414fb52a3a37882a/1477085567694/Leadership+Mosaic+Workbook+-+Introduction.pdf>

[Images for pastor deserving of support](#)

##### **Ministering to Your Pastor: How to Serve God's Servants of the Harvest [Toby Awasum]**

Too many pastors are forced out of the ministry each year because of insufficient support from their church. Are you aware of your pastor's needs? This book teaches God's design for your personal and active involvement in your pastor's welfare. Learn how to empower your pastor so that your pastor can be free to fulfill God's plan for the church!

<http://www.amazon.com/Ministering-Your-Pastor-Toby-Awasum/dp/1560432888>



[https://books.google.com/books/about/Ministering\\_to\\_Your\\_Pastor.html?id=73I-VqepsgsC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Ministering_to_Your_Pastor.html?id=73I-VqepsgsC)  
<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1560432888>  
<https://twitter.com/abbastboy>  
[Images for Toby Awasum](#)  
[Images for Ministering to Your Pastor: How to Serve God's Servants of the Harvest \[Toby Awasum\]](#)

#### [PDF]Mutual Ministry Handbook

The term "mutual ministry" recognizes that the church's ministry is the mutual concern of both the laity and the pastor. It encourages us to move away from a primary focus on the ministry of the ordained clergy alone and includes all the people of God in the mutual work of ministry. There is one ministry in Christ and all baptized people participate in it according to the gifts given to them and the specific ministries entrusted to them.

<http://www.sdsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Mutual-Ministry-Handbook.pdf>  
[Images for Mutual Ministry Handbook](#)

#### Mutual Ministry Review - The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California

Every Congregation in the Diocese of Northern California is expected and encouraged to conduct an Annual Ministry Review as outlined in all clergy [Letters of Agreement](#):

The Rector and Vestry agree to an annual discussion and mutual review of the total ministry of the congregation. It is suggested they engage a third party to facilitate the Mutual Ministry Review (MMR). The results of this review will be reported in writing to the Bishop/Ecclesiastical Authority. The purpose of this review is to:

1. Provide the Clergy and Vestry with the opportunity to assess how well they are fulfilling their responsibilities to each other and to the ministries they share;
2. Evaluate goals set at the previous mutual ministry review;
3. Establish goals for the work of the congregation for the coming year;
4. Isolate areas of conflict or disappointment that have not been resolved and may be adversely affecting mutual ministry; and
5. Clarify expectations of all parties so that future conflicts may be diminished or avoided.

<http://www.norcalepiscopal.org/mutualministryreview>  
[Images for Mutual Ministry Review](#)

#### Pastor Appreciation Scriptures | Pastor Appreciation | Pinterest | Pastor Appreciation

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/261068109631979529/>  
[Images for pastor appreciation on pinterest](#)  
<https://www.pinterest.com/diyawards/pastor-appreciation-quotes-and-scriptures/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/33516639725225776/> 13 Fantastic Bible Verses for Pastor Appreciation  
[Images for Bible Verses for Pastor Appreciation](#)

#### Support Your Pastor - Crosswalk.com

Pastors spend their lives serving others. When you serve your pastor out of love and gratitude, you strengthen him to continue to do the work God has called him to do. Supporting your pastor causes God's love to flow in a circle that ultimately blesses many people.

Here are some ways you can encourage and help your pastor:

<http://www.crosswalk.com/newsletters-only/live-it/support-your-pastor-833470.html>  
[Images for Support Your Pastor](#)

#### Supporting Your Pastor - Sedsc.org

Support is a good idea. The story of Moses and the Israelites in a battle with the Amalekites, (Exodus 17:8-13). As long as Moses held up his hands they won, but when Moses lowered his arms from fatigue, they lost. You know the story. Aaron on one side and Hur on the other side lifting up Moses' arms. God gives us a beautiful picture of support. We need to lift our pastor's arms up.

[http://www.sedsc.org/images/PS\\_supstr.pdf](http://www.sedsc.org/images/PS_supstr.pdf)  
[Images for Supporting Your Pastor](#)

#### The Perfect Pastor (Understanding and Relating to the Life and Work of a Pastor) by D. Thomas Owsley (Author)

*The Perfect Pastor?* by D. Thomas Owsley, D. Min., is an engaging new book about the realistic, humorous, and poignant life experiences of a fictional pastor. More than just a wonderful story, the book is a tool for church members and pastors alike. It equips laypeople with the insights to relate to and **support their pastor** while providing pastors with a solid understanding for how to address the various expectations of church members. Dr. Owsley draws upon four decades of church experience, as both a member and pastor, to clarify the biblical requirements, roles, and responsibilities of a pastor. He taps into this wisdom to reveal what the Bible illuminates as a healthy, balanced relationship between pastor and church members. Through compelling anecdotes and profound observations, *The Perfect Pastor?* improves relationships between church members and their pastors and drives both groups to a greater proximity to God's purposes. D. Thomas Owsley (M. Div. Westminster Seminary California, D. Min. Geneva Theological Seminary) has been active with various lay ministries in local churches since he became a Christian in high school. He has served as a teacher, a deacon, and an elder before he walked the world of a pastor through service as youth director, pastoral intern, interim pastor, church planter, and senior pastor. These roles and the role of founder-principal of a Christian school paved the way for his "up-close and personal" view of the pastor. His search for

“the perfect pastor” continues as he currently serves as senior pastor at Cornerstone Community Church (PCA) in Artesia, California. He and Lois, his wife of thirty years, have two precious daughters.

<http://www.amazon.com/PERFECT-PASTOR-D-Thomas-Owsley/dp/1602666563>

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-perfect-pastor-d-thomas-owsley/1125637314>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1602666563>

<https://imperfectpastor.wordpress.com/tag/perfect-pastor/>

<https://www.donowsley.com/church-leadership>

<https://www.donowsley.com/bookstore/searching-for-the-perfect-pastor-book-3>

<https://www.amazon.com/D.-Thomas-Owsley/e/B00471L64M>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/997381.D\\_Thomas\\_Owsley](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/997381.D_Thomas_Owsley)

Images for D. Thomas Owsley (Author)

Images for The Perfect Pastor (Understanding and Relating to the Life and Work of a Pastor) by D. Thomas Owsley (Author)

What Does the Bible Say About Pastor Appreciation? - OpenBible.info

[http://www.openbible.info/topics/pastor\\_appreciation](http://www.openbible.info/topics/pastor_appreciation)

Images for Bible and Pastor Appreciation

<https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Bible-Verses-About-Pastor-Appreciation/>

<http://www.my-pastor.com/pastor-appreciation-scripture.html>

<https://connectusfund.org/20-best-bible-verses-for-pastor-appreciation>

<http://www.pastor-gifts.com/pastor-appreciation-scriptures>

<https://sermons.faithlife.com/sermons/147826-what-does-the-bible-say-about-pastor-appreciation>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/pastor-appreciation.html>

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/freechurchforms.com.1/PABibleVerses.pdf>

<https://cherishjesus.com/13-fantastic-bible-verses-pastor-appreciation/>

<http://www.churchpastorguide.org/scripture-for-pastor-appreciation-month.html>

<https://www.sharefaith.com/blog/2014/10/top-10-leadership-bible-verses-pastor-appreciation-month/>

Images for leadership-bible-verses-pastor-appreciation-month

#### 45) Challenging the patriarch

Colloquially, the church could have been named (his last name) (*name*) Lutheran Church. He directed the affairs of the congregation. He came from a conservative Reformed tradition and clung to that tradition by his choice of literature and radio broadcasts from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Normally, a pastor is best advised not to directly challenge the patriarch.

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

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.

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

Images for small church organized around one or two matriarchs or patriarchs

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

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

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

But it was clear that the congregation was of one mind to disaffiliate from the ELCA as soon as possible following the passage of [PDF] A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly anyway. So, when he began calling members in the other congregation as a part of the two-point parish trying to persuade them to disaffiliate, I told him that I thought such an action did not represent good churchmanship as these people felt harassed by someone with a distinct ideological bent. He did not take kindly to that comment. On another occasion, I asked him if the congregation, in addition to banning gay marriages, was also going to ban the marriages of those heterosexuals who had been cohabiting. This question put him in a quandary for which he did not have a ready answer.

Some Advice on Same-Sex Marriage for US Church Leaders from a Canadian – Carey Nieuwhof

By the way, if you don't deal with straight sex outside of marriage, don't start being inconsistent and speak out against gay sex.

<http://careynieuwhof.com/2015/06/some-advice-on-same-sex-marriage-for-us-church-leaders-from-a-canadian/>

Images for Some Advice on Same-Sex Marriage for US Church Leaders from a Canadian – Carey Nieuwhof

<https://careynieuwhof.com/an-open-letter/>

<https://www.facebook.com/cniewhof/posts/458972537624513>

The synod staff thought it best for me to move to another assignment after 6 months. I ran into a member of the congregation some years later who told me that the new installed pastor, whom the congregation chose without having to go through a judicatory office, was met with stiff resistance by many. Some pastors left the congregation because they did not like the new pastor.

#### 46) With or around

At one assignment, I volunteered to serve another congregation at the same time. The service of worship schedule made this possible, and members at both congregations helped with the Confirmation Ministry. The Congregation Council president at the second congregation regularly came in to talk things over, and the church secretary simply typed up and copied the bulletins on Friday mornings.

At the next assignment, the church secretary was employed for 20 hours a week to type up a four-page bulletin. She initially volunteered to make whatever changes and corrections to the bulletin I wanted, but later complained to the Congregation Council president that I was asking her to make too many corrections and changes, whereupon the president told me I was making too much work for her and warned me to “back off”. It was also discovered that she was spending work time on social media, sometimes making unfavorable comments about the church and pastor. From then on, among other things, I simply asked a member to read the assembly part of a litany rather than asking the church secretary to print it out. Outside of publications, I kept my requests for assistance to a minimum. Later, the church secretary assumed the responsibilities for the newsletter after the volunteer editor did not put out a newsletter one month and put out the newsletter late or at the last minute two following months without any explanation to me. Initially the church secretary stated to me that I could do whatever I deemed best to the newsletter, but, when I proposed an electronic form [constant contact or a similar program] since most of the people received the newsletter electronically, she complained to the president, and the president told me I needed to “let her do things the way she wants to do them.” Also, he stated regarding the material I had submitted about the synod and churchwide, “People never read that stuff anyway, and it does not need to go in the newsletter.”

#### 5 Signs Bad Governance Is Stifling Your Church's Growth and Mission – Carey Nieuwhof

Micromanaging shrinks the size of the congregation back to the size in which everything can be ‘controlled’.

<http://careynieuwhof.com/2015/05/5-signs-bad-governance-is-stifling-your-churchs-growth-and-mission/>

[Images for 5 Signs Bad Governance Is Stifling Your Church's Growth and Mission – Carey Nieuwhof](#)

Later the church secretary wrote, “any additional articles that do not directly pertain to the congregation will be added as an additional attachment.” Then she compressed my message and articles onto page 2, which she headed “Pastor’s Article.” This was the first time I had encountered this kind of unusual measures. She also insisted on an artsy craftsy format [with numerous fonts and sizes, various backgrounds and side decorations, as well as many articles centered rather than justified], which, in my opinion, was better suited for her sideline business of selling home interiors.

It’s not about your creativity, it’s about serving your congregation with your church bulletin

Though the church communicator emailing me was asking about another topic, in passing she mentioned that she was going to be taking over the production of the church bulletin and was looking forward to changing it every week so she could express her creativity through it.

Her excitement about the new project and a wish to be creative was commendable, but it isn’t a good idea to change the format of the church bulletin (or any other church communication) on a weekly or any other frequent basis and here’s why:

**It’s not about creativity in your church bulletin | UPDATES**

<http://www.effectivechurch.com/2013/12/its-not-about-your-creativity-its-about-serving-your-congregation-with-your-church-bulletin/>

[Images for serving your congregation with your church bulletin](#)

Under these unusual circumstances, I chose to simply submit my articles, message, and material about the wider church and ask her to send it out in one attachment separate from the newsletter. The president regularly came to the church office to talk at length to the church secretary and closed the door behind him and left without stopping at the pastor’s study. While I prefer to work with a president and a church secretary, when a president and church secretary form a united front to work at cross purposes, sometimes an interim pastor has to work around them and work instead with the cooperative members in order to lead and serve the congregation. Fortunately, a new president came on board at the next annual meeting who proved to be more cooperative, and the church secretary resigned a month after I left the assignment allowing the new pastor to start a new working relationship with a more cooperative church secretary.

#### 47) End-around

A pastor asked, “What do you do if the president doesn’t want to do anything.” The convener replied, “Try an end-around.”

##### Resources

**end-around Definition in the Cambridge English Dictionary**

a solution to a problem that avoids the problem rather than dealing with it directly:

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/end-around>

[Images for end around definition](#)

**End-around - Wikipedia**

The end-around is a play in American football in which an end or wide receiver crosses the backfield towards the opposite end of the line and receives a handoff directly from the quarterback.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/End-around>

[Images for football end-around](#)

#### 48) Mutual ministry or micromanagement?

The minutes for an earlier multi-point Parish Council meeting read

5.) Old Business –

A. Organization Flow Chart – The council decided to table this item.

It struck me as odd at the time I read the minutes, but I did not think too much of it until meeting with the president of the Parish Council who explained to me, “I am your supervisor.”

At the next meeting, which was the day before the first meeting of the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) taskforce, I brought up this matter and asked, “Mutual ministry or micromanagement?” I lifted Paul’s perspective of partnership of the gospel and the recommended best practice of mutual ministry. I argued that, if the council concurred with the president’s presumption, then they needed to include that perspective in the MSP because candidates normally do not anticipate encountering this method of operation in such a setting.

#### Resources for Micromanagement

##### Micromanagement - Wikipedia

In business management, micromanagement is a management style whereby a manager closely observes and/or controls the work of his/her subordinates or employees. Micromanagement is generally considered to have a negative connotation.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Micromanagement>

[Images for micromanagement](#)

##### Micromanaging? Here's How (And Why) You Should Stop - Forbes

Micromanaging is one of the most damaging habits an executive can have. Teams get bogged down going through laborious procedures, and worse is the environment it generates: Groups that adapt to a micromanagement style are either quietly rebellious or hapless, unable to make any independent decisions.

This leaves you, the leader, constantly putting out fires, rather than focusing on the larger tasks that only you can perform.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/05/19/micromanaging-heres-how-and-why-you-should-stop/#793852537518>

[Images for Micromanaging? Here's How \(And Why\) You Should Stop - Forbes](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/01/10/15-ways-to-get-your-boss-to-stop-micromanaging-you/#7a3f9e8344b8>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2015/11/19/how-to-stop-your-new-leaders-from-micromanaging/#7564231e54e0>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/roncarucci/2017/10/16/5-ways-to-help-your-boss-stop-micromanaging-you/#1ec06f9>

[Images for stop micromanaging](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2016/08/17/eight-ways-to-deal-with-a-micromanager-at-work/#41c2871f4f94>

[Images for deal with a micromanager](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/deborahljacobs/2012/05/07/how-to-manage-a-micromanager/#2da39691698d>

[Images for manage a micromanager](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bethanylampland/2017/01/30/dont-fall-into-this-bad-boss-trap-how-to-avoid-micromanaging/#19d2cf675a75>

[Images for avoid micromanaging](#)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/02/26/replace-micromanaging-with-macromanaging-for-leadership-success/#763fdddb6f68>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/markmurphy/2017/03/12/the-secret-fear-that-causes-bosses-to-micromanage/#1ba0d2101>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/elanagross/2017/09/29/why-to-stop-micromanaging-your-team/#612e84581956>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2017/05/15/working-for-a-micromanager-here-are-the-survival-skills-youll-need/#fd1ac47579fe>

<https://www.forbes.com/pictures/emeh45gkll/micromanaging-supervisors/#60d313b86dfc>

##### Signs That You're a Micromanager - Harvard Business Review

Absolutely no one likes to be micromanaged. It's frustrating, demoralizing, and demotivating. Yet, some managers can't seem to help themselves. Dealing with a controlling boss who doesn't trust you is tough, but what if you're the one doing the micromanaging?

<https://hbr.org/2014/11/signs-that-youre-a-micromanager>

[Images for Signs That You're a Micromanager - Harvard Business Review](#)

<https://hbr.org/2016/08/why-is-micromanagement-so-infectious>

<https://hbr.org/tip/2015/11/micromanagement-limits-your-teams-growth>

<https://hbr.org/tip/2017/08/to-get-your-boss-to-stop-micromanaging-clarify-expectations>

<https://hbr.org/2011/09/stop-being-micromanaged>

<https://hbr.org/2015/08/how-to-stop-micromanaging-your-team>

<https://hbr.org/2011/11/youre-probably-a-micromanager>

<https://hbr.org/2011/11/why-people-micromanage>

<https://hbr.org/tip/2016/12/avoid-micromanaging-by-setting-clear-targets-for-your-direct-reports>

<https://hbr.org/2012/10/to-get-ahead-learn-to-delegate>

<https://hbr.org/2008/02/micromanage-at-your-peril.html>

## Resources for Mutual Ministry

[DOC]Model Constitution for Congregations 2019 - ELCA Resource Repository

### Chapter 13.

#### CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

**C13.04. *Mutual Ministry Committee(s)*** (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the rostered minister. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.

<https://www.elca.org/constitution> 2019 Model Constitution for Congregations

<https://download.elca.org> › ELCA Resource Repository › Model Constitution

<http://www.elca.org/Resources/Office-of-the-Secretary>

[Images for Model Constitution for Congregations 2019 - ELCA Resource Repository Chapter](#)

#### [PDF]Mutual Ministry Committee

Pastors and other called leaders have assumed the responsibility to be servant-leaders for the church. Day after day they are expected to care for others. Day after day through calling, meeting, writing, teaching, planning, preaching, speaking, laughing and crying—these servant-leaders care for others. Day after day, these servant-leaders empty themselves for the sake of the Gospel. And that is what should happen. But there comes a time for mutual ministry. A time to care for those who are our servant-leaders.

[http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/498/mutualministry\\_elca\\_2002.pdf](http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/498/mutualministry_elca_2002.pdf)

[Images for Mutual Ministry Committee](#)

<http://bcsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/mutual-ministry-manual.pdf> [PDF] Congregational Mutual Ministry Committee

[http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/498/mutual\\_ministry\\_committee\\_docs\\_0708.pdf](http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/498/mutual_ministry_committee_docs_0708.pdf)

<http://livingword-elca.org/announcements/2016/mutual-ministry-committee-formed/>

[http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/498/mutual\\_ministry\\_committee\\_docs\\_0708.pdf](http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/498/mutual_ministry_committee_docs_0708.pdf)

<http://www.nathanaelchurch.com/NLC/Nathanael%20Policy%20Manual%202013.pdf>

<https://zionlongvalley.org/mutual-ministry-committee%EF%BB%BF/>

<http://nisynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/mutualministrycommitteeguidelines.pdf>

<http://stjames-ri.org/voice/draft-laws-mutual-ministry-committee>

[http://www.stjameslex.com/mutual\\_ministry.htm](http://www.stjameslex.com/mutual_ministry.htm)

[http://www.stjameslex.com/mutual\\_ministry.htm](http://www.stjameslex.com/mutual_ministry.htm)

#### Mutual Ministry | Episcopal Church

A term given to the concept of shared ministry and leadership in a congregation. Mutual ministry is an approach to Christian ministry that is lived out of the promises made in baptism. It sees the ministry of the whole congregation as the primary ministry. All members of the congregation are doers of ministry. Deacons and priests serve as resource and support persons to the congregation, and perform the other duties appropriate to their orders.

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/glossary/mutual-ministry>

[Images for Mutual Ministry | Episcopal Church](#)

[https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/CDO\\_Living\\_Into\\_Our\\_Ministries\(1\).pdf](https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/CDO_Living_Into_Our_Ministries(1).pdf)

[https://www.ecfvp.org/uploads/tools/files/Living\\_into\\_Our\\_Ministries2.pdf](https://www.ecfvp.org/uploads/tools/files/Living_into_Our_Ministries2.pdf)

<http://www.norcalepiscopal.org/mutualministryreview>

<https://www.diocesefl.org/resources/resources-for-congregations/mutual-ministry-review.aspx>

<https://dioceseofnewark.org/resources> Mutual Ministry Review

#### [PDF]Mutual Ministry Evaluation Process - Gulf Coast Synod

The goals of the review are: • To identify and affirm the accomplishments, faithfulness, and competencies of the rostered minister and the congregation • To help rostered ministers sharpen personal goals and to define areas of needed or desired professional, spiritual, and personal growth • To help rostered ministers and laity clarify expectations of one another and to improve the effectiveness of their shared ministries.

<https://gulfcoastsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/49/2013/01/Mutual-Ministry-Evaluation-Process.pdf>

[Images for Mutual Ministry Evaluation Process](#)

#### [PDF]Mutual Ministry Handbook

The term “mutual ministry” recognizes that the Church’s ministry is the mutual concern of both the laity and the pastor. It encourages us to move away from a primary focus on the ministry of ordained clergy alone and includes all the people of God in the mutual work of ministry. There is one ministry in Christ and all baptized people participate in it according to the gifts given to them and the specific ministries entrusted to them.

<http://sdsynod.org/download/call-process/Mutual-Ministry-Handbook.pdf>

[Images for Mutual Ministry Handbook](#)

#### [PDF] Mutual Ministry Handbook: Guidance for Healthy Congregations by Bishop Robert Driesen - SD Synod

The term “mutual ministry” recognizes that the Church’s ministry is the mutual concern of both the laity and the pastor. It encourages us to move away from a primary focus on the ministry of ordained clergy alone and includes all the people of God in the mutual work of ministry.

<http://www.sdsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Mutual-Ministry-Handbook.pdf>



<https://sdsynod.org/download/call-process/Mutual-Ministry-Handbook.pdf>  
[Images for Mutual Ministry Handbook: Guidance for Healthy Congregations by Bishop Robert Driesen - SD Synod](#)  
[http://nepasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/mutual\\_ministry\\_handbook.pdf](http://nepasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/mutual_ministry_handbook.pdf)

#### **Mutual Ministry – Northern Illinois Synod**

The Northern Illinois Synod provides mutual ministry support for all synod pastors, associates in ministry, and diaconal ministers.

<https://nisynod.org/resources/mutual-ministry/>

[Images for Mutual Ministry – Synod](#)

<https://iksynod.org/mutual-ministry/>

<http://www.wisynod.org/for-congregations.html> Mutual Ministry

<http://www.swtsynod.org/article399288.htm> The Southwestern Texas Synod Office: Home: Mutual Ministry

#### **Pastor and People: Making Mutual Ministry Work by Richard J. Brueschoff (Author)**

The relationship between the pastor and the people is integral to a congregation's life and ministry. This timely resource offers key insights on tending to various aspects of this relationship, including reflections on the ministry of clergy and laity, the role of a pastor, ministry review, performance evaluation, and much more. Suitable for pastors, congregational leaders and councils, call committees, and anyone involved in church ministry.

The reproducible tools included in the book can be downloaded and customized at [www.augsburgfortress.org/CLS](http://www.augsburgfortress.org/CLS).

This leadership development book contains reproducible tools for use with your council, committees, planning teams, other leadership groups, and the congregation as a whole. These tools are available as a file that can be downloaded and customized. The tools for download are listed below (0806646519sample.rtf can be customized in word processing software).

Who might find it helpful? Pastors and those serving the pastoral role; Council presidents and members; Call committees; Congregational committees such as mutual ministry, pastor/parish relations, personnel, and human resources; Synod staff members and others who consult with congregations.

What the book is about - *Pastor and People* is a guidebook of practical information on the relationship between ELCA pastors and congregations. Each chapter explores a different aspect of this relationship.

The relationship between pastor and people: A clergy perspective

The relationship between pastor and people: A lay perspective

The roles of a pastor and expectations of a congregation

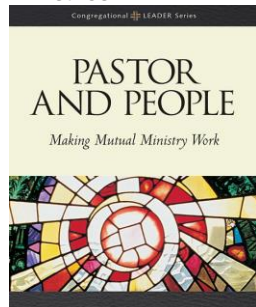
Mutual ministry

Pastoral ministry support

Ministry review and performance evaluation

Personnel issues

This book has been developed in cooperation with the ELCA Division for Ministry and the Division for Congregational Ministries.



<http://www.augsburgfortress.org/cls/leadership/people.jsp>

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/6811/Pastor-and-People-Making-Mutual-Ministry-Work>

<http://www.augsburgfortress.org/cls/leadership/people.jsp>

<https://www.selectlearning.org/store/all/making-mutual-ministry-work>

<http://www.amazon.com/Pastor-People-Making-Ministry-Congregational/dp/0806646519>

[http://books.google.com/books?id=MUgWBvIZefMC&source=gbs\\_book\\_similarbooks](http://books.google.com/books?id=MUgWBvIZefMC&source=gbs_book_similarbooks)

[http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/784052.Pastor\\_and\\_People](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/784052.Pastor_and_People)

[Images for Richard J. Brueschoff \(Author\)](#)

[Images for Pastor and People: Making Mutual Ministry Work by Richard J. Brueschoff \(Author\)](#)

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category/286319/Congregational-LEADER-Series>

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category/286442/Leadership>

<https://www.goodreads.com/series/148656-congregational-leader-series>

<https://www.thriftbooks.com/series/congregational-leader-series/82455/>

[Images for Congregational Leader Series](#)

#### **49) Micromanagers and monitors**

Certain members of one Congregation Council in an unincorporated community studied the pie chart and spread sheet from the previous pastor on how he spent his time. They asked detailed questions and made recommendations on how to spend his time.

Certain members of the Congregation Council at the other congregation located in a village with a population of 660 believed that the congregation held high expectations of the pastor and regarded it as their responsibility to make sure those expectations were met. I challenged the Parish Council that, if the Congregation Councils insisted on acting this way, that the Ministry Site Profile needed to reflect this posture to allow prospective candidates to decide whether to subject themselves to this kind of scrutiny.

## 50) Dealing with exasperation

There are times when I feel like speaking to congregation leaders using similar words Jesus used towards religious leaders.

### Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

13 'But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.' 15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

oremus Bible Browser: Matthew 23

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Matthew+23>

[Images for Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees](#)

Then, I remember that I am not Jesus and that I am not particularly anxious to suffer the same fate.

### The Plot to Kill Jesus

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. So, the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, "What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation." But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all! You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed." He did not say this on his own but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God. So, from that day on they planned to put him to death.

oremus Bible Browser: John 11:45-57

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=178875031>

[Images for Plot to Kill Jesus](#)

I recall the imprecatory and lament psalms.

### Imprecatory Psalms - Theopedia

Imprecatory psalms are those psalms that contain curses or prayers for the punishment of the psalmist's enemies.

<https://www.theopedia.com/imprecatory-psalms>

[Images for Imprecatory Psalms](#)

### Psalms of Lament - Bible Odyssey

Psalms of lament respond to illness, violence, or other calamity, urging God to intervene favorably in accordance to God's character and history with God's people.

[www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/psalms-of-lament](http://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/psalms-of-lament)

[Images for Psalms of Lament](#)

I vent some of my frustrations by punching an Everlast Reflex Bag as a part of an exercise workout. I purchased this reflex bag at an ALDI discount grocery store of all places.

### Everlast Reflex Bag

#### Description

This Everlast Reflex Bag is a specialty freestanding punching bag that utilizes a spring-mounted design to develop speed, timing and accuracy in striking. The high-density plastic base is easily filled with water or sand for extra stability, so you can **keep punching away**. The Everlast freestanding punching bag features a spring neck that provides for quick rebound during training, while the high-grade shock-absorbing foam with protective outer layer ensures long lasting durability.

<https://www.walmart.com/ip/Everlast-Reflex-Bag/19476907>

[Images for Everlast Reflex Bag](#)

I remind myself that it is pastorally incorrect to blame and shame.

### Blame and Shame: Negative methods, destructive results

When we are trying to persuade somebody do to something (or maybe not do it again), we often use 'blame and shame'.

<http://changingminds.org/blog/1705blog/170521blog.htm>

[Images for Blame and Shame: Negative methods, destructive results](#)

I pray for direction for myself and for the leaders and I pray the serenity prayer.

### Serenity Prayer - Wikipedia

The Serenity Prayer is the common name for a prayer written by the American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971). The best-known form is: God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,; Courage to change the things I can,; And wisdom to know the difference.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serenity\\_Prayer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serenity_Prayer)  
[Images for serenity prayer](#)

I look to the literature to discover best practices for how to deal with difficult behavior and how to have difficult conversations. [See 7Personnel4Resources 22) Difficult Conversations.]

## 51) Review of the membership roster

[DOC]Model Constitution for Congregations 2019 - ELCA Resource Repository

### Chapter 12.

#### CONGREGATION COUNCIL

**C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

<https://www.elca.org/constitution> 2019 Model Constitution for Congregations  
<https://download.elca.org> > ELCA Resource Repository > Model Constitution  
<http://www.elca.org/Resources/Office-of-the-Secretary>

I checked out the congregation trend report at [Research and Evaluation - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - ELCA](#) before starting one assignment to see that during the previous 3 ½ year pastorate, the congregation average worship attendance went from 122 to 80 with a corresponding loss in financial receipts. When I got there, I learned that the constitution had been changed from a *shall* to a *may* in **C12.07**. Four months into the assignment I received an updated membership roster from the church secretary. When I looked through the roster, I found names removed from the roster that I had initially received. When I asked the church secretary about this, the church secretary testily replied, “I got a new software program that moves people off the roster when they have not communed for the previous year.” I brought this matter to the Congregation Council to make the point that there is a reason for reviewing the membership roster and not simply leaving the review up to a church secretary with a new software program. I related to them that I talked with an older woman at quilting that morning who had been removed from the membership roster by the computer program. I asked the council which of them was willing to inform her she was no longer listed on the membership roster. After I left to take another assignment, this woman’s daughter became the new church secretary and proved to be easier to work with for the new pastor.

## 52) Speak the truth in love

Unity in the body of Christ

<sup>15</sup>But **speaking the truth in love**, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup>from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.

[oremus Bible Browser: Ephesians 4:15-16](#)  
<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Ephesians+4>  
[Images for speak the truth in love](#)

Paul seeks to maintain unity in the body of Christ by exhorting the believers to speak the truth in love.

### Resources

#### Ephesians 4:15 - Speaking the Truth in Love

The point is, there’s a way Christians are to proclaim the truth. Our attitude should reflect the fact that we want to help, not hinder.

Is there a time to deal directly, plainly, even forcefully with a problem? Absolutely! In Titus 3:10 Paul instructs Titus to “Reject a factious man after a first and second warning” (NASB). That’s plain, isn’t it! Paul says if you get a fellow who’s a divisive and factious element within a congregation, you don’t tap dance around like you’re tiptoeing on jacks. You get after it and deal with the problem. Show some starch, some backbone, before more harm is done!

But, **love for all the brethren and love for God should be a Christian’s attitude of life**, even when we are pressed to make firm stands on difficult matters. Our speech can be direct and bold, with courage and conviction, even as we maintain a Christian’s character.

[http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-ephesians-4-15\(2\).htm](http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-ephesians-4-15(2).htm)  
[Images for deal directly, plainly, even forcefully with a problem](#)

#### What It Means to Speak the Truth in Love « Power to Change

There is a marked distinction between just communicating truth, and speaking the truth in love? Speaking the truth in love is: **Truth (reproof and/or warning)** communicated with affirmation and encouragement, and firmly established on a historical relationship of caring and commitment. Ephesians 4:15 says as believers we should be “speaking the truth in love”. The primary way we reveal our love for God is by loving others. The clearest way that we manifest our love for others is through our words. Speak them with love.

<http://powertochange.com/experience/spiritual-growth/truthinlove/>

## Images for Truth (reproof and/or warning) communicated with affirmation and encouragement

There may be two contrasting participation styles at a Congregation Council meeting. Some will tell others what they think regardless of the sensitivities of others,

### dealing with coworkers who are rude in meetings — Ask a Manager

As for how their managers should be handling this, ideally their managers would recognize that employees who behave like this are disruptive and would address it as they would any other performance issue. In this case, that would mean explaining that their tone is having a corrosive effect on the work environment and that they need to approach their work and their colleagues with a more positive tone (and general decency) ... that they need to be more adaptable and accommodating about (fill in whatever they're complaining about) ... that they need to be more vigilant about keeping track of information ... and so forth. And as for the off-topic tangents in meetings, whoever is facilitating those meetings needs to be asked to more assertively redirect conversation to keep it on topic.

<http://www.askamanager.org/2011/05/dealing-with-coworkers-who-are-rude-in-meetings.html>

[Images for dealing with coworkers who are rude in meetings](#)

### How to Deal with Rude People: Complete Guide | Personal Excellence

This is part 1 of my series on how to deal with rude people — including co-workers, associates, customers, managers, and strangers.

<https://personalexcellence.co/blog/rude-people/>

<https://personalexcellence.co/blog/rude-people-part-2/>

<https://personalexcellence.co/blog/rude-people-part-3/>

[Images for How to Deal with Rude People: Complete Guide | Personal Excellence](#)

### The 2 Best Ways to Deal With Rude People - wikiHow

You will inevitably have to deal with mean or rude people throughout your life. Whether it's a complete stranger at the grocery store, your roommate, or a coworker, there will always be someone who gets on your nerves. There are different strategies to address rude people based on the situation. If the person is someone who has insulted you personally or their rudeness is something you have to deal with on a daily basis, it may be best to confront them directly to keep it from happening again. If the person is a complete stranger and their rudeness is senseless and not worth your time, it is probably wise to walk away from the situation altogether.

<https://www.wikihow.com/Deal-With-Rude-People>

[Images for Deal with Rude People](#)

<https://www.wikihow.com/Deal-With-Nasty-People>

[Images for Deal with Nasty People](#)

while others will sit there and say as little as possible during the meeting only to rehash the meeting in the parking lot [or the new style parking lot (email)] afterwards.

### Best 25+ Passive aggressive quotes ideas on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/passive-aggressive-quotes/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/682295412266124666/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/393079873713611023/>

[Images for passive aggressive quotes pinterest](#)

### Crazy-Makers: Passive-Aggressive People - Excel at Life

Introduction

Page 1

What is passive-aggressive behavior?

Page 2

Categories of passive-aggressive people.

Page 3

Types of passive-aggressive behavior.

Page 4

How do you handle passive-aggressive people?

Page 5

<http://www.excelatlife.com/articles/crazy-makers.htm>

[Images for Crazy-Makers: Passive-Aggressive People](#)

### 5 Ways to Root Out Passive Aggression at Work | Inc.com

Those covert attacks in the office can be maddening--and deeply destructive. Here's how to put a stop to them.

<http://www.inc.com/christina-desmarais/5-tips-for-dealing-with-passive-aggression-at-work.html>

[Images for Passive Aggression at Work](#)

### Guest Blog: Welcome to the Passive Aggressive Church

A significant issue that the contemporary church experiences today is a passive aggressive tendency in dealing with conflict. The NYU Medical Center defines a passive aggressive individual as someone who "may appear to comply or act appropriately, but actually behaves negatively and passively resists." Passive aggressive people are generally unreasonable, are difficult to correct because they rarely express their hostility directly, and they repeat their behavior over time.[1]

<http://renovateconference.org/passive-aggressive-church>  
[Images for Passive Aggressive Church](#)

#### Hidden agendas and passive aggressive behavior

In our organization, we have a principle called Robust Dialogue where any issue can be put on the table with the exception of personal attacks or hidden agendas. The reason there cannot be hidden agendas is that you cannot have honest dialogue when they are present. What you actually have is a surface dialogue with other issues underlying the conversation that remain unstated.

<http://leadingfromthesandbox.blogspot.com/2012/07/hidden-agendas-and-passive-aggressive.html>  
[Images for hidden agendas and passive aggressive behavior](#)

#### How to Spot and Deal with Passive-Aggressive People

Passive aggressiveness may be directed towards a person or a group. The root causes are complex and deep-seated. Whatever the reasons that may drive an individual to be passive-aggressive, it's not easy to be on the receiving end of such veiled hostilities. How can one successfully manage these situations? Here are 8 keys to handling passive-aggressive people. Not all of the tips below may apply to your particular situation. Simply utilize what works and leave the rest:

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/communication-success/201401/how-spot-and-deal-passive-aggressive-people>  
<http://nipreston.com/publications/excerpts/passiveaggressiveexcerpt.pdf>  
[Images for How to Spot and Deal with Passive-Aggressive People](#)

#### Quotes About Passive Aggressive (22 quotes) - Goodreads

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/passive-aggressive>  
[Images for passive aggressive quotes](#)  
<http://www.wiseoldsayings.com/passive-aggressive-quotes/>  
<https://www.enkiquotes.com/passive-aggressive-quotes.html>  
<https://www.izeyodiase.com/8-quotes-on-passive-aggressive-behavior/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/jakerria/passive-aggression-quotes/>  
<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/leighwharton/passive-aggressive-quotes/>

#### The Angry Smile | Life Space Crisis Intervention

Learn the Powerful Skills of Benign Confrontation!

What is **passive-aggressive** behavior? The authors of this three-part book have studied the psychology of this behavior for over four decades in both clinical and educational settings. They offer real-world examples and empowering, practical strategies for working with or when confronted with individuals who exhibit any of the five levels of passive aggressiveness.

<http://www.lsci.org/node/874>  
[Images for Angry Smile | Life Space Crisis Intervention](#)

#### The Desperate Pastor Blog: A 21st Century Church Epidemic

**Passive aggressive behavior** is a mechanism for handling hostility or anger in an indirect way, often in an underhanded or devious way that is hard for others to recognize, let alone deal with. Sometimes the passive-aggressive is aware of what he or she is going, and other times not.

<http://desperatepastor.blogspot.com/2011/01/21st-century-church-epidemic.html>  
[Images for passive aggressive behavior](#)

#### Understanding and Dealing with Passive-Aggressive People

Passive aggressive people can be a frustrating bunch. They use sarcasm, victimhood and other subtle devices to avoid confrontation or get out of doing tasks they don't like. Learn to recognize and deal with them before they drive you crazy...

[http://www.lifescrpt.com/well-being/articles/d/dealing\\_with\\_and\\_understanding\\_passive\\_aggressive\\_people.aspx](http://www.lifescrpt.com/well-being/articles/d/dealing_with_and_understanding_passive_aggressive_people.aspx)  
[Images for Understanding and Dealing with Passive-Aggressive People](#)

Oversimplified caricature? Yes. But is there some truth to the statement? I think so. Are both ends of the spectrum exasperating? You bet! There has to be a better way.

"Speak the truth in love." To speak the truth does not mean telling it how it is without concern for how it will be received. To speak in love does not mean avoiding directness in fear of hurting other's feelings. "Speak the truth in love," is lived out in creative tension.

#### Speaking the truth in love. | Truth | Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/54113632996209595/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/al513/find-your-truth-speak-your-truth-in-love/>  
[Images for speak the truth in love pinterest](#)



Why leaders are a pain: Truth telling in the parish | The Christian Century Feb 08, 2016 by William H. Willimon

Some of the best service that pastors offer arises when we dare to prod, preach, and pray a congregation toward the painful reality it has been avoiding.

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/2016-01/why-leaders-are-pain>

[Images for truth telling in the parish](#)

### 53) Anonymous criticism

When it came time in the agenda for communications, the president informed the Congregation Council that he had received 2 anonymous letters, but that he had placed them in the circular file. How best to deal with anonymous criticism?

#### Resources

##### Anonymous Criticism - Encompass Church

Most anonymous criticism is benign. We get unsigned Welcome Cards with comments that say things like, "The room is too dark. The music is too loud. The pastor talks too fast or too long." (You're usually right about the last one.) But once in awhile, a member of our Ministry Team receives an anonymous letter or voice mail message that is far more critical, far more personal, written to express great anger, demand change, or even to shame the person who receives the letter or message. Because of the impact such letters and messages have on people who receive them, I feel an urgent need to address what I believe is thoroughly un-Christian behavior. My belief is that:

<https://www.encompass.church/anonymous-criticism/>

[Images for Anonymous Criticism - Encompass Church](#)

##### Dealing with Anonymous Criticism, Concerns, or Opinions: Interim Ministry Association ELCA

In order for the congregation, pastor, and the congregation council to be able to deal directly and effectively with criticism, concerns, or opinions in the congregation, the following guidelines are adopted:

<http://www.imaelca.org/resources/dealing-with-anonymous-criticism-concerns-or-opinions/>

[Images for Dealing with Anonymous Criticism, Concerns, or Opinions: Interim Ministry Association ELCA](#)

##### Dealing with Faceless Criticism - Barnabas Network

I believe that, when it comes to faceless criticism (or any kind of criticism), putting in place a specific strategy and setting healthy boundaries is vital to the relational life of the Body of Christ. Equally, I believe that creating a safe place for people to share their concerns will go a long way to minimizing indirect criticism. Approaching this whole issue with a positive anticipation and a godly determination to free the Body of Christ from destructive communication is the first step to a new level of true fellowship in the local Church.

[http://www.barnabasnetwork.com/faceless\\_criticism](http://www.barnabasnetwork.com/faceless_criticism)

[Images for Dealing with Faceless Criticism - Barnabas Network](#)

##### How do you handle anonymous criticism? | Biblical Leadership

On occasion a church leader will share that he or she received an anonymous letter. The leaders are inevitably hurt, and they are frustrated because they have no way to respond.

Over the years, I have seen a common theme with anonymous letters. I can best delineate it as seven considerations.

<https://www.biblicalleadership.com/blogs/how-do-you-handle-anonymous-criticism/>

[Images for How do you handle anonymous criticism? | Biblical Leadership](#)

##### Seven Considerations for the Church Leader Who Receives an Anonymous Letter

On occasion a church leader at Church Answers will share with the community that he or she received an anonymous letter. The leaders are inevitably hurt, and they are frustrated because they have no way to respond.

Over the years, I have seen a common them with anonymous letters. I can best delineate it as seven considerations.

<https://churchanswers.com/blog/seven-considerations-for-the-church-leader-who-receives-an-anonymous-letter/>

[Images for Seven Considerations for the Church Leader Who Receives an Anonymous Letter](#)

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/12/one-sentence-pastors-church-staff-hate-hear/>

[Images for One Sentence That Pastors and Church Staff Hate to Hear - ThomRainer.com](#)

[Images for "People are saying that..."](#)

[Images for "cringe factor"](#)

##### What Pastors Should Do With Anonymous Letters

I have a suggestion. Let's be biblical about straightening out matters of concern and misunderstanding with what I call the [Matthew 18](#) principle ([Matthew 18:15-18](#)).

<https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/166083-dean-dequara-should-do-with-anonymous-letters.html>

[Images for What Pastors Should Do With Anonymous Letters](#)

### 54) Chew and grind

Most matters that came before the Congregation Council the members chewed over.

### Chew over - Idioms by The Free Dictionary

1. To discuss something at length. A noun or pronoun can be used between "chew" and "over." *I've chewed the job over with many people, but I still haven't decided what to do.*

<https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/chew+over>

[Images for chew over](#)

Whenever a matter came up regarding something or someone that they could agree to take exception to, it became an occasion to grind away.

### Grind vs Chew - What's the difference? | WikiDiff

As verbs the difference between **grind** and **chew**

is that **grind** is to reduce to smaller pieces by crushing with lateral motion or **grind** can be brawl, fight, wrangle over while **chew** is to crush with the teeth by repeated closing and opening of the jaws; done to food to soften it and break it down by the action of saliva before it is swallowed.

<http://wikidiff.com/grind/chew>

[Images for Grind vs Chew - What's the difference?](#)

## 55) Evaluation during or after a meeting of the Congregation Council?

Processing the Congregation Council meeting usually takes place. Too often it happens in the parking lot afterwards. Electronic messages can be the new parking lot now. Why not build evaluation into the structure of the meeting agenda and make it more straightforward? Following is an action agenda I received at a Northwest Synod of Wisconsin council leadership event many years ago.

### Action Agenda

#### Preparation

1. Inspiration (Opening Devotions)
2. Personalization (Sharing of Joys and Sorrows)

The guiding thought is that church meetings can be a place where not only matters matter, but where members matter.

3. Transition (Minutes from last meeting)

#### Action

1. Identify and prioritize what needs to be acted upon at this meeting.  
[The rule of thumb is that whatever is first on the agenda will command the most time, so it is recommended to act on the most important, not the easiest to dispose of. In addition to those printed in the prepared agenda, items can be written on newsprint or the dry mark board.]
2. Take action.  
[Motions are brought to the floor according to the priority assigned above. Discussion follows, pointing toward one of the following actions: pass, amend, table, refer. If information is needed from reports it can be solicited at this time, but only the needed information.]

#### Information

1. Reports [The effectiveness of this whole Action Agenda concept rests with the reversal of the usual order of information and action. So, unless something from a report is needed to help with an action item, all reports wait until this point in the meeting.]
2. Communication (Correspondence, publicity, other)
3. Review of Assignments  
[Especially important if action items have assigned tasks to certain people.]
4. Information about next meeting

**Evaluation** [Group reflects on how the meeting went and offers any suggestions for improvement.]

**Celebration** (Review of action taken, progress made or reported.)

**Prayer**

**Adjournment**

### Resources

#### A family systems approach to parking lot meetings - The Presbyterian Outlook

"**Parking lot meetings**" refer to private conversations that take place either before or after an organization's official meeting or event where select persons of similar opinions discuss concerns about that organization and/or its leaders privately rather than openly in the meeting or event. Members talk secretly with other persons from within their organization rather than more objective outsiders. That is, issues are discussed covertly with members of like mind "in the parking lot" rather than overtly in the meeting or event.

<https://pres-outlook.org/2018/09/a-family-systems-approach-to-parking-lot-meetings/>

[Images for family systems approach to parking lot meetings](#)

<http://www.ecfvp.org/blogs/3578/5-resources-for-better-church-meetings> #4

<http://www.ecfvp.org/posts/no-more-parking-lot-conversations/>

<https://mcsminmywords.wordpress.com/2015/05/12/secret-meetings/>

#### Is E-mail the New Parking Lot? - Alban Institute

You may be familiar with—perhaps even have participated in—“parking lot meetings.” Those unofficial conversations (often held in parking lots following official meetings) that tend to undermine decisions, complain about individuals, and stir up discontent. They are extremely effective forms of communication, but they are not always helpful. In some important ways, e-mail has become the new “parking lot meeting. It spreads information (accurate or not) quickly and widely, it is impossible to stop, and it can be very damaging.

<https://alban.org/archive/is-e-mail-the-new-parking-lot/>

Images for Is E-mail the New Parking Lot?

<https://albanroundtable.wordpress.com/2012/09/03/resources-and-comments-in-response-to-is-e-mail-the-new-parking-lot/>

<https://albanroundtable.wordpress.com/2009/12/07/resources-in-response-to-is-e-mail-the-new-parking-lot/>

#### What Does a Productive Board Meeting Look Like? - CBWC

The evaluation of a church board meeting is not a common practice, at least not formally. It is not unusual, however, for meetings to be reviewed in the parking lot, but the terms of reference usually relate to the spirit of the evening. Topics include dry points in the discussion, whether opinions were received openly, or the financial impact of a specific decision. Some boards now invite participants to offer feedback in the room, by placing two simple questions on the agenda at the end of the meeting: How did we do this evening? Do you have any comments to share about how we interacted with each other or about our productivity?

<https://cbwc.ca/productive-board-meeting/>

Images for What Does a Productive Church Board Meeting Look Like? - CBWC

#### 56) Emergency distributions of the endowment fund

[This post is written 5/15/2020 during the pandemic lockdown.] What happens when congregants are locked out of their churches because of the threat of COVID-19? One option a congregation may consider as a last resort is emergency distributions from the endowment fund. The following paragraph is taken from a sample mission endowment draft.

##### Emergency Distributions

When, in the opinion of the Committee, circumstances are so dire and of such an emergency nature that the future of this congregation is at stake, and that the only recourse seems to be the use of the Fund principal beyond any portion distributable under the foregoing provisions, the Committee may, upon a unanimous vote, recommend such authorizing action to this congregation. Such an emergency distribution of principal shall require a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ s) vote of the members present at a duly convened meeting of this congregation.

I searched for resources on the internet for emergency distributions but could not find any resources that specific. Perhaps as the economic collapse becomes even more severe, more congregations will take this route and internet resources will be developed.

#### 57) Pandemic lockdown gets people thinking about ministry collaboration

[This post is written 6/19/2020 during the pandemic lockdown of congregants from the churches.] The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin sent an email on 6/18 inviting people to join a Zoom meeting on 6/23 to explore ministry collaboration.

##### NWSWI Area Strategies 101

Hello congregations of the Northwest Synod,

Has your congregation been thinking about the possibility of ministry collaboration? Join us to learn the basics of options and opportunities if your congregation is interested in partnering with a neighbor congregation, trying a new experiment on how to do ministry in our changing world or can no longer support a full-time pastor on your own.

##### Holy Conversations: Options for congregations considering a vital and sustainable future

Discerning the season of your congregation's life is a crucial step both in regard to vitality and to sustainability. It is important to look at a wide range of options and to prayerfully discern what direction God is calling the congregation.

Holy Conversations - Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

<http://nswwi.org/congregations> Congregational Vitality

holy conversations

<http://nswwi.org/congregational-vitality/holy-conversations>

Images for Holy Conversations: Options for congregations considering a vital and sustainable future

<https://nclutheran.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Holy-Conversations-Brochure.pdf>