

Please **HONOR** the copyright of
these documents by not
retransmitting or making any
additional copies in any form
(Except for private personal use).
We appreciate your respectful
cooperation.

Theological Research Exchange Network
(TREN)

P.O. Box 30183
Portland, Oregon 97294
USA

Website: www.tren.com
E-mail: rwjones@tren.com
Phone# 1-800-334-8736

ATTENTION CATALOGING LIBRARIANS

TREN ID#

Online Computer Library Center (OCLC)

MARC Record #

Digital Object Identification

DOI #

Ministry Focus Paper Approval Sheet

This ministry focus paper entitled

CREATING A FRAMEWORK OF VOCATIONAL PRACTICES
TO EMPOWER MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Written by

PATRICIA LEE AGNEW

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

has been accepted by the Faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary
upon the recommendation of the undersigned reader:


Kurt Fredrickson

Date Received: January 28, 2016

CREATING A FRAMEWORK OF VOCATIONAL PRACTICES
TO EMPOWER MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

A FINAL PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

PATRICIA LEE AGNEW
JANUARY 2016

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the faithful people of St. Paul's United Methodist Church who encouraged me, prayed for me, and gave me time to complete this doctoral project. I would also like to thank the people of Cornerstone who traveled with me on an incredible journey that transformed my life and I hope theirs. Thank you to Marje Erickson whose beautiful prayers inspired and sustained me through the writing process. Thank you to my mom, who edited this project and gave me invaluable feedback. Thank you to my daughters, Amanda and Natalie, whose encouragement kept me going.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
PART ONE: THE CHALLENGE OF VOCATIONAL AUTHENTICITY	
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter 1. PASTORAL REFLECTION	7
PART TWO: THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF LEADERSHIP IN CONTEXT	
Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	35
Chapter 3. A THEOLOGY OF VOCATIONAL AUTHENTICITY	62
PART THREE: RE-IMAGINING VOCATIONAL MINISTRY	
Chapter 4. ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR VOCATIONAL AUTHENTICITY	86
Chapter 5. IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT OF FRAMEWORK	94
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	113
APPENDICES	117
BIBLIOGRAPHY	120

PART ONE

THE CHALLENGE OF VOCATIONAL AUTHENTICITY

INTRODUCTION

I entered the Doctor of Ministry program at Fuller Theological Seminary in 2005 as a tired church planter in need of re-tooling my ministry. Soon after, the church I planted, Cornerstone United Methodist Church, was at a crisis point. Through my learning at Fuller and my reflections on Cornerstone, I began to see we had built a dynamic attractional church, which was meaningful for several years but which now could not sustain itself as the denominational support waned. I was beginning to see that the cultural shift we were experiencing was demanding a new approach to ministry. In our effort to build Cornerstone and bring people into a relationship with Jesus, we had lowered the bar of discipleship. Our motives were good, and faith came alive for people through all of the vital programs we developed and the dynamic worship service we offered. We had attracted many people to Jesus but we had not been effective in nurturing maturing disciples of Jesus. We had not effectively trained people to nurture their own faith. We had created consumers of the religious goods and services we provided. The majority of people were there because our church met their needs, not because they wanted to participate deeply in a faith community or the mission of God. We attempted to change our ministry into a network of house churches, but this was too much of a shift from how we began. We closed Cornerstone a year later.

While every class at Fuller has been significant and transformational, the single most influential book I was required to read was *Deep Change* by Robert E. Quinn. His premise is that incremental change is continuous change, which is the result of rational analysis and planning. It is the process of tweaking things here and there to make

necessary adjustments. Deep change is discontinuous change, which is the result of new ways of thinking and behaving. Deep change means “walking naked into the land of uncertainty.” Quinn proposes there are times for incremental change and times for deep change.¹ After reading this book and encountering the missional church movement, it became clear to me that Cornerstone was on a path of slow death. As I sought God’s direction, he called me to a path of deep change in hope of recovering our life. We had operated on an attractional basis, working hard to build Cornerstone by attracting people to Jesus through our church while essentially remaining inside our Christian cocoon. But that is contrary to how God operates. God is always reaching out to us. Our God is a seeking God and a sending God. Ultimately God sent Jesus to live incarnationally in our world to make the love of God accessible and tangible. We needed deep change. The Church needs deep change to navigate the major cultural shift we are experiencing.

The United Methodist Church needs to look back to the life and ministry of John Wesley to discern principles which will help us navigate the cultural shift we are currently experiencing. John Wesley faced a traumatic cultural shift as the medieval and agrarian culture transitioned to a modern and industrial one.² This Industrial Revolution widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The Anglican Church of the day was primarily impacting the lives of the upper class. John Wesley was trained as an Anglican priest but was dissatisfied with its limitations. He developed a method of nurturing disciples, which brought about not only personal renewal primarily for the urban poor but

¹ Robert E. Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 3.

² Michael D. Henderson, *A Model for Making Disciples: John Wesley’s Class Meeting* (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing House, 1997), 12.

also a national spiritual renewal in eighteenth-century England. It also created a new expression of church. The impact of the Methodist movement continues to be felt around the world today. Not only did individuals find personal salvation, but many historians believe that this same movement spared England from the kind of bloody revolutions which ravaged other nations on the continent.³ John Wesley's mission to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land not only transformed countless lives, especially the urban poor, it also transformed society. His mission fulfilled the United Methodist Church. Countless pastors and churches have tried to replicate Wesley's discipleship system with limited success. We need to take it to a deeper level and discern the undergirding principles that propelled the Methodist revival and then seek to implement those into our cultural context. This doctoral project explores both the ministry of Jesus and the early Church as well as John Wesley and the Methodist Church to discern guiding principles to shape my ministry today.

Now, ten years after beginning the Doctor of Ministry program, I am unexpectedly back in a traditional ministry setting as senior pastor of an established church, St. Paul's United Methodist Church (hereafter, St. Paul's). The experience of the birth, transition, and death of the church plant, Cornerstone, and my discovery of the missional church movement has convinced me that The United Methodist Church needs deep change to navigate a path of life in our postmodern culture. I am equally convinced that learning principles from our founder, John Wesley, can help us navigate this path because he instituted deep change in his cultural context. However, while my convictions

³ Ibid., 12.

are strong, I have been ineffective leading a church through this deep change. As I came to St. Paul's, I encountered a church full of wonderful faithful disciples of Jesus. St. Paul's is a vital church grounded in traditional practices with an average age of about sixty-five. The time is now for the people of St. Paul's to make the deep changes necessary to walk the path of life into the future because they are a healthy, stable church not yet in crisis. However, the path forward is not clear, and I find myself reverting back to old patterns of pastoring grounded in the expectations of the attractional church and the trappings of church growth. The pull is strong to revert to a traditional attractional approach to ministry.

As I was working with a church member to come up with a topic for my doctoral project, he suggested I look at myself. That was the missing piece for me. I shifted my focus from how the *church* needs to change to how *I* need to change. I asked myself the following questions: How do I need to pastor differently in order to lead this church into a vital missional future? How does a missional approach to ministry shape the role of pastor? I long for clarity because I am floundering in my current vocational practices. I have an unsettling feeling deep in my soul. While my ministry is successful according to the standard metrics and the congregation is very happy with my leadership, I do not feel like I am being faithful to all God has taught me over the past ten years. In addition, there is a disconnect between my vision for the church and my practice of the vocation of pastor. I invest so much of my time in the church that I do not have time to be engaged in the community, building authentic relationships with people, or taking good care of myself. I need to make deep changes in my vocational practices, acting my way into new thinking, until the new vocational practices become my new default.

This doctoral project re-imagines the vocation of pastor for the missional church and creates a framework of personal authentic vocational practices. It defines practices which empower missional ministry. It assesses my current vocational practices and develops a clear framework of new vocational practices, which will help me to lead St. Paul's into its vital future. While this centers on how I use my time, it is not a time-management issue. The problem is much deeper. I do not have clarity about the vocation of pastor of a missional church and so I feel tossed about by the waves of demands upon my time, old views of pastoral expectations, and the work to be done. As I am able to clarify the role of pastor and define appropriate vocational practices, I will be better able to manage my time.

The foundational shift in vocation is from being a shepherd of the church to being a missionary to the community. The heart of transitioning into a missional church is not about building up a robust mission's program; rather it is about re-orienting all the church does around embracing God's mission to the world. It is a shift from thinking the church is a gathering of believers to seeing the church as sending out its members into the world to make tangible the love and grace of Jesus. Pastors need to break free from the shepherding mindset and adopt a missional posture in our communities. Shepherds care for the sheep in their flock. Missionaries go into a new culture, learn the language and culture, build trust with the native people, and discover ways to interpret the gospel in ways that can be understood, believed, and lived. Missionaries also establish systems to mature new believers into disciples. The ministry of a missionary balances these two movements of the church: sending out into mission and gathering in to heal and nurture.

The first part of this doctoral project addresses the challenge of vocational authenticity. This section describes my evolving call to ministry and the lessons learned along the way. It studies the history, people, and core values of St. Paul's in order to establish that both St. Paul's and I are well positioned to transition to missional ministry.

The second part addresses the theology and practice of leadership in context by exploring the biblical and theological foundations to re-imagine the vocation of pastor in the missional church. John Wesley effectively adapted the ministry approach of the Anglican Church and the vocational practices of an Anglican priest in the eighteenth century in England to lead a lasting movement of renewal which became the Methodist Church. An examination of the vocational practices of John Wesley gleans principles which can be adapted into our cultural context. This, along with the call to apprentice Jesus, defines key guidelines creating a framework of vocational practices which are essential to lead missional ministry.

The third part re-imagines vocational ministry and practices as I assess my current practices in light of this new missional vision for ministry to identify strategic vocational practices. An important element defines some current practices I can release in order to focus time and energy on the new practices. A holistic approach defines a strategic framework of personal vocational practices and a plan for implementation authenticates my call and my current ministry context.

CHAPTER 1

PASTORAL REFLECTION

This chapter reflects on my journey as pastor in the United Methodist Church. It begins with the story of the lessons learned as my call to ministry evolved with each pastoral appointment I served. Then it describes the story of St. Paul's. It then assesses my current vocational practices. Through these reflections, key issues are identified to be addressed in pursuit of personal vocational authenticity.

The Story of My Evolving Call

My call to ministry has been shaped by many transformational experiences over the years. Twenty-plus years of experience as a pastor in The United Methodist Church has planted within me convictions about the Church and the role of pastor. The following section highlights these key experiences and the lessons learned along the way.

Call to Ordained Ministry

One thing I know for sure is that the same almighty God I read about in the Scriptures has been active in my life since birth. I was born into a legacy of ministers. The three generations before me were all Salvation Army officers working to establish the work of "The Army" in England and America. I was born into a loving Christian

family who nurtured me and raised me in the church. I attended church for the first time when I was two weeks old, on Christmas Eve, and I have been attending willingly ever since.

I grew up in the United Methodist Church going to church every Sunday, attending Sunday school, and singing in the children's choir. I was very active in youth group. Church was where my closest friends were and where my life was shaped. The church was my extended family and my second home. When I was in sixth grade, I participated in the confirmation class, which in our tradition is a way for a teen to make a personal commitment to Christ and the Church. It came to the end of our class, and one of my friends said she was not going to get confirmed. To be honest, I had not really thought of it as optional; it was just the next expected step. She said she did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God and so she would not get confirmed. I went home, after she made her shocking announcement in class, and I remember lying in bed that night pondering, "What do I believe? Do I believe Jesus is the Son of God?" And in my thirteen-year-old understanding, I came to the conclusion that I had always believed in God, and "Yes. I do believe Jesus is the Son of God." I am grateful to my friend who, through her actions, challenged me to think more deeply. What could have been just a ritual of the church became an intentional step in my faith journey, a step in figuring out my own beliefs. At the same time, it was just a step in my discipleship. Following Jesus is so much more than a one-time decision.

Several years later when I was applying to colleges, I remember sitting on the floor of our living room with all the college catalogs spread out on the floor, and my dad was sitting in the avocado corduroy chair reading the paper. He said to me, "Patti, why

don't you go to a Bible college and become a pastor?" To which I quickly replied, "No way. I could never preach every Sunday." And that was that. I never gave it a second thought. I ended up at the University of California in Santa Barbara. God had plans to shape me for ministry there. The first person I met was a small group leader in the local Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship (hereafter, IVCF) chapter. My faith truly came alive through my involvement with IVCF. In our small group Bible study, we grappled with Scripture and how it applied to our daily living on campus. I learned how to have a meaningful devotional and prayer life. I learned how to discover the truth of God through inductive Bible study and the importance of applying that truth to my daily living. Through IVCF, I learned that being a Christian was not a Sunday activity, or just being part of an extended family, or even just adhering to a set of beliefs; I learned that being a Christian was a way of living. Following Jesus became the central focus of my life. I also learned how God creates each of us uniquely, with gifts and abilities to serve him in the world and in the Church. In that context, it became clear to me that God was calling me to be a math teacher. It felt like all of my life had prepared me for this vocation and that it would be my ministry. At the same time, I was asked to apply for IVCF staff. I was discerning if I should go right into graduate school to get my teaching credential, or take a break and serve on Inter Varsity staff. IVCF asked me to serve at UCLA before I was accepted to graduate school, which I interpreted as God's will, and I went on to serve as a campus minister at UCLA for four years.

I loved this job, even the fundraising required, and God used me to impact students' lives. I especially found fulfillment and success in discipling students, shaping leaders, sharing the gospel, and leading worship gatherings. I ended up as a solo campus

staff person and had a conflict of ministry philosophy with the rest of the area staff, and so after four years it was time for me to move on. At this point in my life, I was burned out in ministry and felt God leading me to fulfill my vocation of serving God in the secular world. I took a position as Membership Services and Youth Director at the local YMCA and shined the light of Christ there. Six months into that job, I was driving home after one more frustrating day of work. I was stuck in Los Angeles traffic at a stoplight on Venice Blvd., and I cried out to God, “What do you want me to do?” On that slow drive home I thought about my giftedness, my successes, and what I liked doing. Every answer was ministry related: discipling, faith conversations, leadership development, leading Bible studies, and creating meaningful worship experiences. By the time I got home I was convinced God was leading me to attend seminary and pursue professional ministry. Over the next few years as I attended Fuller Theological Seminary, it became clear to me that God was calling me into ordained local church ministry in the United Methodist Church. After graduating, I moved to Denver, Colorado, and was ordained into the United Methodist Church.

The ordination service included a lot of pomp and circumstance, which usually is not very meaningful to me, but I was in for a surprise God moment. The bishop called me forward, and she and the district superintendents laid their hands on me while she said the words of ordination. As she talked I felt power go through her hands into my body. The Holy Spirit anointed me to be a pastor in the local church. It was a great affirmation of my call after my long journey. The bishop appointed me to three small churches in rural southeastern Colorado, where I spent the first three years of my ministry. During the

ensuing twenty years of ministry, no matter how frustrated I got or lost I felt, I have never doubted my call or God's presence in my ministry.

Call to Plant a Church

After three years on the southeastern plains of Colorado, the bishop appointed me to serve in a growing suburban area of north Denver in Broomfield, Colorado. I was part of a dynamic pastoral team in a rapidly growing church. During the first month, the senior pastor took me and the other associate pastor on a ride around town, teaching us about the community and the history of the church in that community. Then he drove us several miles north along a road to a big field. There were no commercial buildings, no houses, and no people in sight—just wheat and cows. He stopped the car and said, “We are going to plant a church here one day.” That announcement surprised me because that was not part of my experience in my tradition. But at the same time the idea captured my imagination and heart. Then he said, “Do either of you want to be the pastor of this new church?” I quickly said, “No.” I knew God was not calling me to that. That was a job for a young charismatic single male pastor, not a married young mom working part time with a toddler at home and a baby on the way.

The senior pastor kept planting seeds in that congregation over the next few years. A year or so later, the seeds had taken root and the lay leaders started saying, “We should plant a church on the growing edge of Broomfield.” By then developers had bought the land and were planning on building tens of thousands of homes over the next five to twenty years. We formed a team of staff and lay people, including me, to discern the vision, determine the strategy, make a plan, and secure funding to plant a church. People

kept asking me if I would be the pastor, and I kept saying “No.” Everything fell into place except the appointment of a pastor. The bishop kept sending candidates, but none of them were right. One evening I went to see the movie *Pearl Harbor*, and God spoke to me during the scene when the main character volunteered to serve in the British Air Force. In that moment I sensed God calling me to plant this church and I said, “Yes.”

The next day I told the senior pastor about my experience, and after thinking about it overnight he was ready to move forward with me as the pastor of this church plant. I was appointed pastor of this new church, received training, but was encountering unexpected opposition, primarily to my gender. People did not think a woman could plant a church. The senior pastor said many times, “This church plant must succeed. We cannot fail.” God was faithful and led me every moment of every day, and we planted an amazing dynamic church where faith came alive for people who had never been part of a church or who had left the church during their youth. It was the hardest yet most exciting work I had ever done. I knew I was in over my head, which forced me to depend on God instead of relying upon my skills, experience, and personality. It was amazing to see how God worked in miraculous ways every day. And so God called me to be a church planter, which I experienced as a secondary specialized call.

Call to Missional Church

Cornerstone United Methodist Church (hereafter, Cornerstone) was planted as a daughter church of Broomfield United Methodist Church. Over the next few years one hundred people came from the parent church as well as others with whom the leaders connected to help create this new faith community. People of all ages attended, although

the majority were families with young children. The focus was on children's ministry and reaching out to young families in the community. A defining experience was when the leaders worked together to transform an old church building into an underwater sea adventure for our Vacation Bible School. It was incredible. Volunteers put in many hours, and God touched the lives of the children and their parents. Over half of the children were new to Cornerstone, and half of them were preschoolers. The church had found its niche. An amazing children's ministry was developed. Many families were coming and a few grandparents too. I was in awe of how God worked in and through this congregation. These children and their parents were learning and living powerful spiritual truths. The people were dedicated. They worked hard, had a lot of fun, and the church grew, eventually becoming financially independent. It had been done – a dynamic church had been planted in four years.

Along the way the senior pastor left the parent church, and the new senior pastor was not supportive of its daughter church, Cornerstone. Determined to make Cornerstone a success, the faithful leaders pressed on and worked hard. I felt incredible pressure to succeed and at the same time received very little support from the denomination. We were now an abandoned daughter church not yet grown to full maturity. Financial resources were growing thin because growth was slower than expected and community development was delayed; no new homes were being built. Easter that year was the largest yet. Many new people joined Cornerstone, leading to the highest average monthly worship attendance. But one month later there was not enough money in the checking account to pay the next month's bills. The lease was up for renewal on the building. We were in crisis. Sensing that, many people left. Others gave generously to keep

Cornerstone afloat. A strategic planning team was formed to create a plan to move forward.

I was beginning to see that many people who were so excited about the children's ministries at Cornerstone were not actively maturing in their faith. They were consumers of the spiritual programs we offered. It was a sobering realization. I had taken so much pride in the way people were engaging with the church and lost sight of forming disciples.

I was tired. Somewhere along the way God had gone silent. I was not sure how to navigate us forward. This was my tenth year in ministry, and I had never had more than two weeks of vacation annually. A few months prior I felt like I needed a sabbatical to renew my spirit, but I could not see how I could take time off at this critical stage of Cornerstone's development.

I read about Fuller Theological Seminary's Doctor of Ministry program and knew that was what I needed. This was an opportunity to renew my batteries and retool my ministry toolbox. I began the Doctor of Ministry program a tired church planter. I remember sitting in my first class and hearing Dr. Kurt Fredrickson share his story and his vision of the church as missional outpost.¹ It immediately gave me a vocabulary to express my experience in the Cornerstone church plant. We had created an attractional church that was less than effective at forming maturing disciples of Jesus. I began reading about Willow Creek and other mega churches who had similar revelations. In our

¹ The class was MG735: Releasing Your Personal and Church's Potential taught by Dr. Bob Logan, February 6-17, 2006 in Pasadena, CA. Dr. Kurt Frederickson shared his story with us as an introduction to the Doctor of Ministry program at Fuller Theological Seminary.

evangelistic enthusiasm to bring new sheep into the fold, we watered down the gospel and what it meant to follow Jesus.

I went home with a new language about Church and a new but still fuzzy image for Church but with no idea how to make it into a reality. At this point I was unsure of God's vision for Cornerstone and unsure which way to go into our uncertain future. I shared this with a few colleagues during a coaching triad, and they strongly suggested I take some time to get away to hear from God. Through a few miracles and a supportive husband, within twenty-four hours I was in the Rocky Mountains alone with God, my Bible, my journal, and a retreat guide for three days. God spoke clearly to me through two Scriptures: "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isaiah 43:18-19).² And "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly" (Matthew 11:28-30).³ It was time to forget the old and do the new thing God had for us. And it was time to transition my style of ministry to be more like Jesus, to discover the unforced rhythm of grace.

² All Scripture quoted is from the *New International Version Bible* unless otherwise noted.

³ *The Message: The New Testament in Contemporary English* by Eugene H. Peterson.

I went back home, preached about my experience, and called people into a new vision for our future. We did not renew our lease. We moved out of the building and into the community. We drastically simplified our ministry, focused on wholeheartedly following Jesus and building our relationships with each other. We took a break from our elaborate children's programming, which demanded so many volunteer hours. We moved our worship into a neighborhood clubhouse and went acoustic. It was so simple, so authentic, and so real. I loved it.

I continued to work with the strategic planning team. We studied the gospels, John Wesley's ministry, and our context. We discerned together a plan to transition to a network of missional house churches which met weekly for worship, fellowship, and Bible study. We focused on living as disciples and engaging our communities in relationship and acts of compassion. These house churches then gathered monthly for worship together. This was one of the most meaningful expressions of Church I have ever experienced, a gathering of people seriously seeking to be faithful to Jesus in their everyday living. It was liberating to drop all the programming and meetings and instead focus our energy on living as disciples of Jesus in our families, our neighborhoods, and our workplaces.

We moved out of the church building and out of the Christian cocoon. As we spent more time in the world, life was more challenging, and thus we were desperate to gather together. Commitment and dedication were not an issue. Our house church gatherings were precious times together. Many people did not make this radical transition. We lost many people and could not sustain my salary with our three house

churches. Six months after hitting our crisis, we made the difficult decision to close Cornerstone.⁴

As difficult as all of this was, in the midst of it God solidified my convictions that as we navigate the massive cultural shifts we are experiencing, the traditional church needs to find new expressions to remain vital centers of discipleship. In my doctoral studies, the book that has had the most profound impact on me is *Deep Change*. Congruous incremental change will not be enough to sustain the institution of the United Methodist Church in our current century. The Church needs deep change. Churches need to be less focused on offering amazing programs and ministries and more focused on building faith-nurturing relationships with people, shaping disciples of Jesus who engage their neighborhoods and communities with tangible expressions of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Or, as Dr. Kurt Fredrickson said, the Church needs to become a missional outpost, a place to be renewed, equipped, and sent out in mission to the world.

I am also deeply convinced that the United Methodist Church can learn important principles practiced by John Wesley in shaping the Methodist movement in the 1700s which can guide us in transition in our current cultural context. God was now calling me to be part of the efforts to transition the Church from an attractional model into a missional outpost, shaping and sending out disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world.

⁴ By God's grace, two of these house churches continue to meet weekly for fellowship and Bible study nine years later. They truly are powerful expressions of church.

A Surprise Appointment

Following this painful yet life-transforming experience, I was without a church and once again sought God's direction for my life. A colleague who was also struggling in his church plant announced one day that God had released him from his call to plant that church, and he left. I asked myself whether God was releasing me from the call to church planting and missional church. I contemplated returning to pastoring a local church, or perhaps planting another church based on my new vision. I prepared to become a math teacher at the local middle school and start a new church as a tentmaker living incarnationally in the community. Then the bishop appointed me to be an associate pastor in another community. I accepted that appointment and moved my family to southeast Aurora, CO.

In my first meeting with the senior pastor, she shared that she had a vision for this church to plant a daughter church on the growing edge of Aurora. I was excited and felt God leading me here for that work. But within a year, she was appointed to a different church, and the new senior pastor had no interest in planting a church. I had learned my lesson and did not move forward with the vision to plant a daughter church without the senior pastor's support. Additionally, I experienced a personal crisis: my marriage fell apart, and I found myself a single mom and sole supporter of my two teenage daughters on a part-time pastor's salary. Those were difficult days, but we were sustained by God's faithfulness, my wonderful parents, and a compassionate, generous church.

Two years later the bishop appointed me to a full-time position as pastor of a traditional church in Colorado Springs, where I currently serve. This was not where I imagined being led by God, and yet God is using me to touch lives in this setting. I still

feel a call to plant a new missional church. I am still convinced that the traditional church needs deep change in order to be faithful to its mission to make disciples for the transformation of the world. Yet I find myself serving in a traditional church and need to be faithful here. My biggest struggle is with myself. Being back in a traditional church I find I have reverted to my vocational practices of twenty years ago. I struggle to discern how I am supposed to incorporate all I have learned on this remarkable pain-filled journey into my ministry today. I strive to faithfully live out my convictions and callings in my current ministry setting.

The Reality of St. Paul's United Methodist Church

St. Paul's has existed for over one hundred years. This next section explores its history, people, and core values. The reality is that St. Paul's is well-positioned to transition to missional ministry.

Faithfulness for over One Hundred Years⁵

The story of St. Paul's begins in 1890 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Miss Sophie Hubert organized the Union Mission Sunday School with eighteen people from various denominations on the south end of town. This mission grew rapidly, and soon they needed a place to worship. The First Methodist Church in town donated two hundred dollars, and a canvas and board tent was erected. Two years later a strong wind blew down the tent. The members were determined to erect a building, and with mostly volunteer labor they constructed a building. Reverend A. F. Bridges from the First

⁵ Janice K. Andrew, *Growing in Christ – Serving with Love: History of St. Paul's United Methodist Church* (Colorado Springs: St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 1993.)

Methodist Church was appointed pastor. In March of 1893 he organized the Union Mission into the South Colorado Springs Methodist Episcopal Church—not without opposition, however, as many members represented various denominations and did not like the Union Mission being supplanted by the Methodist Episcopal Church. They preferred the non-sectarian work of the mission. Nevertheless, the ministry continued under the leadership of several Methodist circuit-rider preachers.

The building was moved several times, each time a little farther north. The name also changed a few times. In 1899 it settled into a new location with the name St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church. Miss Sophie Hubert's name is mentioned frequently for several years in the church history, and I suspect her faithful leadership and powerful influence carried this church forward through conflict and struggle. The original mission work remained a priority for this congregation through the years. Many of the pastors who served this church came to Colorado Springs for health reasons. They found their health, or the health of their family members, improved in this healing climate. Under their leadership, the church grew steadily. The Ladies Aid Society was organized in the early 1900s. This group toiled diligently to benefit the needy of Colorado Springs as well as St. Paul's Church.

In 1953 the church only had 197 members, 60 percent of whom were “pension age.” The district superintendent felt the future did not look bright for this church in its current location because a new Methodist church was being formed for the south end of town. The members worked hard with the pastors appointed, and many efforts were put forth to revitalize St. Paul's. They grew in membership and became more financially stable.

In November of 1958 the congregation voted to relocate the church to the northeast end of town. A year later they sold the church and purchased the land on which the church currently sits. For two years they met in the elementary school across the street while money was raised and a church was built. All the while the church membership continued to grow. In 1960 they formed a Boy Scout troop sponsored by St. Paul's, which is still in existence today. On Palm Sunday in 1961 they held their first worship service in the new sanctuary. The congregation continued to grow, and so did the building as additions were constructed to accommodate the growth and ministry. In March 1976 the church membership was 1019—417 percent growth in twenty-two years. That is astonishing. In November and December of 1976 the women organized an effort to make and sell 5,030 pounds of peanut brittle for “The Christmas Miracle.” The first \$5,000 collected was given to missions and the remaining \$1,500 raised was given to support the general budget. Programs and ministries were created to meet the needs of the people focusing on energy conservation, fitness, children and young parents, and music. In 1987 an annual peanut butter drive was established to be given away to the needy in the community. We continue to do this each February.

By the end of the 1980s the membership was close to one thousand with an average worship attendance of 550 and over three hundred children and adults in Sunday school. St. Paul's thrived under the seventeen-year pastoral leadership of Rev. Gene Yelken until his retirement in 1995. In 1993 St. Paul's had a grand centennial celebration. In the foreword to the centennial historical account of St. Paul's, the pastor, Gene Yelken wrote, “Consistently, through both the good times and the hard times, this church has sought to live out its ministry and mission in the spirit of (the apostle) Paul's words . . .

For a century, through God’s grace, we have struggled, and in the struggle we have tried as pastors and laity to be true to our high calling in Christ.”⁶ At the close of the first century of St. Paul’s ministry, spirits were high and enthusiasm for the future was great. However, difficult days were ahead.

Over the next sixteen years, six pastors served as senior pastor. Each had either a neutral or conflictual tenure. There was financial misconduct among the staff. The church divided, and many people left. In 2009 Rev. Larry Paulson was appointed to this divided, hurting congregation. He served for four years and focused on healing and unity. The church became stable and financially secure under his competent leadership. I was appointed to St. Paul’s in 2013 and have been well received by the congregation, even though they were a little skeptical of a “lady preacher.” Our membership is currently 317 and our average worship attendance is 180, as reported to the Rocky Mountain Conference on November 29, 2015.

Stable and Poised to Live into the Twenty-First Century

When I arrived at St. Paul’s as senior pastor two years ago, I found a congregation of faithful, enduring people who were hungry for the gospel. While my predecessor had done a wonderful job of healing and unifying this congregation, he had little focus on Jesus, Scripture, or discipleship. The congregation has been very responsive to my biblically based preaching and basic teaching on spiritual practices.

⁶ Andrew, *Growing in Christ – Serving with Love*.

I also found a group of people who were very traditional. They want to sing the old hymns played on organ every Sunday. They are very resistant to anything “contemporary,” primarily due to several poorly led and thus failed attempts at contemporary worship services over the past twenty-two years. Traditional at St. Paul’s refers to more than just a worship style; they also have a traditional approach to ministry. When I arrived we had small group gatherings to get to know one another, in which I discovered that many of the people have been members of this church for forty to fifty years. This is an elderly congregation, mostly retired. There are some young people and families with middle-age parents, mostly the adult children of long-time members.

Last fall we conducted a Spiritual Well-Being survey in worship, and we were shocked to learn that 58 percent of the people in attendance that day were seventy-one and older. A full 88 percent of the congregation that day were fifty-one and older⁷. The congregation does not realize how old they are. This is not bad, for they are energetic and committed to the church, but it is our reality. They are faithful people; these are the diehards who have survived the conflicts of the past twenty-two years. Some had left for a time and now have returned. Others have remained in spite of the conflictual nature of the pastoral leadership.

In my first two years I have discovered deeper issues of trust and power struggles. They desire to grow and reach young people, but they do not know how. Most of their ideas and suggestions are spinoffs of what they did in their heyday during Rev. Gene

⁷ John Zondlo, *Health Survey St. Paul’s UMC_September_2014results* (Colorado Springs, CO: Penrose-St. Francis Health System, 2014)

Yelken's tenure. St. Paul's members, as a whole, are dedicated, faithful, generous, and traditional people.

St. Paul's is stable. We are bringing in new people just over the rate people are passing away, so our membership is on a slight incline. Our worship attendance increased when I arrived and has increased only slightly this second year of ministry. The church is financially stable, which is not to be taken lightly. My predecessor focused his administrative efforts in tightening up the financial policies and practices. In the past six years St. Paul's has reversed their decline, and for four of the past six years has operated in the black and built up their reserves. This financial stability did not come without cost. I found the church to be spending very minimal dollars in programming and ministry. Most of the funds were being spent on the building and staff. They were financially stable, but they were not doing much. I have found the congregation to be very generous when they are given an opportunity to give to worthy causes. St. Paul's recognizes its need to grow and reach younger generations. We recently raised over twenty thousand dollars in three months in order to install projectors and screens in the sanctuary and upgrade the sound system. This project tested the congregation's willingness to sacrifice their preferences for the sake of the future. While I still hear a little grumbling, they passed the test. We need to continue to integrate technology in worship and all we do at St. Paul's. It is now time for more significant change as we live into our future.

Well Positioned for Missional Approach to Ministry

St. Paul's is well positioned for a missional approach to ministry. Their faith is deep and genuine, they value putting their faith into action in mission, they care about

one another, they share in a vital worship experience, and they are grounded in the local neighborhood. The people of St. Paul's have experienced the ups and downs of life and learned along the way that God's grace and presence will sustain them. Their faith is time tested. As David gives testimony to his hard-won trust in God as he expresses in Psalm 23, the people of St. Paul's echo with David that they trust in the Lord who leads them to green pastures and still waters, who renews their souls, and who walks with them through the dark valleys. Their individual and community faith is strong and authentic. This is a church which has faced many struggles in its one-hundred-plus years. In the 1950s when their vitality was waning, they found a way forward. This has created a spirit here of perseverance. The congregation knows it needs to work together to reach the younger generations and remain vital. They have a desire to pass their faith onto the next generation. While limited at times in their traditional thinking about how to achieve this, nevertheless, they have the desire to share their faith and hope in Jesus, which bodes well for connecting in meaningful relationships with those outside the church.

While there are conflicts among the members of this congregation, they have learned to unite together to overcome challenges, and they have learned how to be accepting of one another. The origins of St. Paul's implanted a value to tolerate a wide range of theology. This church tolerates a wide spectrum of theology from liberal to conservative to evangelical in ways I have not experienced in other congregations. Loving and accepting one another in spite of differences has been an emphasis since the string of conflictual pastors. The people genuinely care about one another. We can leverage our smaller size to cultivate multi-generational relationships. Deep and genuine

faith, along with authentic and loving relationships, positions St. Paul's well to move into the future.

St. Paul's, since its inception, has valued missions, as defined by reaching out to those in need in the community. St. Paul's began as the Union Mission, engaging and addressing the needs of hurting people in the community. This value runs deep in the DNA. The Ladies Aid Society kept focused on missions. The Peanut Brittle Christmas Miracle campaign contributed almost 80 percent of its profits to missions, keeping only 20 percent for St. Paul's. More recently, for many years St. Paul's has had a monthly mission focus whereby a local or global agency is lifted up for financial or other support each month. An example of this is the annual peanut butter collection, which is donated to one of the local food banks. The congregation responds generously. Many people in this congregation are retired and use their time to volunteer for a host of nonprofit organizations in town, which make a difference in the community: food banks, free medical services for seniors, meals for homeless, military veteran services, etc. The heart that drives this is a deep desire to live faith in such a way that it makes a difference in this world. This aligns well with a key value in the missional church approach, reaching out into the community and incarnating the gospel.

While St. Paul's is grounded in traditional worship, the worship experience is vital and relevant. They have received well the addition of new elements to increase the level of participation in worship, such as prayer stations where people can come forward, light a candle, and offer a prayer at any time during the service. Our prayer time also provides opportunity for people to participate in the silent prayer time, coming up to the communion rail to pray, as well as being led in prayer by the pastor. The worship is not

dry, boring, or rote. Worship is a meaningful time to connect our hearts with the heart of God. Worship is an encouraging, renewing hour that empowers us to live our faith the rest of the week.

The location of St. Paul's also positions it well for missional ministry. It is a neighborhood church, and the majority of its members live in the surrounding neighborhoods: 30 percent live in the same zip code and 83 percent live within a five-mile radius. In addition, St. Paul's is located across the street from an elementary school. We are intentionally building a relationship with the staff of the school. This takes time to build trust with the school that we are not out to proselytize. We are also working to overcome the past when our church actively distanced ourselves from them. The church would not allow them to use our parking lot and, in fact, the pastor made it his priority to put nasty notes on the cars of offenders. With my arrival and a new principal, we are actively growing our partnership with the school. This includes inviting them to use our parking lot, offering our building for events such as their winter concert, hosting and serving lunch to staff on in-service days, and providing donations and volunteers for their annual fundraiser. It is my hope that we can continue to build this relationship.

These core values of the members of St. Paul's have the potential to help them transition to a new posture for ministry. They have genuine faith, they value putting their faith into action through acts of compassion, they genuinely care about others, they have a vital worship experience, and they are connected with the neighborhood. This is a strong foundation on which to build.

Strengths and Liabilities of St. Paul's United Methodist Church

The strengths the congregation of St. Paul's brings to this process are many. The people have been on a long journey together and love one another. They know each other and care about one another. They have a strength that comes from going through hard times together. And they have a trust that God will see them through. Their deep faith is the rock on which they stand. They are not locked into an intellectual understanding of faith; they have a faith that makes a difference. They highly value putting their faith into action and helping others. As much as they love one another, collectively they have a desire to reach out, to include others, to share what they have learned about life and God with others. They especially want to connect with younger people. This congregation also has a strong military component. We have a large number of veterans as well as several active military service men and women. The community of Colorado Springs is home to two military bases as well as the Air Force Academy. All of these attributes will help St. Paul's move forward.

St. Paul's also has some liabilities to overcome. At times the congregation is stuck in the traditional ways of the past and operates with an attractional mindset, expecting people to come to the church if we offer good programming. This can be a hurdle to innovation. The members also carry some unresolved conflict from the past that surfaces in power struggles around financial matters. While they have a lot of life and faith experience because of their age, they also have lower energy and sometimes feel it is time for younger people to carry the load. Like any congregation, St. Paul's has its strengths and weaknesses. As we journey forward together, we will have to learn how to build upon our strengths and limit the liability of our weaknesses.

Assessment of Personal Vocational Practices and Leadership

This section assesses my current vocational practices and highlights what I am doing right. In addition, it assesses what needs to change and identifies areas of disconnect between vocational call and practice. Then it identifies key issues to address in order to align my vocational practices with my vision for the missional church.

What I Am Doing Right

Many areas of my ministry are effective. I enjoy creating and leading meaningful worship experiences, which has increased the spiritual vitality of our worship. I seek to honor their traditions but add new elements from time to time. Some members are apprehensive at first but find the Spirit touches their hearts through all the elements of the service. People frequently share how God opens their eyes to see spiritual matters in new ways through my preaching. They are also very responsive to my teaching of basic spiritual practices in such a way they can incorporate them into their daily lives.

I have been living as a disciple of Jesus for all of my life, bringing an authenticity and integrity to my discipleship and leadership which is contagious. I lead and preach in such a way that people see the real me and the work of God in and through me. I also have strong interpersonal skills, and I genuinely care about people. I seek to be accepting and encouraging of people, and I strive to get along with diverse people and personalities.

Through these efforts I have built a great rapport and trust with the congregation. This has helped me negotiate conflict and touchy situations. I have strong organizational skills which serve me as well. I enjoy analyzing situations and coming up with a strategic plan through whatever it is. I also have put effort into reaching out to and building a

relationship with the principal and elementary school leaders across the street. This has encouraged some in our congregation to connect with the school as well. We are continuing to build this relationship, and I see it as a wonderful place to make the love of Jesus tangible.

Areas of Disconnect Between Vocational Call and Practice

For all that is going well, I have a feeling of unrest deep within my soul. This stems from the disconnect between my vocational call and vocational practices. I dream of a time when the heart of what I do develops disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world. My central passion in ministry is and always has been discipleship—a discipleship that leads to personal and social transformation. My unrest increases when my work focuses more on maintaining the institution and less on shaping disciples. I long for clarity in my vocation which will drive and give priority to my vocational practices.

Recently, I was talking with a colleague I admire, and he shared that in his early years as a pastor he had a mentor who helped him clarify his giftedness and what he could offer the church. For his thirty-plus years in ministry he continues to effectively lead the church with great clarity and purpose. Currently I lack such clarity, and as a result I feel tossed about by the demands and expectations of the church and the older expectations of what a pastor is supposed to do.

In my current setting it takes so much of my time to maintain the institution through administration, managing conflict, caring for the people through hospital visitation, home visitation and funerals, that I have very minimal time for self-care and to engage the community in acts of compassion. I allow the urgent to overtake the

necessary. I often am doing my sermon preparation at the last minute and rarely have extended time for reflection and catching a vision from God. An area of disconnect is how much time I spend managing the business of the church which I am neither passionate about nor experienced with, and how little time I spend discipling people. I must repent of an experience this year when two young adults were seeking to grow in their relationship with Jesus, and I did not have time or a process in the church to come alongside them.

The other thing I have little time for currently is building our staff team and developing lay leaders. All of these are activities I view as essential to my vocation as pastor and yet do not seem to have time to do. It is time for change.

Key Issues That Need to Be Addressed

The issue always comes back to time, and yet I know the issue is not time management. I am quite efficient and accomplish a lot every day. The key issue is much deeper. The way I use my time each day is where the rubber meets the road in terms of living out my vocation in authentic and faithful ways. Clarifying my call as pastor of a missional church and aligning my core vocational practices with that call is the solution to my time management issues.

As I mentioned earlier, God spoke to me through Matthew 11:28-30, as translated in *The Message*. “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythm of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to

live freely and lightly.” This continues to be a defining Scripture for me. So many images capture what I long for deep within my soul. I understand that I need to walk *and* work with Jesus, watching how he leads. When I do that then I can discover the unforced rhythm of grace. My work now feels forced some days. I long to live freely and lightly. Now I feel constrained and burdened. Jesus spent the majority of his time teaching the disciples, hanging out with the least and the lost, connecting with his heavenly father, and engaged in acts of compassion.

I have identified the following key issues for me to address. First, I observe that Jesus spent a significant amount of time interacting with people on the street. He was moved with compassion for the hurting, lost, hungry, and those living on the margins. I need to create time in my schedule to be involved with the least and the lost in our community, offering acts of compassion.

Second, I recognize that I cannot do that on my own power. Thus, I need to create a rhythm in my life of foundational spiritual practices that keep me connected to the living power and presence of God so that God may empower and lead me. Jesus had a regular schedule of pulling away to draw close to his heavenly father. I too need to create a framework of spiritual practices in which I engage regularly.

Third, the central issue for me is transitioning from an attractional posture of ministry to a missional stance. Due to the cultural shifts, the Church is no longer the center of our community life. People do not automatically come, no matter how awesome our programs and ministries are. I hope to create a basic guide for deep change that will help me act my way into new thinking. I desire that the way I use my time will reflect my core values and vision for the Church. Currently, I feel great pressure to produce spiritual

“products” for people to consume, and I feel pressure to attract and keep young people. I also feel like I am not adequately caring for the congregation and all of their health and medical needs. These are pressures of the attractional church pastor.

I need to shift my mindset from being shepherd of the church to being missionary to the community. I believe that if I can make this fundamental shift, I will be in a position to help lead the church into being a missional church focused on the mission of God. I believe in the Church. I have hope for its future, and for my future, but it is time for deep change. God is at work, and I want to be part of the new thing God is doing. The heart of my discontent is that I am perpetuating the old thing. I have a glimpse of what the new missional church can be, but I need to gain clarity about what that implies for the vocation and practice of pastor.

PART TWO

THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF LEADERSHIP IN CONTEXT

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores significant books which lay the groundwork to re-imagine vocational practices necessary in living out an authentic call. It clarifies a vision for the Church to faithfully live into the twenty-first century. It defines key practices of pastoral leadership necessary to lead the church into its future.

Theology

An Emergent Theology for Emerging Churches, Ray S. Anderson

Ray Anderson, in his book, *An Emergent Theology for Emerging Churches*, delineates the theology of the emergent church of the first century to inform the emerging church movement of today.¹ This theology is defined as emergent theology. He begins by arguing that as the church expanded from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and beyond, the Jerusalem church took the role of guarding the purity of the tradition, which resulted in limiting the expansion of the church. When the controversy arose over whether a Gentile believer had to be circumcised before being accepted as a disciple of Jesus, the Jerusalem

¹ Ray S. Anderson, *An Emergent Theology for Emerging Churches* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 7-18.

church insisted they did. In Acts 10-11, the Scriptures record that Peter went to Antioch to ascertain what was going on and discovered the Holy Spirit was active in these converts and thus concluded that the Gentile believers did not need to become Jewish in order to follow Jesus. The movement of Christ continued on its mission to reach the ends of the earth with the gospel. Brian McLaren writes in the foreword, “By the end of Acts, Antioch is sending out teams of missionaries who were bold innovators, creative explorers, and daring boundary-crossers.”² There are several unique qualities to the emergent theology of the Antioch church which empowered and grounded this missional movement of Christianity.

Anderson begins by observing that emerging churches are mission-minded communities, what we call today missional churches.³ The missional church is a church on the move, the church on a mission from God. Anderson defines it this way, “The church exists as the missionary people of God – that is its nature. The mission of the church is to embody in its corporate life and ministry, the continuing messianic and incarnational nature of the Son of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.”⁴ The missional church embodies the mission of God to go out, seek the lost, meeting them on their turf, as Jesus became human to meet us on earth. The emerging church, no matter in which century it exists, is a contemporary expression of the historical Christ.⁵ Despite

² Ibid., 5.

³ Ibid., 32-34.

⁴ Ibid., 32.

⁵ Ibid., 45.

what some Jerusalem-minded people may think, emerging churches are not just another form of spirituality or a radical deviation. Rather they embody the movement of God's spirit on the creative edge of the kingdom of God in its context.⁶

The church of every age gets bound by its culture and needs to break free from this bondage. Anderson writes, "I want to unbind the church of its wrappings so that the church of the future can emerge in our midst through the Holy Spirit, as Christ emerged from his tomb and is emerging from his future into our present."⁷ Many churches are stuck in the attractional mindset that was effective years ago but is limited in its ability to reach people in our secular society. There was a day a church could offer wonderful worship and programs and people came, were shaped into disciples, and impacted their communities. That is no longer the case.

Church people need to get out of their churches and engage the secular world around them, sharing the good news of the grace of Jesus Christ with people in tangible and authentic ways. Anderson writes, "A disciple of Christ is not intended to be a little messiah but to participate in the messianic mission to extend the kingdom into every crevice and corner of the world."⁸ The emergent theology which will drive this is the conviction that it is more about Jesus and less about church.⁹ God sends us out to invite people to live like Jesus, not to attend our church. Those outside the church today do not have much desire to be in the church, but they are hungry to receive the grace of Jesus

⁶ Ibid., 64.

⁷ Ibid., 74.

⁸ Ibid., 115.

⁹ Ibid., 141.

and to extend that love and grace in the world. They are motivated to live like Jesus. The church of today needs to be freed up from its attractional mindset and adopt the missional mindset. We need to quit sitting in our church waiting for people to come. We need to learn to invite people to learn about Jesus instead of inviting them to attend our churches.

Along the same lines, pastors need to break free from the shepherding mindset and adopt a missional posture in our communities. Shepherds care for the sheep in their flock. Missionaries go into a new culture, learn the language and culture, build trust with the native people, and discover ways to interpret the gospel in ways that can be understood, believed, and lived. Missionaries also establish systems to mature new believers into disciples. The ministry of a missionary balances these two movements of the church; sending out into mission and gathering in to heal and nurture. The end of Anderson's book brings this full circle. He talks of how the emerging church is about mission not just ministry.¹⁰ The mission of the church is not to grow the church but to send out its people into the world to carry on the mission of God.

The ministry of the church is its life, activities, and programs. These work together to carry out its mission. The ministry of the church should always be grounded in its mission. Ministry tends to be centripetal, moving toward the center. Mission tends to be centrifugal, moving energy outward.¹¹ The programs and activities of the church are not bad in and of themselves. They are a necessary part of the church. We need ministries to nurture and mature disciples and equip them to be sent out in mission to the world. The

¹⁰ Ibid., 178-199.

¹¹ Ibid., 182-186.

problem arises when the ministries get focused inward and no longer make disciples for the transformation of the world.

The church needs to engage in a continual loop of gathering disciples and sending them out. The call to missional church and incarnational living is a corrective to the attractional church and focus on church membership of the last few decades. To be a disciple is to *be* the church not just *go* to church. Anderson writes, “If you were to ask the apostle Paul, Did you go to church today? He would stare at you dumbfounded! The people of Antioch did not go to church, they were the church!”¹² The church as a place to gather and nurture believers is only half of the picture. The church is also the place from which believers are sent out into the world to share the good news of the grace of Jesus Christ with the world.

The current church is out of balance and needs to be released from its current attractional mindset. Then it can be set free and sent out on the mission of God. The contemporary church needs to emerge from its past and reconnect with its mission.

Story

Fail, J.R. Briggs

The most significant storyline of my life through this Doctor of Ministry process has been the exhilaration of planting Cornerstone and the devastation of closing it. I have worked hard to come through this experience a healthy and whole person. I did not want this experience to define or limit me. The institution of the United Methodist Church has not been very helpful in the process, but God has faithfully met me every moment of

¹² *Ibid.*, 218.

every day and continues to redeem the experience. As difficult as it has been, I am grateful for the experience because of all I have learned about myself, God, and church. I was drawn to read *Fail* by J. R. Briggs because of my experience with this significant ministry failure.¹³ I read this book after doing the majority of my recovery work, and I agree with every word Briggs writes. It was an affirmation of the process I went through and gave me a few new insights as I continue to process it all.

In the foreword Eugene Peterson writes, “Failure can serve as compost for enriching the pastoral vocation.”¹⁴ By the grace of God this is true for me. I have found clergy to be a bit like fishermen, bragging and exaggerating about their catch of the day. Rarely have I experienced moments where I felt safe to admit my struggles and failures in ministry. This book was refreshing, and I admire the author’s courage to write it and provide gatherings for pastors to safely process failure.

I especially appreciate Briggs’ emphasis that this process is not about learning from failure so one does not fail again. Rather he emphasizes that failure can be a “crucible of character formation.”¹⁵ Briggs shares that the most central truth he learned in his failure was that his identity was not tied to his failure, his worth was not tied to what he did or who respected him. Failure is an event and not an identity.¹⁶ It has taken me a few years and some significant experiences to get to a place where I do not define myself by my failure. He writes, “The gospel does not keep us from failing but instead

¹³ J. R. Briggs, *Fail* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014).

¹⁴ Eugene Peterson, “Foreword,” in Briggs, *Fail*, 9.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 23-24.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

transforms it into deeper meaning and a more hopeful purpose.”¹⁷ I now have a much deeper understanding of and appreciation for the gift of redemption that is ours in Jesus Christ.

The crisis of failure is a fork in the road that has the potential to transform or destroy.¹⁸ Briggs writes, “Contrary to our culture – we may fail, but it does not define us. We may fail, but we are loved anyway. We may fail, but we are accepted by God, who has taken our failures upon himself.”¹⁹ That is profound, and as I read it I realized this is an area on which I still need to work. I carry much of the burden of the failure on my shoulders, and I need to give it to Jesus. I have worked hard so that the failure of Cornerstone was transformative not debilitating. I continue to learn and process the experience and to allow God into the brokenness. It has been nine years since we closed Cornerstone. I have definitely felt blamed and judged at times for the closing of Cornerstone.

I have only recently begun to feel like people respect me and value my experience. I maintain that even though my church plant failed, I learned much about church planting through this experience, perhaps even more than I might have with a “successful” church plant. I am now the chairperson of our New Church Development Committee, and I trust God will continue to redeem my experience to further our efforts of starting new faith communities and caring for church planters.

¹⁷ Ibid., 39.

¹⁸ Ibid., 42.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The second chapter of Briggs's book is titled "Success: the Golden Calf of American Church." Success was one of my biggest struggles in this experience. I was told emphatically when I was appointed to pastor this new church, "This cannot fail. This church plant must be a success." And by that the person meant it had to become a large growing church. I unknowingly carried that as a burden through the journey, which at times blinded me to be able to see where God was leading us. When our Cornerstone church hit a rough patch, I felt stuck, trapped, and alone. God was silent. I kept pushing forward, driven by the pressure to succeed.

At that time one of my mentors²⁰ taught me a very important lesson about success. He said success is not measured in numbers and results. Success is "figuring out what God wants you to do and doing that." And so I stopped pushing on and sought God's direction. It became clear to me that we could not survive on the trajectory we were on. God began calling me to lead in a new direction, engaging deep change. As I processed this with our strategic leadership team, we decided to move out of our building and simplify our ministry. During that season I learned that following God's call may in fact lead to eliminating programs, moving out of a building, people leaving the church, closing the church. Those are all signs of failure in our metrics of success. And that is the trap of the church growth movement—that God's top priority is to grow the church and that faithful ministry always brings increase. A subtle twist on this is defining success as fruitfulness.

²⁰ Dr. Bob Logan taught us this important principle in our Fuller class OD717: Empowering Leaders for Healthy Growth in Pasadena, CA July 23-27, 2007.

Jesus teaches us in John 15 that there are times when what is needed is pruning and our priority is abiding not increasing. Thus, success is about abiding in the vine, being faithful to God's call in our lives. It is true that God seeks fruitfulness, but that is not our burden. God brings the growth; we abide. In light of this, I appreciate these words that speak to the vocation of pastor. Briggs quotes Eugene Peterson, who writes in *Working the Angles*, "The biblical fact is that there are no successful churches. There are, instead, communities of sinners, gathered before God week after week in towns and villages all over the world. The Holy Spirit gathers them and does his work in them. In these communities of sinners, one of the sinners is called pastor and given a designated responsibility in the community. The pastor's responsibility is to keep the community attentive to God."²¹ Those are liberating words. Briggs adds these words which speak to the vocation of pastor, "The path of obedient, faithful ministry begins when we drop our roles as busy religious salespeople working *for* God and instead recapture our calling to live *with* him and, in turn, invite others into that life."²²

I need to come up with new metrics related to faithfulness and input, not fruitfulness and results. I wonder if this is the crux of the matter of the discontent in my soul. Currently, my ministry is "successful." The congregation loves me, my preaching, my leadership. Worship attendance is stable to growing, more programs are happening, the church is active in meaningful ministry. Yet, I feel to be a successful pastor I am squelching truths I learned through this experience of closing Cornerstone. So the unrest

²¹ Eugene Peterson, *Working the Angles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 2.

²² Briggs, *Fail*, 62.

continues to fester in my soul. I wonder if I am being faithful to God's call. After all my experiences and learning, I wonder how God wants me to lead this traditional congregation.

Briggs shares an experience where he encounters a broken stained glass window, which is especially beautiful the way the sun shines through its brokenness. He writes, "When we are broken, we have the potential to be beautiful because of what works through us."²³ I would add, we are beautiful because of the way the light of Christ shines through us. He writes that the pastors he has talked with who have experienced amoral ministry failure time and time again are grateful for the experience. I concur. It was through the process of struggle and failure that I learned lessons which I would not have learned through success. Cornerstone was on a path of slow death which I did not want to walk. I felt God leading me and us into a new way of being church. We took that path, and within twelve months we had to close. But I would not trade those twelve months. I am grateful for what I experienced and learned in those twelve months.

Briggs continues to write about specific ways to process failure. He writes, "Walk this road faithfully. Endure the grief with others. Learn what God is teaching you. There is a life of joy, meaning and wholeness ahead for those who process grief well."²⁴ He closes with words of hope for those who have experienced failure to hold on to. I appreciate this book which encouraged me and helps pastors embrace failure and see it as an invitation to growth and an opportunity for grace and healing.

²³ Ibid., 146.

²⁴ Ibid., 144.

Health

Being a disciple of Jesus is not one of many activities in life; it involves all of living. To be a disciple is to live our whole life under the authority of Christ. It is not just what we do at church. In the gospels Jesus spent time in the synagogue and with religious people. But he also spent considerable time being with people in the community, in homes, and at parties. We too need to find balance between our church activities and the rest of our life. The reality is that being a pastor is not just a job, it is a way of living, of expressing discipleship. Thus, a holistic approach to the vocational practices of a pastor is essential. God has given us the gift of life and our bodies. God desires we be healthy in all aspects of living. *The Well-Played Life* and *Margin* both speak to and give guidance for holistic practices beyond what a pastor does while in the church building.

The Well-Played Life, Leonard Sweet

The Well-Played Life was a good word to me because I tend to derive my worth from my work. This leads to working too hard to the detriment of my relationships, my whole self, and my effectiveness in ministry. In *The Well-Played Life*, Leonard Sweet establishes that the legacy of our Protestant work ethic, and I would add the cultural pressure to succeed, has taught people to seek value and worth, identity and fulfillment in work, as well as assurance of faith. He writes, “After five hundred years, the Protestant work ethic has not made us better disciples, only weary and cranky human beings.”²⁵ This rings true for me. In seasons when I work long and hard, I often end up cranky and tired, without accomplishing much. In fact, I am learning to recognize that when I am

²⁵ Leonard Sweet, *The Well-Played Life* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2014), 2.

working hard and not seeing results, it is not time for me to work even harder, rather it is time to stop and connect with God.

Sweet proposes we find our assurance and value in a loving relationship with our Creator. Our worth and our value ought to be derived from our relationship with our Creator, not from our accomplishments.²⁶ The well-played life then focuses not on work, but on living faithfully as a disciple in every area of our life each day.²⁷ God did not create us in order for us to do his bidding. God created us to be in loving, joyful relationship. Sweet writes, “God did not create us to work at life, but to play and find joy in living. When Jesus said, ‘I have come that you might have life,’ he didn’t then spend his time on earth showing us how to work harder to attain life by our own means; he showed us how much God wants to walk with us in the Garden ... and how playing in our relationships, both divine and human, can make life ‘joy unspeakable and full of glory.’”²⁸ I do struggle with this; the Protestant work ethic is ingrained in me. Working long and working hard comes naturally to me, as does seeking value and worth in this work.

I heed Sweet’s call to focus more on enjoying life with Jesus in “Godplay”. Sweet writes, “Living a ‘well-played’ life means experiencing the fullness of joy that comes from being in deep with the divine, cleaving close to the covenant, living in sync with the Spirit, and yoked to Christ to the point of surrendered trust in God’s providences and

²⁶ Ibid., 2-3.

²⁷ Ibid., 20.

²⁸ Ibid., 6-7.

promises.”²⁹ Peterson’s translation of Matthew 11:28-30 conveys the same truth. The “unforced rhythm of grace” concept parallels Sweet’s concept of living a well-played life. Both emphasize the need to connect with God in all aspects of living, to be attentive to the work of God in us and through us.

In my life, the times I go through my day attentive and responsive to the Holy Spirit, I see God at work in my plans as well as in the interruptions and unexpected encounters. There is joy and freedom in living this way. This is “Godplay”; this is the unforced rhythm of grace; this is a life of assurance and joy no matter the circumstances.

The driving achiever in me wants a strategic plan or set of long-range goals to guide my work. In my current appointment, I have been seeking clarity for a strategic plan for two years and am frustrated and feel lost because it has not come to me. Perhaps it is God’s way of telling me to be attentive to the Holy Spirit in the present and not worry so much about the future. Sweet writes, “There is no *plan*. God didn’t give us a plan, but a purpose; not a map, but a mission; not a blueprint for tracing, but a blue sky for exploring. God’s *plan* is for us to spend our lives doing whatever unlocks our tear ducts, makes our throats deep with song, keeps the gales of laughter surging in our souls, and turns our feet to dancing.”³⁰ He argues that part of being missional is to let go of a focus on a strategic plan and just live in the present with Christ and see where the journey takes you. “God has made us with special gifts and blessings, with the expectation that we enjoy using them in God’s mission in the world.”³¹ This is very liberating and

²⁹ Ibid., 20.

³⁰ Ibid., 86.

³¹ Ibid.

instructs me to focus on living in the present. Let God worry about the future of the church while I worry about faithfully living Jesus' mission today.

Sweet goes on to define three main ages in our lives and how we live in each age. He defines the stage I am in as the Second Age. The focus of the Second Age is maturation in our discipleship and being full participants in the faith community.³² "A job or business should be a form of play that pursues God's pleasures of learning and growing – of intellectual stimulation, imaginative activity, risk-taking innovation, but-what-if creativity."³³ The key is expressed on page 143, "The well-played life can be realized in every moment of every day – in our jobs, our family lives, our playgrounds, playlists, playdates, playcreation."³⁴ "Godplay" is not about how we spend our play time. It is a holistic concept that applies to every component of living. A well-played life has to do with how we live every moment, seeking to live every moment connected and obedient to God. "Doing God's mission in the world is never *work* when you are living in God's pleasure."³⁵

Sweet writes about prayer as a way of life, as the foundation for all of living. Jesus did not add prayer to his daily activities of preaching, teaching and healing. Rather prayer was the foundation of his living relationship to his heavenly father, and it was the foundation out of which he preached, taught, and healed. I would add that the practice of

³² Ibid., 139.

³³ Ibid., 140.

³⁴ Ibid., 143.

³⁵ Ibid., 145.

sabbath is important here. Sabbath is ceasing from work and re-connecting with our Creator. I do not practice sabbath regularly, but when I do, it releases me from the burdens that come with my work. My self-worth and sense of faithfulness is too easily wrapped up in my success in ministry. To cease from work re-establishes that my worth and joy emanate from my relationship with my Creator, not from my productivity or effectiveness in ministry.

I struggle with this balance between work, play, and rest. I struggle with the temptation to derive my value from my work. Seeking to live a well-played life will help me achieve balance and restore joy in my work, rest, and play.

Margin, Richard A. Swenson

Creating more margin in my life is critical to living as a faithful disciple of Christ. Richard A. Swenson argues in his book, *Margin*, that we live in an unprecedented age in which the conditions of our modern living, and all of the amazing advancements in technology which were designed to save time and make us more efficient, have actually done the opposite and put more load on our systems.³⁶ Margin is the space between the demands on us and our available resources: physical, emotional, spiritual, relational, and financial. Many people are living marginless lives, at the end of their ropes, exhausted and hurting, overloaded. Marginless living, when we hit the limit of our resources and abilities, is detrimental to our health, relationships, spirituality, and our general living.³⁷

³⁶ Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial and Time Resources to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress), 45.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

Somehow despite all of the progress and modern conveniences, life is more demanding and cluttered than ever. Something is wrong, people are tired and frazzled.³⁸ As I reflect on this, I identify three key areas where I need to increase my margin: emotional, physical, and financial.

Swenson does not just describe the problem of marginless living, he also lays out a prescription for combatting it. The prescription is to create more margin in our lives by increasing the space between our load and our limits. “Margin grants freedom and permits rest. It nourishes both relationship and service. Spiritually, it allows availability for the purpose of God. From a medical point of view, it is health-enhancing. It is a welcome addition to our healthy formulary: add a dose of margin and see if life doesn’t come alive once again.”³⁹ The general formula to increase margin is to lessen our load and/or increase our capacity. All people have limits: personal, emotional, relational, physical and financial.⁴⁰ God does not intend for us to live at the edge of our limits. Swenson lifts up four areas for us to focus on: emotional energy, physical energy, time and finances.⁴¹ In the area of our emotional energy each person needs to learn his or her limits as well as what drains and what replenishes. For me, I need to focus in the area of increasing and deepening my friendships with people outside the church. In the physical energy arena, I need to increase my exercise as well as increase rest in the form of days

³⁸ Ibid., 16.

³⁹ Ibid., 69.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 42.

⁴¹ Ibid., 78.

off and sabbath. “We do not rest because our work is done; we rest because God commanded it and created us to have a need for it.”⁴²

I am heading into a new season of life as an empty nester and will have more time available than I have had in twenty years. But I need to be careful not to fill up the hours with more work. I want to be disciplined with balancing time for work, play, and rest. In the area of finances, I struggle as a single parent now helping my two daughters through college. I need to create a workable budget which includes paying down debt and saving for retirement.

Another principle this book taught me is that there is a reason for pain, and if we respond to it, pain can lead us to the path of healing.⁴³ People feel pain, which is an indicator that all is not well. Our Creator gave us a pain impulse so that we would attend to the problem. I have always been taught to push through pain, or to learn to live with it. I have an old back injury from my competitive gymnastics days. When this back pain flared up at the same time I was reading this book, I decided to seek help. I went to a physical therapist. After a few months of therapy and daily exercises the back pain subsided. I honestly did not know it was possible to live without pain. God desires we are whole and healthy. God has power to heal and does not desire we live in pain. I need to be quicker to listen to my body and respond to pain in order to discover the path of healing.

⁴² Ibid., 197.

⁴³ Ibid., 17.

This issue of margin is a deeper matter than our overall health; it is an issue of faithful discipleship, because living without margin decreases our ability to live incarnationally. It is difficult to love my neighbors when I do not have enough margin to hang out with them. It is difficult to give generously when I have no financial margin. When we are in overload, we have limited resources available for God to use. To live incarnationally requires having resources available to be responsive to the Holy Spirit. Margin increases my ability to be available to and to respond to Jesus, to live generously, and to respond to the needs and people I encounter each day. Increasing my margin is not only important for my overall health; it is also crucial to incarnational living.

I appreciate how clearly Swenson lays out the problem and the practical suggestions he gives to increase our margin. This is an area with which I struggle. I consistently live at the edge of my limits.

Vocation

Called, Mark Labberton

Mark Labberton, in his book *Called*, begins with the good news that God so loved the world that the gift of God's son reorders and enlarges our hearts and lives.⁴⁴ The primary call on our life is the call of Jesus to follow him. Labberton writes, "We can, however, re-center our lives on Jesus Christ, whose call is to 'live differently.' Whatever our context, our work, our relationships – that is the primary thing we are to be about every day: following Jesus."⁴⁵ This is so simple but so profound when fully embraced

⁴⁴ Mark Labberton, *Called* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 8.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

and lived. It takes a lifetime of study and practice to shed preconceived notions and seek to more fully understand who Jesus is and calls us to be.

Labberton goes on to say that the little moments are the most impactful.⁴⁶ The greatest influence we have is through the ordinary moments of daily living. This call of God is a call to flourish. “The God made known in the Scriptures, and incarnate in Jesus Christ desires flourishing people in a flourishing world. This is God’s intent and commitment, and God created humans to flourish by co-laboring with him in that endeavor.”⁴⁷ Sometimes we are looking for profound things when the reality is that our biggest impact is in the simple living of the gospel in our gritty, messy, everyday ordinary lives. To love God and to love our neighbors is the simple, profound, central pursuit of our lives.

The author goes on to argue that the church is the called out community of Jesus followers. Again, simple and profound, to be the church is to be a loving community of people, seeking individually and collectively to reorder their lives in order to follow Jesus and live as Jesus teaches us to live. As simple as this sounds, it is extremely challenging. God intends for the church to be a community of love and hope in a lost world.⁴⁸

Chapter Two addresses the crisis the Church faces today. “We say we are following Jesus, but what we actually offer is buildings, programs, music, classes, token work projects and budget appeals.”⁴⁹ That is it. This is what my older, traditional church

⁴⁶ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 32.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 20.

needs to grasp. In order to reach the younger generation, we don't need to find the proper program. We need to first of all recommit to living and loving like Jesus, not only in our individual lives, but in the church. As the church can begin to live and love like Jesus, it will be authentic and vital. That is what the younger generations are challenging the church with.

Labberton poses a question we need to ask ourselves: "If I hang out at your church will I meet people who are actually *like* Jesus?"⁵⁰ My answer is the same for every church I've been a part of: "Yes." In every church I find amazing people who have beautiful lives which reflect the grace and love of Jesus. In every church I find faithful people who seek to live the way Jesus calls them to. However, there is a disconnect when the church "bears little resemblance to the One it claims to follow."⁵¹

In the midst of this critique of the Church, Labberton expresses his hope which I share, "I believe the local church can be one of the best contexts in which to be formed as a person and as a disciple."⁵² That is my personal experience with the church. The church shaped and formed me, transforming me into a disciple of Jesus. And I agree that God intends for the church to be a community of love and hope in a lost world.

The work of the Church then, is to seek to more completely align itself with Jesus, not merely as individuals but also as a community. This is true no matter what "strategy" a church uses, whether it is missional or attractional, contemporary or traditional, Boomer or Millennial. It is what gives me hope for the institution of the church. God has chosen

⁵⁰ Ibid., 26.

⁵¹ Ibid., 26.

⁵² Ibid., 31.

his church to be the community where his love and grace is experienced and shared—a place that is a crucible of transformation of those inside and outside the church. While some feel called to leave the institution and have no hope for the survival of the institution, I hold on to great hope because God has chosen to work this way. At the same time, I do see the need for radical renewal and reformation in the church.

I remain dedicated to working within the institution to be an agent of change and renewal. I gained clarity while reading this book that my primary call is to live and love as a follower of Jesus. And my vocational call is to lead the church in such a way that it may strive toward this simple profound challenge. “Every believer and every community of believers needs to recover our identity as followers of Jesus and learn to practice it in daily life, in the context of our real world.”⁵³ This is the heart of the missional incarnational impulse.

To be incarnational is to embrace the call to live like Jesus in the world in which we find ourselves: in the world, in the community, in the neighborhood, in the workplace, in our families. We are to be expressions of the love of Jesus in those places. To be missional is to accept God’s purpose for ourselves and for our church to co-labor with God in loving our lost world.

In Chapter Four, Labberton argues that the cultural context in which we live has made a radical shift. The Church is now living in exile and is no longer the dominant culture here in the United States. In fact, he says we are a declining cultural force.⁵⁴ Thus,

⁵³ Ibid., 39.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 55.

we need to shift our stance in our culture from being the center of our culture to being missionaries sent into our culture. God has not sent us into the world to judge, but to love and live as light-offering hope and life. He likens us to the Israelites living in exile. “This was the point of exile for Israel: they were to seek the shalom of the city in which they were oppressed, for in its shalom they would find their shalom (Jeremiah 29:7).”⁵⁵ He challenges us to live in such a way that the world is a better place because we live here.

Our challenge is to strive to live our daily lives faithfully following Jesus and to work together to seek to make the world a better place by our personal involvement. It will take our full intention and attention. It will cost us. We will have to be willing to make sacrifices. We will need to seek God’s guidance in everything we do. My experience through Cornerstone is that when we do this, life is rich and God is real. This is the abundant life Jesus calls us to and promises us.

Recognizing we now live as exiles is the heart of the issue that drives my perception of the vocation of pastor to shift from shepherd of the church to missionary to the community. The church is not the center of our cities anymore. People in our culture do not automatically come to church. We need to heed Jesus’ call to go out and meet people where they are, inviting them into a relationship with Jesus. And then we invite them to be part of the church, the community of believers, because that is the place where we can be shaped and transformed and sent back out into the world to share the gospel with others.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 58.

Labberton continues by challenging the Church to be the community of Jesus' followers in which we learn how to love and to serve, to be the place where disciples of Jesus are developed and matured. As that happens internally, we can better love and serve the wider world beyond the church.⁵⁶ At St. Paul's we undertook a project this past year to install projectors, a computer, and screens in our sanctuary. I was proud of our congregation for stepping up to this project and being willing to be a little uncomfortable for the sake of others. But I was very surprised to see how this project resurfaced personal conflicts that were not resolved years ago. That kind of bickering turns people off from the church. We must find a way to love one another inside the church in life affirming and healthy ways, especially when conflict surfaces. Only then can we be an authentic witness to the powerful love and grace of Jesus.

Finally, in the last chapter, Labberton addresses the issue of vocation. He drives home again that the primary call and focus of our lives is to follow Jesus, to experience the continuous formation into the likeness of Jesus.⁵⁷ Part of that calling is to live out our discipleship in our work. That is the heart of our vocation.

What I learned about my pastoral vocation while reading this book is that first, my primary focus is personally living as a disciple of Jesus. Second, my job is to keep church people focused on flourishing where God has put them, and refocus my efforts on making disciples rather than recruiting church members. And third, I need to lead the

⁵⁶ Ibid., 63.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 135.

church in such a way that it embraces its call to be a community of disciples who are learning to live, love, and serve not for our sake but for the sake of the world.

Practices

The Spirit of the Disciplines, Dallas Willard

The main premise of Dallas Willard in *The Spirit of the Disciplines* is as simple as it is profound. And it has the power to change not only our lives, but also the world. It is not his original idea; it is God's central intention for humanity. Willard writes, "My central claim is that we *can* become like Christ by doing one thing – by following him in the overall style of life he chose for himself ... We can, through faith and grace, become like Christ by practicing the types of activities he engaged in, by arranging our whole lives around the activities he himself practiced."⁵⁸

To be a disciple of Jesus is so much more than believing in Jesus, trying to be good, and going to church. At a foundational level, to be a disciple of Jesus is to re-order life so as to live by the values of Jesus and the Kingdom of God. The heart of being a disciple is living by the values Jesus taught and lived. We do not seek to replicate Jesus' life; it would be unrealistic to live as he did in the ancient near east. We seek to incarnate his values into our daily living; that is, to live as Jesus would live if he were me in my context.

What is important to grasp is that following Jesus does not merely involve our outward actions. We are not called to teach, preach, and heal as Jesus did. It is not just

⁵⁸ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988), ix.

about loving our enemies, turning the other cheek, sharing wisdom, offering healing. All of these outward actions are important but only part of the picture. Willard makes a wonderful analogy of being a disciple to being a child who idolizes a professional baseball player.⁵⁹ The child will seek to emulate the baseball player, copying his stance in the batter's box, swinging the bat in the same way, wearing the same socks and shoes. The child does all this, and yet does not play as well as the player he idolizes. The child does not play as well because he is only copying the player's game behaviors. The power of the professional baseball player's game is in what is not seen. The daily exercise, drills, diet, and rest. Willard writes, "A baseball player who expects to excel in the game without adequate exercise of his body is no more ridiculous than the Christian who hopes to be able to act in the manner of Christ when put to the test without the appropriate exercise in godly living."⁶⁰

A disciple must copy the spiritual practices such as prayer, fasting, and worship. These are the actions that empower loving behaviors. This is true for baseball players, it is true for disciples, it is true for pastors. There are vocational practices done behind the scenes which empower the outward behaviors of a pastor. These behind-the-scenes spiritual disciplines have the power to transform us to be more like Christ. We cannot effect this transformation with our own power; we must make ourselves available to God to release his power into our lives. Willard describes that a rigorous practice of discipleship brings true transformation of character.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Ibid., 3-4.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 4.

⁶¹ Ibid., 111.

The message of salvation is so much more than the idea that we are forgiven of our sins and entitled to eternal life in heaven. The message of Jesus was not just one of forgiveness of sins, but rather the promise of new life.⁶² The new life is available to us through the practice and power of the spiritual disciplines.

Willard makes a powerful analogy of a disciple to a light bulb. “The light bulb is dead when disconnected from the electrical current, even though it still exists. But when connected to the current, it radiates and affects its surroundings with a power and substance that is in it but not of it.”⁶³ We have lots of church people dimly shining. We have not taught people the need for nor the way to connect with the current. They get a little power from worship on Sunday but not much to sustain them for life’s daily challenges. The church falls short when it does not do an effective job of teaching people how to access the current. This happens when we focus on making church members over disciples of Jesus.

Willard proposes that churches be academies for life as it was meant to be.⁶⁴ The church ought to be a community that teaches the disciplines of the spiritual life and challenges us to put those at the center of our lives. I liken this to a skeleton. Our skeletons hold our body together and make it mobile. It is impossible for humans to exist without a skeleton (apart from advanced medical intervention). Our skeleton supports our life and empowers our living. In the same way, a framework of spiritual disciplines that we build our life around can support our life and empower our daily living.

⁶² Ibid., 36.

⁶³ Ibid., 64.

⁶⁴ Ibid., xii.

This is a radically different approach than what I grew up with. For me, spiritual disciplines were always the “ought to’s” of my faith. I felt inadequate in their practice. They did not come naturally for me. I always felt guilty about the lack of time I invested in spiritual disciplines. As I have matured in my faith and been taught more about how to practice spiritual disciplines, I have discovered that spiritual disciplines bring life to my faith. As I continue to grow and implement these ways of Jesus into my daily living, God transforms me and graces me with power.

The same is true in the vocational practices of ministry. I feel the need to establish a framework of vocational practices, behind-the-scenes disciplines, which empower and enliven ministry. If I could define these with clarity and practice them with consistency, I believe it would have a profound impact not only on myself, but also my church and through the church, the world.

CHAPTER 3

A THEOLOGY OF VOCATIONAL AUTHENTICITY

The missional church requires missional leaders. For the church to transition to a missional posture in the neighborhood, the role of pastor must also shift. The traditional vocational practices of the pastor must shift from those primarily caring for the congregation to primarily training disciples who go out into the world and engage the world with the gospel. If the majority of work hours are spent in the church building and with church members, then it will be difficult for the pastor to shift focus from the congregation to the neighborhood. The mission of the Church is not merely to grow the church but to participate in the mission of God and send out its people into the world to engage the community with the gospel.

Jesus commissioned his disciples to go out to all nations and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). The Church needs to reclaim this commission, particularly the call to be sent into all the world. The Church and its pastors must go out into the world with the gospel. This is the heart of the missional impulse. The primary vocational shift for the pastor is to see his or her self as a missionary to the surrounding community, not primarily a shepherd to the flock that is the existing congregation.

John Wesley made some radical shifts to his vocational practices as an Anglican priest in England as he adapted his understanding of scriptural Christianity to his cultural setting. These fueled a renewal movement called Methodism in England in the 1700s, which made its way to North America. The church which formed out of this Methodist movement had a twofold focus: personal holiness and social holiness—transformation of individuals alongside transformation of the world. These twin emphases fueled widespread spiritual awakening in London, England, the colonies in America, and beyond. John Wesley made key adaptations to the vocational practices of his day that set forth principles to guide vocational practices today.

This chapter explores the theological underpinnings of leadership in the missional church to guide in re-imagining the vocation of pastor. Five core values emerge from linking missional church insights with key biblical passages and ministry principles of John Wesley. The five essential core values of missional leadership are to be missional in focus, incarnational in style, balanced in healthy holistic living, grounded in spiritual practices, and realistic in expectation. These core values point to five vocational practices essential for vitality and new life.

Missional: Go Out and Engage the World with the Gospel

God loves the world. God's love has the power to redeem all of creation and each individual in it. This great love compelled God to send Jesus into the world. This great love compelled Jesus to send his disciples into the world with the gospel. God is not a stationary God, sitting in the heavens, waiting for people to approach him, only acting in response to human requests. God is active in our world: loving, healing, transforming,

redeeming, resurrecting, and sustaining life. And so the church must not sit and wait for people to come, or even offer great programs and do good marketing so people will come to church. The church must go out into the community and take the love of Jesus to the people and creation. It is this work of engaging the world with the gospel in which pastors are called to co-labor with God. The primary vocational shift for a missional pastor is to see his or herself as a missionary to the surrounding community rather than a shepherd to the people in his or her local church. This follows the example of Jesus and was the practice of John Wesley.

God's Mission Has a Church

Missio Dei is a Latin theological term that can be translated “mission of God.”¹ *Missio Dei* identifies God as a sending God. The mission of God is to love the world. God is always actively loving and redeeming Creation. And the good news is that God's mission has a church. The church is an instrument for God's mission. The Church is to partner with Jesus to accomplish God's purposes for all Creation and not be bound by cultural and religious expectations and guidelines. This is the orientation of the missional church. Alan Hirsch writes in *The Forgotten Ways*, “A working definition of missional church is a community of God's people that defines itself, and organizes its life around its real purpose of being an agent of God's mission to the world.”² God calls us to be missionaries, to go out into the world and bring the love of Jesus to the neighborhood. The Church today must broaden its mission, not just to those “in the parish,” the church

¹ Eddie Arthur, “Missio Dei and the Mission of the Church,” Wycliffe Global Alliance, <http://www.wycliffe.net/missiology?id=3960> (accessed November 27, 2015).

² Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 82.

members and constituents, but all those in the world. The world is our parish. We serve a God with a mission who has sent us out into the world to accomplish his will. Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well and John Wesley's pursuit of the world as his parish both demonstrate the missional heart of God.

Jesus Hurdles Cultural Barriers to Engage the Woman at the Well

Jesus consistently went out into the community and engaged the people with the good news. One specific example is his encounter with a Samaritan woman as recorded in John 4:1-42. Jesus hurdles cultural, religious, and gender barriers to engage this woman at the well. The Samaritan and Jewish people had deep-seated conflict due to political, historical and religious conflicts over many generations.³ The Jewish people viewed the Samaritans as unclean and thus not to be engaged. In addition, they had conflict over the proper location of the temple and proper worship.⁴ Therefore, Jews did not associate with Samaritans.

Against this backdrop, first, Jesus broke cultural religious barriers. Typically, Jewish people would take a detour around Samaria when traveling from Judea to Galilee in order to avoid contacting Samaritan people. In John 4:4, the gospel writer tells us Jesus had to go through Samaria on the way from Judea to Galilee, making a point that Jesus would not avoid these people. Jesus would not be bound by the cultural and religious customs of the day. The first barrier Jesus crossed was the cultural religious barrier of avoiding Samaritans.

³ Harvey J. S. Blaney, *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 4:391.

⁴ Bruce Milne, *The Message of John* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993), 83.

Second, Jesus initiated a conversation with a woman at the well, which broke both gender and cultural barriers. John 4:7 records, “When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, ‘Will you give me a drink?’” Jewish men were not supposed to talk with women. A sample of rabbinical teachings illustrates the expectations of male and female interactions. “One should not talk with a woman on the street, not even with his own wife, and certainly not with somebody else’s wife, because of the gossip of men,” and, “It is forbidden to give a woman any greeting.”⁵ The woman’s response indicates how unusual this would have been for a Jewish man to speak to a Samaritan woman. John 4:9 records, “The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?’ (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)” The second barrier Jesus broke was the gender barrier.

Third, Jesus broke with custom and engaged her in a lengthy conversation on significant issues. Jesus treated this woman with great dignity and respect. He listened to her. He talked with her and led her into deeper understanding. She was very responsive, and Jesus drew her deeper into conversation by suggesting she think beyond the physical aspect of living water. He spoke in a language and with images she could relate to. He led her in conversation from water to worship and finally revealed himself to her in a way she could understand. John 4:26 records that Jesus said, “I who speak to you am he.” The Samaritans’ Scriptures only contained the Pentateuch. So Jesus used similar words from the Scriptures she used and would understand. Jesus revealed himself to her in a similar way that God revealed himself to Moses in Exodus 3:14, by saying, “I am who I am.”

⁵ Ibid.

Jesus treated her as a full human being, a worthy recipient of grace and his message, not as a despised enemy from whom to fear contamination.⁶ Jesus crossed several religious and cultural barriers just to engage this woman in conversation and then proceeded to treat her with respect and dignity and draw her into an understanding of deeper truth, finally revealing himself to her.

At this point, the disciples return and are shocked by Jesus' behavior, which violates social and religious customs. Jesus proceeded to defend his actions by defining his mission as, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work" (John 4:34). Jesus states his purpose is not to fulfill and abide by current religious and social expectations, but to do the will of God. That is Jesus' overriding purpose, to do the will of the one who sent him. Jesus is a missionary to the world: he has been sent by God to fulfill God's purposes. In Jesus' actions here, he clearly has been sent, not only to the Jewish people, but to the Samaritan people as well. And, it is safe to assume, he has been sent to all people. Jesus continued to talk in John 4:34-38 about the harvest and how the disciples will reap the harvest that others have planted. This speaks to the future when the disciples will be the sent ones to continue his, and thereby God's, work. Jesus' defense of his actions with the Samaritan woman at the well spells out guiding principles for his actions. Jesus is on a mission, sent by God, to all people to share the good news. His motivation is worthy of our consideration to define our actions. We, too, as Jesus' Church, are to focus not on obeying the current cultural and religious expectations, but on obeying the will of God as we are sent out to all people to carry on the mission of God.

⁶ Gail R. O'Day, *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 9:571.

Next, the woman went back to her people in town and shared her experience with Jesus. She became a witness. She is still not clear exactly who Jesus is, or what his words meant, but she shares and they respond. They then relate to Jesus and come to believe, saying, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world” (John 4:42). It is remarkable that not only did Jesus treat this woman with great respect and dignity, but that she then became a witness to her community who brought them to faith in Jesus. Not only was she included in Jesus’ message, but she was also valued enough to be a sent one, a messenger, a missionary.⁷ She acted in partnership with Jesus to bring about the harvest. The Church is to follow Jesus’ example and share the love of God with all people, in a language they can understand, crossing all barriers to share the gospel.

John Wesley Looks upon the World as His Parish

John Wesley was an Anglican priest in England in the 1700s. He sought to bring renewal to the Church of England. John Wesley had to navigate the radical cultural shifts brought on by the Industrial Age to bring the gospel to all people. His work is instructional for us today as we navigate renewal of the church in the midst of radical cultural shifts.

The first principle to explore is his realization that the world was his parish. In his journal entry on June 11, 1739, John records that he was summoned to London at his earliest convenience.⁸ The church leaders were challenging his practice of preaching all

⁷ Ibid., 570.

⁸ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 1:199-202.

over, from town to town, even though he was not appointed to those parishes. John defends himself by saying that he is a disciple of Jesus, and as such, he will not sit still, even while he awaits assignment. They challenged his practice of gathering Christians who are not of his charge to sing psalms, pray and hear the Scriptures expounded. His response was that he lives under the authority of Scripture, in which God commands him to spread the gospel. He writes, “Where shall I preach? Europe, Asia, Africa, America? But all of these divided into parishes. Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter, I look upon the world as my parish.”⁹ With that defense and guiding principle, John Wesley continued to share the gospel wherever he found himself. His mission broadened, his responsibility was not limited to the people within his parish. His mission included the whole world, wherever he found himself. He intentionally crossed the parish boundaries and religious guidelines and went out into the city where the least and the lost were. This guiding principle eventually led him to share the gospel outside the church buildings, in the town squares, pubs, and fields. In a similar vein, pastors of local churches today need to follow John Wesley’s example and expand their view to see not only their parishioners, but all the people in the community, as their parish. The mission field is the world, the community, the neighborhood in which missional pastors find themselves. Missional leaders must intentionally go out into the world and share the gospel of God’s great love there.

⁹ Ibid., 201.

Incarnational: Be the Presence of God in Your Time and Space

In addition to being missionally focused, a second characteristic of missional leadership is to live incarnationally, living with the people and sharing the gospel with them in ways they can understand. As disciples, a central intent is to live the kingdom values Jesus taught and lived. We are not to imitate Jesus, for he lived in the ancient near east. Rather, we are to translate kingdom values into contemporary cultural context. This incarnational impulse must be central to the lifestyle of a missional leader.

Incarnational Living

Missional pastors are to be expressions of the love of Jesus in the world today. Alan Hirsch writes, “If God’s central way of reaching his world was to incarnate himself in Jesus, then our way of reaching the world should likewise be incarnational.”¹⁰ Later he writes, “Incarnational ministry essentially means taking the church to the people, rather than bringing people to the church.”¹¹ This requires we engage the culture, not separate from it.

To live incarnationally requires a person blur the lines between sacred and secular. All of life is holy when set aside for use by God. God can use anything to teach, to communicate, and to guide. For example, in my call to plant a church, finally it was while watching the movie *Pearl Harbor* that I heard God calling me. God can use it all, so it is not necessary to separate secular from sacred and think God only works in the sacred. Believers today tend to cocoon themselves within the Christian community

¹⁰ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 133.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 135.

spending most of their time with church people. Jesus calls us to be salt and light in the world, not to separate ourselves from the world, but to exert our influence in the world. As Jesus was sent from heaven to live among the people, so we are sent into the world to make the love of God real. John Wesley would incorporate this principle of “being more vile” in his ministry when he began field preaching.

Being Salt and Light

Jesus taught this principle of incarnational living in the Sermon on the Mount.

According to Matthew, Jesus addressed the crowd saying,

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16).

These verses are a metaphor for the life of the disciple.

The world is decaying and dark and needs the influence of salt to preserve and light to overcome darkness. Thus the Christian’s vocation is to be salt and light.¹² Both salt and light exist not for themselves, but for the impact they have on others. Salt preserves and seasons. Light illuminates. Thus this metaphor lifts up the call on disciples to impact others. It implies disciples have a function beyond themselves. The bold statements, “You are...” are emphatic by both word choice and position.¹³ Listeners

¹² John R. W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon On the Mount* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 65.

¹³ M. Eugene Boring, *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 8:181.

might have assumed that the religious leaders should be salt and light, but they themselves were not worthy to be salt and light. These sayings depict the mission inherent in discipleship. Here Jesus is calling *all* followers *to be* salt and light. These are less commands than statements. You are light. You are salt. Therefore, live in such a way as to fulfill that purpose. Accept this reality and live into it.¹⁴ It echoes the call of God on Israel to be salt. This is then a continuation of Israel's God-given purpose now being extended to those who follow Jesus.

Peterson captures this message well in his translation in *The Message*,

Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage. Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16, *The Message*).

Disciples must retain Christlikeness like salt must retain saltiness. Living like Jesus makes one distinct from the world, for it requires counter-cultural living no matter what culture one lives in. Salt loses its saltiness when it becomes diluted and impure. One loses his or her impact when we compromise and become more like the culture. We are to be rubbed into society to help it from going bad. Salt has no business staying in a lovely saltshaker. Salt must get out and get mixed in with culture to have an impact.¹⁵ Our

¹⁴ N. T. Wright, *Matthew for Everyone: Part One* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 40.

¹⁵ Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, 65.

vocation as followers of Jesus is to be salt and light, to be out in the world, shining our light in its darkness and seasoning the world with kingdom living.

John Wesley Is Forced Outside the Church and Preaches in the Fields

In 1725, as a young student at Oxford, John Wesley was influenced by reading Bishop Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. John Wesley was filled with a strong desire to live according to those rules, but he was alone. Four years later he found someone else with the same desire, and they met to help one another. Soon two more joined them, and they agreed to meet on Sunday evenings. Soon they spent six evenings each week, studying the classics, reading the Scriptures, and provoking one another to love and to do good works.¹⁶ They called themselves the Holy Club. They took seriously the rules; they were "tenacious of order to the last degree, observant of every rule of the Church." They were orthodox on every point. This small group came to be called Methodists because they were so methodical in their approach to discipleship.¹⁷

After a failed missionary endeavor in the colony of Georgia, John Wesley returned to London in 1738. Full of passion for the Church (of England) he longed to get back to Oxford, but was detained in London. He was, "Continually importuned to preach in one and another church," not only Sunday mornings, but afternoons, evenings and weekdays also. He writes, "But in short time I was excluded from one and another

¹⁶ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 7:421.

¹⁷ Ibid.

church, and, at length, shut out of them all.”¹⁸ Perhaps this was the best thing that ever happened to John Wesley, for it forced him out of the church and sent him into the world.

George Whitfield invited John Wesley to join him in the practice of field preaching. John Wesley was a conservative high churchman, and, therefore, the idea of preaching outside the sanctuary was abhorrent to him. He wrote on Saturday, March 31, 1739, “In the evening I reached Bristol, and met Mr. Whitefield there. I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this savage way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a church.” John Wesley saw the great throngs of people who were eager to hear the gospel, and he was convinced he needed to set propriety aside. Just two days later, on April 2, he wrote in his journal, “At four in the afternoon, I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people.”¹⁹

Thus began John Wesley’s career of field preaching, an experiment because it was better than not preaching at all. It went against all his training and belief that preaching belonged in the Church. He writes later,

What multitudes of them . . . who, week after week, spent the Lord’s Day, either in the ale-house, or in idle diversions, and never troubled themselves about going to church, or to any public worship at all. Now, would you really have desired that these poor wretches should have sinned on till they dropped into hell? Surely you would not. But by what other means was it possible they should have been

¹⁸ Ibid., 422.

¹⁹ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., 1:185.

plucked out of the fire? Had the Minister of the parish preached like an angel, it had profited them nothing; for they heard him not. But when one came and said, ‘Yonder is a man preaching on the top of the mountain,’ that they ran in droves to hear what he would say; and God spoke to their hearts. It is hard to conceive of anything else which could have reached them. Had it not been for field-preaching, the uncommonness of which was the very circumstance that recommended it, they must have run on in the error of the way, and perished in their blood.²⁰

The same is true today. People are not coming inside churches; worship attendance is declining. The gospel must be taken to the streets, to the people, incarnated into the culture in which people live.

Those three days changed the course of John Wesley’s ministry. He was forced out of the church buildings and drawn out to the fields. From there, he expanded his ministry to pubs, street corners, and all manner of places other than behind a pulpit and thus became known for bringing the gospel to the common people. In defense of his actions, later he wrote, “There will be considerable good done there, if the preachers don’t coop themselves up in the house. No great good will be done at any place without field preaching. You say I do great harm by breaking and setting aside order. What is the end of ecclesiastical order? Is it not to bring souls from power of Satan to God?”²¹ The result of field preaching is that people heard the gospel, accepted Christ, and lived as disciples of Jesus. That is the rule for judging the practice of field preaching. The people back then, and people today, will never hear the gospel if it is only proclaimed inside a church. There is a time and place to let go of religious customs in order to reach common people with the gospel. That was John Wesley’s motive, and it should be ours. Today,

²⁰ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., 8:230.

²¹ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., 12:80.

more and more people are not going into church. It is imperative the Church go out to the people.

John Wesley combined the idea that the world was his parish with the idea of “being more vile” and spent less time in the church and more time in the bars, outside the factories, even preaching in the fields instead of from a pulpit. John’s friend Whitfield encouraged him to leave the pulpit and preach in the fields in order to reach people who did not come inside the church with the gospel. At first John was reluctant, feeling it took away from the holiness of preaching. But he decided to try it and found that people were very responsive as he brought the gospel to the common people in the places they occupied. This was incarnational, taking the gospel to where the people were, and speaking in a language they understood.

In the missional church, it is essential to live incarnationally. An effective missionary does not go into a culture to judge it and try to change it. An effective missionary goes into a culture, builds relationships of trust, lives out Kingdom values, and figures out how to translate the gospel of Jesus into the culture. That is incarnational living.

The missional leader must, then, live incarnationally in the world, loving people in such a way as to point them to Jesus. The missional leader must build authentic, relevant, real, honest, vulnerable, no-strings-attached, relationships with people. The purpose is not to get people into church, but to get people connected with the living, loving God we know in Jesus. The motivation is to authentically love our neighbor, not to fill the church pews. Missional church requires incarnational living, which is willing to “be more vile” in order to reach some, as John Wesley came to realize.

Norman Shawchuck writes,

Jesus stands with one foot in heaven and the other upon earth, his hands and side scarred by nails and spear. He stands at the very heart of human history, human suffering, human death, anguish, and tragedy. But he stands there like a rock! He stands there having endured everything – even human suffering in thought and body. And he says, ‘This is where you must stand, not in a dreamland of faith that deceives you into thinking you can float into heaven on a billowy cloud. No, if ever you are to enter heaven, you will do so at the cost of serving God at the vortex of human suffering and tragedy, and your only earthly reward will be that people curse you for it.’²²

Shawchuck captures that this is a tough calling. It is not easy to live incarnationally. It cost Jesus his very life. It involves pain and suffering. We cannot stand with people in the midst of their lives without experiencing pain. We cannot live in the world as disciples without some sort of suffering. Jesus promised us that. To live missionally and incarnationally cannot be done in our own human strength. Jesus exemplifies this in his living. He spent countless hours with people, preaching, healing, touching, and offering words and acts of compassion. He also spent countless unrecorded hours alone, with his heavenly father, drawing strength, direction, and power. In order to live incarnationally, we need to apprentice Jesus, imitating his overall lifestyle.

Apprentice Jesus: Live and Lead Like Jesus

The third principle of missional leadership is apprenticing Jesus, following his example in living a healthy, balanced, spiritually empowered lifestyle. The Church and its leaders today tend to be out of synch with Christ. It is time to resist the pull of cultural and religious expectations and return to Jesus’ expectations and practices. The missional

²² Norman Shawchuck, *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God*, (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2006), 237.

church challenges us to recalibrate our lives with Christ. Jesus offers a direct invitation to model our lives after his in order to receive true life in Matthew 11:28-30. John Wesley demonstrates the value of judging vocational practices by the values of Jesus rather than the expectations of the institution of the Church. The call is clear, to seek to live and lead like Jesus.

Discipleship in the Missional Church

Willard expresses a haunting question, “Why don’t Christians look more like Christ?” His answer is that Christians, in general, do not truly practice spiritual formation. They are not patterning their lives after the life of Christ. He challenges believers today to orient the whole of their lives after Jesus, to apprentice Jesus. In this pursuit, believers will discover a rhythm of life that works in tune with the Spirit. This is a lifelong endeavor.²³

This is a key focus of the missional church, discipleship. The purpose of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who transform the world. It is a correction to today’s churches which seem to value and work toward making faithful church members. Hirsch writes, “In order to recover the ethos of authentic Christianity, we need to refocus our attention back to the root of it all, to recalibrate ourselves and our congregations around the person and work of Jesus, the Lord.”²⁴ The missional church is to be the faith community that teaches the disciplines of the spiritual life and challenges us to realign our priorities and loyalties around the person and work of Christ.

²³ Dallas Willard, “Leadership: The Apprentices,” Christianity Today, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2005/003/2.20.html> (accessed April 12, 2006).

²⁴ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 94.

Learning the Unforced Rhythm of Grace

Jesus offers words of life according to Matthew 11:28-30. “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Jesus is addressing the oppressive rules and regulations of religion when he invites followers to take up his yoke and apprentice his living. He promises the yoke is easy, and life and joy will be restored. Matthew 11:28-30 is Jesus’ invitation to come to him and receive rest from one’s burdens. Specifically, this passage points to the burden of religious obligation imposed by Judaism of the day. The Pharisees called people to carry the yoke of the Torah, which was the heavy burden of the Jewish law.²⁵ Jesus invites people to pick up a different yoke.

The burden imposed by the religion of Jesus’ day is similar to the burden imposed by the institution of the Church today. Religious expectations and obligations for pastors are burdensome and rob pastors of the life Jesus intends. Jesus’ priority was to seek out and live by the expectation and will of his heavenly father. This often conflicted with the expectation and will of the religious leaders. The same is true today. The missional pastor must focus on apprenticing Jesus and seeking the will of God over the expectations of the institution and its members. The result will be living freely and lightly in the unforced rhythm of grace, as Peterson translates these verses in *The Message*.

²⁵ Wright, *Matthew for Everyone*, 137.

John Wesley's Gauge of Scriptural Christianity

John Wesley wrestled with the conflict between what he called scriptural Christianity and the institutional practices in the Church of England throughout his ministry. He was loyal to the Church of England. But time and time again the expectations and demands of the institution conflicted with his sense of what was needed for the sake of Jesus and the gospel, which he called scriptural Christianity. Each time John Wesley wrestled with the matter, he boldly took the path of obedience to will of God over obedience to the Church of England.

A Holy Club member, William Morgan, suggested they visit prisoners to fulfill the call in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46. The vocational practice of the day was for a parish pastor to visit only prisoners condemned to die. William Morgan visited people convicted of common crimes, as well as those in debtors' prison. He provided for their physical needs, as well as engaged them in meaningful conversation. He reported to Wesley his practice of visiting these prisoners and the fruitful conversations he had with them. He talked of this so frequently that on August 24, 1730, John and his brother Charles went to visit prisoners. They were so well satisfied with the conversations that they agreed to go once or twice a week. This led to a regular pursuit of doing good to all people by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting those who are sick and in prison. John sought the advice of his father in this radical matter of visiting prisoners. His father, an Anglican priest as well, responded that he greatly approved of this practice.²⁶ Later, in a letter John Wesley wrote in defense of their

²⁶ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., 1:7.

actions, he described their purpose of seeking to meet the physical, financial, and spiritual needs through instruction and charitable contributions.²⁷ These practices became a defining mark of these Methodists, to not only be serious and devout in their personal pursuit of deepening their faith and love for God, but also serving as Christ's hands among the poor and those in need through acts of mercy and compassion.

John Wesley took the gospel from behind the sacred pulpit, outside the holy church, and into the vile streets. John Wesley constantly adapted the religious and institutional practices of his day in order to create new ways of ministry, bringing the gospel to all people. His priority was to attune his ministry to the ministry and practice of Jesus.

Live in the Tension: Engagement and Withdrawal

The fourth principle of missional leadership guides a pastor to live in the tension between engagement and withdrawal—negotiating a balance between engaging the world in acts of compassion and pulling away for spiritual renewal. It is critical to be spiritually empowered, for relying on our human power will only lead to burnout. There is also a tension to negotiate between nurturing the people of a congregation and engaging the world with the gospel. This is the tension of a missionary. The key to living in the tension between engagement and withdrawal is listening for and obeying the will of God.

²⁷ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., 1:9-10.

Engagement and Withdrawal in the Life of Jesus

Mark 1:21-39 depicts a day in the life of Jesus, powerfully illustrating the tension between the demands of the religious people, the demands of the common people, and the need to be alone. To begin with, in Mark 1:21-28 Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath. There he taught the religious people, and they were astounded by his teaching. It is worth noting that Jesus spent the Sabbath in the synagogue, the religious institution of the day. He was a faithful Jew who did follow the current practices of Judaism. While there, a man with an unclean spirit entered, and Jesus cast it out. The people were again impressed with his power, and word spread.

Mark's quick pace narrating these events emphasizes the action of Jesus. In the following verses, Mark 1:29-34, Jesus left the institution, the synagogue, and went to the home of his followers, Simon and Andrew's house. Once there, Jesus discovered Simon's mother-in-law was ill, and he responded by healing her. Then that evening, the whole city gathered outside the door and sought healing from Jesus. Jesus healed many that evening. This is a powerful scene depicting how Jesus' power impacted lives, healed, and released new life.

The story abruptly continues the next morning in Mark 1:35-39. Jesus got up early in the morning and withdrew to a quiet place to commune with his heavenly father. Presumably Jesus needed to renew his spirit after a demanding day of ministry. He also needed to touch base with his heavenly father and discern his next steps. The crowds returned to the house, seeking Jesus. The disciples could not find him. They hunted for Jesus and found him in a deserted place. They communicated to Jesus the urgency of the situation and the potential to do amazing ministry. But Jesus plainly and clearly, with

conviction, responded, “Let us go on.” Jesus was clear that he had not come to be a local healer. Jesus’ mission was beyond this small town. “Let us go on to neighboring towns so that I may proclaim the message there for that is what I came to do” (Mark 1:38). Jesus had great clarity of mission and purpose in this moment after his time apart with his heavenly father. We see in these verses that Jesus spent time in the religious institution of the day, he spent time in the community in small and large gatherings, and Jesus spent time quiet and alone. That is a good example for all spiritual leaders.

A key vocational practice of a missional leader is living in the tension between engaging in public ministry and withdrawing to a quiet place with God. Jesus went back and forth between religious people, common people, and solitude. This kind of living requires balance between breathing in, to receive the Holy Spirit through spiritual practices, and breathing out, to help and heal people through acts of compassion. It is living in a constant tension between withdrawal and engagement.

John Wesley Emphasis of Personal and Social Holiness

John Wesley taught that the life of a Christian ought to be one of transformation. Following Jesus ought to transform one’s life to be more like Christ. Specifically, he called people to personal and social transformation or, as he called it, holiness. Personal holiness is the transformation that happens in the heart and life of an individual believer as he or she receives the grace of Jesus. Social holiness is the transformation that happens in the world through acts of compassion and mercy, as the least and the lost receive the grace of Jesus Christ. Both are part of the Christian life and need to be kept in balance, for they nurture and sustain one another.

John Wesley came to understand this. In his early years, he was very focused on personal holiness, establishing essential practices for the Holy Club. These practices were very stringent and were strictly enforced. Along the way, John Wesley was challenged by a member of the Holy Club, William Morgan, to go to the local jail and visit the prisoners. John Wesley did not see the value in that, but one day he went. He was amazed at how God worked and was immediately convicted that visiting prisoners, helping the poor, and other social ministries were an essential part of following Jesus. Out of this experience, his emphasis on social holiness was born. Pursing personal holiness and social holiness became a hallmark of the Methodist movement.

It is crucial that ministry is balanced. Time should be taken to withdraw, to connect with God, and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is important to apply the truths of the gospel and the power of Jesus to our personal lives so that the Holy Spirit may effect change in individuals. But that is not all. This must be balanced by the outward effort of ministering to others, caring for the poor, the least and the lost, the orphan and the widow. Learning to live in this tension between engagement and withdrawal, between personal and social holiness, brings balance and purpose to discipleship. It is living as Jesus lived.

PART THREE

RE-IMAGINING VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

CHAPTER 4

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR VOCATIONAL AUTHENTICITY

This chapter establishes re-imagined principles for vocational practices, which support ministry as a missional leader. It defines essential practices for personal vocational authenticity, including getting out of the church building, engaging the community in acts of compassion, maintaining a healthy holistic lifestyle, engaging regularly in spiritual practices, and creating a realistic time management framework. These vocational practices will help me act my way into new thinking. Currently, I revert back into old practices, which reinforce old thinking. By pursuing these principles and practices, new thinking will be embedded into my behavior.

Get Out of the Church Building

First, missional leadership requires getting out of the church building and being present in the community. There is value in being in the church building. When I am there I am able to connect with the staff and the congregants who stop in. It is important to foster these relationships. I am also present to be aware of and deal with various issues as they arise, frequently heading off crises. Not to be overlooked is the administrative work I get done in the office.

However, there are liabilities of being in the office. I get pulled into conflictual situations that can easily be resolved without me. When I am not there, these issues get resolved without my involvement. Also, there are so many interruptions that I am not able to focus for study, reading, and writing. Currently, I do this work at my home office. Additionally, the more I am in the office, the more my mind and heart are focused on the issues of the church and its people. It sucks me into the church and keeps me church-centric.

Therefore, a key vocational practice is to spend significant time outside the church building. Study, reading, and writing can be accomplished in coffee shops, libraries, and eating establishments. I can also meet with congregants in these places. Being out of the building, I then have a ministry of presence in the places I find myself. Part of this vocational practice requires I network when I am in the community by taking time to get to know the people there, the servers, the business owners, the workers, the patrons. Time and time again, I find myself entering into significant conversations with these people. Therefore, being out of the church building, networking, and intentionally being available to God creates opportunities to incarnate the gospel. God goes before us and is already present in these places and at work in people's lives. Being present in the community makes me available to cooperate with God in his mission.

Since the primary challenge is to redefine the pastoral role as missionary to the community over shepherd to the church, then a radical shift here is necessary in how I use my time and where I am present. Missionaries spend major amounts of time connecting with the people in the culture. Thus, the deep change I am aiming at is to spend at least 50 percent of my work hours outside the church building.

Engage the Community

Second, missional leadership requires engaging the community through incarnational living. This has a triple emphasis; being present in the community, intentionally building relationships, and engaging in acts of compassion. To begin with, incarnational living requires being present in the community and intentionally living as Jesus calls us to, continually seeking to living out kingdom values. Incarnational living involves continually seeking to embody the values of Jesus. This is a lifetime endeavor, for there is always room for growth as we resist the pull of cultural values and lean into kingdom living by always striving to reflect the values of Jesus and the Kingdom of God in daily living.

In addition, incarnational living requires intentionally building authentic relationships of trust, as a missionary would. These are not relationships with a hidden agenda to get people to come to church. These are relationships of care and compassion, authentically getting to know people, with no strings attached.

Lastly, incarnational living requires intentionally engaging in acts of compassion, especially connecting with the poor and outcast. This is what Jesus spent significant time doing. Thus, to apprentice Jesus and obey God's call to care for the poor, oppressed, orphan and widow requires intentionally seeking ways to engage people in acts of compassion. This is not motivated by pity but seeks to become a mutual experience where both parties are blessed through the encounter. It is not that one person has something to offer and the other person has a need. It is that both people have needs and God can use each to bless the other. Through incarnational living and acts of compassion, the love of Jesus is made tangible in this world and in people's lives.

The point of getting out of the church building is not merely to find a new location to do all the same work. Rather it is to re-shape the expectations of what pastoral work is and to include missionary-type practices, such as being present as the church in the world, connecting in authentic no-strings-attached relationships with people in the community, and making the love of Jesus real in the community.

Healthy and Holistic Lifestyle

A third practice of a missional leader is to live a balanced, healthy, holistic, lifestyle. Missional leadership is more about a way of living than a professional occupation. Apprenticing Jesus is not a forty-hour-a-week pursuit, it is a whole life pursuit. Apprenticing Jesus is more than self-care, it is seeking to obey the will of God in every area of life. Living missionally and incarnationally requires margin in order to be available to God. Margin is the reserve available between our load and our limits. If there is little margin, then there is little available for God to use. To be able to respond to the Holy Spirit's leading, it is important to have resources available, such as time, energy, and money, as well as to be healthy enough to offer these things.

For me, personally, I have identified three areas to focus on: exercise for better physical health, read for better intellectual capacity, and engage in creative activities to increase emotional health. Overall, I am in excellent physical health, as just confirmed by an annual physical. The areas I need to work on are dealing with stress and lowering my blood sugar levels. Both of these concerns can be addressed through regular exercise. A regular routine of working out, both increasing muscle mass and cardiovascular exercise,

will provide stress relief and keep my blood sugars in check. I prefer to use exercise over medication to deal with both of these areas.

Another area of focus for me is reading. Over the years I have discovered that God frequently uses reading to refine and inspire my thinking. The StrengthsFinder assessment I completed in July 2007 identified these as my top five strengths: strategic, learner, ideation, maximizer, achiever.¹ These strengths are understood in the following ways. Strategic is to create alternative ways to proceed faced with a given set of opportunities, goals, and challenges. Learner is a great desire to learn and improve. Ideation makes one fascinated with ideas and able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena. Maximizer focuses on transforming something from good to great. Achiever works hard and has great stamina, seeking satisfaction in being busy and productive. Several of these reveal my drive to learn and work with ideas, translating them into action. My analytical mind is always working and needs new stimulation. Currently, reading is the first thing on my to do list that gets neglected. I need to be much more intentional about setting aside time to read, for this will empower my ministry in many ways.

Lastly, I will engage in creative practices, which renew my spirit. God is a creative spirit, and connecting with that part of myself also connects me to God who renews my spirit. The challenge and creative process of sewing a quilt engages a different part of my brain and energizes me. Creative practices also fight depression and loneliness, because instead of sitting around and watching television, I actually create

¹ *Clifton StrengthsFinder Top Five Report for Patti L Thomas* (Princeton, NJ: The Gallup Organization, 2000).

something. It also gives me a feeling of accomplishment, which is significant because so much of pastoral work does not create tangible results. Finishing a creative project is satisfying and rewarding. The two creative pursuits which are most meaningful to me are photography and quilting.

Living a balanced, healthy, holistic lifestyle is important in the life of a missional leader. Margin in each of these areas creates space for God to work. A regular routine of exercise, reading, and creative pursuits will feed my mind and spirit in a way that will energize me and keep me healthy and available to God.

Spiritual Practices to Maximize Leadership Capacity

Fourth, a missional leader needs to engage regularly in spiritual practices in order to be empowered by the spirit. Spiritual practices are those disciplines which connect us to God and put us in a position for God to renew and transform us. Spiritual practices are essential and life giving. To live missionally and incarnationally is demanding and requires sensitivity to the spirit's guidance and direction. When living missionally it is easy to become overwhelmed by the pain and suffering in the world. Spiritual practices are a means to expand our leadership capacity. Dr. Mary Maggard Hays in her work on leadership as she presented to us in class, has linked specific spiritual practices to specific leadership capacities. She proposes that a leader's ability to vision is enhanced through solitude and silence. The character of a leader is improved through study and meditation of God's word. The leader's ability to empower others is enhanced through prayer and

confession. Team building is increased through submission and celebration. The leader's capacity for disciplined action is increased through keeping sabbath.²

The weakest areas in my leadership capacity are vision and disciplined action. God commonly grants vision to leaders in the context of solitude on a mountaintop or desert place. Along these lines, God frequently speaks to me in my car and outside my daily routine. Henri Nouwen writes, "Solitude is a furnace of transformation. Without solitude we remain victims of our society and continue to be entangled in the illusions of false self . . . Solitude is not a private therapeutic place. Rather, it is the place of conversion, the place where the old self dies and the new self is born."³ Thus, I need to create regular practices of solitude and silence in the framework of vocational practices to create space to hear from God, to increase vision, and to create space for this conversion process and new life to emerge.

In the area of disciplined action, I have so many demands on me from the church, the parishioners, my children, my dog, and upkeep and maintenance of my home as a single person, that I usually give in to the tyranny of the urgent and neglect the important. Instead of feeling in control of my time and being intentional about how I use it, I often feel tossed about by the immediate demands on me. I need to be much more purposeful about how I use my time and protect time for the important things that are always there, but have no voice calling me to them. Keeping sabbath will help me maintain perspective and keep balance between work and rest. Keeping sabbath connects us with the living

² Mary Maggard Hays, "Leadership and Quality Characteristics" (lecture, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, February 8, 2006).

³ Henri J. M. Nouwen, "The Way of the Heart" (HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.: 1981), quoted in Norman Shawchuck, *A Guide for All Who Seek God*, (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2006), 91.

God, renews our spirit, so we can go back out into the world and act. It also grounds us in our identity as a child of God separate from our accomplishments and failures. As the previous areas focused on activity, this practice will create balance and is focused on pulling away and connecting with God. It is the withdrawal part we see Jesus do regularly. The most important step in this for me is to commit to a regular weekly day off. A day to use as I wish, and not to do work related tasks. In addition, I want to create practices to specifically withdraw and renew my spirit. My intention is to create a rhythm of withdrawing by diverting daily, withdrawing weekly, maintaining monthly and abandoning annually as Bob Logan outlined for us.⁴

Establish Control and Strategic Use of Time

Fifth, an essential practice of a missional leader is to establish control and strategic use of time. This for me is where the rubber meets the road. All of the above intentions need to be translated into specific actions and worked into a realistic schedule. I need to put all of the above into a framework to guide my time management on a monthly basis; otherwise, I am just adding vocational practices to an already too-busy life. The time framework will be geared toward all of my living, not just my professional hours each week, because missional incarnational living is truly a way of living, not a way of working.

⁴ Bob Logan, "Empowering Leaders for Healthy Growth" (lecture, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, July 26, 2007).

CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION OF FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, personal vocational practices are defined. The re-imagined principles and essential practices of missional leadership from the previous chapter are turned into corresponding vocational practices. A strategic framework is developed and implemented which will empower missional ministry and create an authentic vocational lifestyle.

Getting Out of the Office and Into the Community

My current vocational practices fall into six major categories: administration, worship leadership, teaching, congregational care, professional development, and responsibilities beyond the local church. A list of these practices and the estimated time I invest in them each week and month is in Appendix A. It is worth noting that these do not line up with the practices of a missionary in a community. These line up with the responsibilities of a shepherd of a church and a pastor maintaining the institution of the church.

Analysis of this list reveals that my current vocational practices consume on average sixteen hours per week in the church building. And, additionally another twenty-

one hour per week outside the church building. That totals thirty-seven hours each week on vocational practices which primarily focus on shepherding the current congregation. This clearly illustrates the problem, currently, thirty-seven hours per week are focused on church-centric vocational practices.

Determine Ways to Work Remotely Outside the Church Building

Many of these vocational obligations currently are accomplished outside the church building. For example, there are too many interruptions in the office for me to do my sermon preparation, writing, and studying in the church office, so I do those in my home office. I would like to do much of the work on my sermon while I am out in the community. Visitation of the sick and homebound along with the monthly dinner group are done outside the church building. All of the professional development activities are done outside the church building, as well as many of the responsibilities beyond the local church.

In addition, many of these vocational obligations could be moved outside the church building such as overseeing staff and working with committee chair people, answering email as well as preparation for and follow up to administrative meetings. I now have a laptop computer which allows me to do many of these activities out and about. We could even move some administrative and committee meetings outside the church building, which might open the eyes of the people to see the work they do in a broader community context.

Determine How Many Office Hours Are Needed

The reality is that my time gets eaten up in the church office. No matter how many hours I am in the office, there is always more work to do than I have time for. And, as many hours as I am present in the office, those hours will be consumed by church business, no matter how critical or trivial. Therefore, to make this radical shift to be a missionary to the community, I need to minimize the hours dedicated to being at the church so that time can be freed up for the more essential vocational practices of a missional leader. As I analyze my current practices, I want to limit my hours inside the church building to fifteen to seventeen per week which includes nine hours in the office mid-week, two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half hours on Sunday mornings, and three to five hours in church evenings and Saturdays.

Engaging the Community in Acts of Compassion

A key new vocational practice will be to engage the community in acts of compassion. This needs to be a regular part of my routine, not something I fit in when there is time. I am willing to devote several hours to this, because it will pull me into the community and help prevent me from being sucked into the church. Jesus devoted many hours to this as well, so in apprenticing Jesus, it is central to get outside the church building and serve in the community. I will explore different possibilities in our community and see where the needs intersect with my passions, skills, and availability, in order to find the best places for me to serve. Then I will make specific commitments to these activities and hold space in my calendar for them. I volunteered at a few non-profit agencies in Colorado Springs this fall to help me discover some viable opportunities.

Volunteer Experiences

To begin with, I volunteered at Marian House, a local Catholic Charity that offers several services, including a noon time meal which serves over six hundred hungry people every day of the year. On a Wednesday I went to Marian House at 10:30 and met with the volunteer coordinator. He told me about all of the programs they offer and potential service opportunities. He had specific needs for the mail room, to sort and hand out mail once a week, which is a unique opportunity because you get to know the clients who use this service and, thus, it provides an opportunity to build relationships. He also told me about the Homeless Engagement And Response Team (hereafter, H.E.A.R.T.). This is a street outreach program which builds relationships with homeless individuals and connects at-risk people with the available services in the community. This opportunity includes training and assessment and requires a long-term commitment. I am interested in H.E.A.R.T. but will have to see if it is the best option for my overall strategy.

After meeting with the volunteer coordinator, I went into the dining hall to volunteer with the noon meal that day. By the time I got there, the food had been prepared. I was given a brief orientation and then assigned the task of serving at a station in the feeding line. My job was to serve the main course. Soon the clients were allowed to enter the facility and walk through the food line. I tried to make eye contact with each client, greeting them with a smile and a big scoop of hot food. The majority of the clients that day were very courteous and grateful. Clients were all ages, from preschool children through elderly. Some were high school students, some were families, some obviously street people. All were hungry, and we fed each one no questions asked and no

proselytizing. It was an eventful day. The ambulance was called twice, once for a client who fainted, and once for a client who had a seizure. I was very impressed by how ready the leadership and volunteers were to assist each individual with respect and dignity, while still serving the over six hundred people in a brief two-hour window. I was also impressed with how energetic, enthusiastic, compassionate, and dedicated the entire volunteer staff team was. The lunch hall was filled with much joy and kindness. I was also impressed with how many volunteers it took and how many of these volunteers serve at least once a week at Marian House.

As I reflected on my experience, I was filled with gratitude for all that God has blessed me with. This experience increased my gratitude and contentment with my own life. It was a joy to serve and give to others. Knowing I am doing something that truly helps others in need is very satisfying. It was also a benefit that two of my church members volunteer at that same time at Marian House. So if I volunteer regularly, it would be a good relationship builder with them. And lastly, but more importantly, it was a valuable experience because I am convinced it is the kind of thing Jesus would have done. To feed those who are hungry is a central value throughout all of Scripture. And to serve non-judgmentally, with joy and love and compassion, is the way I imagine Jesus living out this value. This was a valuable use of my time, and I would like to make it a regular vocational practice once a month.

In addition, I looked into volunteering at the Colorado Springs Therapeutic Riding Center (hereafter, CSTRC). CSTRC offers equine-assisted therapy to people of all ages with special needs. The instructors and therapists are able to meet the individual needs of each rider by working one-on-one with them, using the horse as the classroom. Through

the various programs, people with disabilities are able to improve their way of living and quality of life. When I arrived on a Sunday afternoon, the place was busy with people who were there to ride the horses they boarded there, or to just hang out with their friends and dogs. It is obviously a place where people find a sense of belonging, a sense of family. I connected with Nancy, the owner, who told me about the program which teaches horse riding to people with disabilities. While the goal is riding skills, the result is an increased quality of life and self-esteem as the skills are translated into daily living. Therapeutic riding has physical, occupational, and speech-language therapy benefits. And it is a fun way to learn. This program relies on local volunteers but requires training. Therefore, I was only able to observe during my visit. I was able to watch two different therapists work with two different children with disabilities. Each client had a therapist as well a volunteer who is there to watch out for the safety of the child. Sometimes a second volunteer guides the horse. I was impressed by the patience and expertise each therapist had and the rapport with not only the horse but also the children and the volunteers. It is quite a challenge to manage not only the client and his or her special needs, but also the horse and the other volunteers. The parents were at ease while their children were on the horse which communicated to me a general trust in the staff and program. And the children were enjoying the activities, even though it was therapy. The exercises were more fun since they were done while riding a horse.

As I reflected on the experience, I was impressed with the owner, Nancy. She knew everyone there. She was very knowledgeable and available to take time to talk to me and answer my questions. She also was quick to jump in and help sweep the floor and perform other chores as needed because they were short staffed that day. I was impressed

by the effect the equine-therapy had on the special needs children and their parents. Clearly, this is an effective program for these children. And I was very impressed with the therapists, who knew what they were doing, not only in therapy, but also in managing horses, volunteers, and child clients simultaneously. It is a team effort. While this is a valuable program and they are in need of volunteers, I feel like there are better places where my specific skills can benefit others.

Finally, I looked into volunteering at the local charter school which is located across the street from our church, Globe Charter School. I have talked with the principal several times, and we are renewing the relationship between the school and the church. The previous pastor did not encourage a partnership and in fact discouraged parents from parking in the church parking lot which caused tension. Our church has provided lunch for the teachers on an in-service day several times. Each time it is well received. They appreciate getting a break, having a meal provided for them, as well as a chance to just sit down and eat together without work needing to be done. We also host their winter program in our sanctuary since their cafetorium is too small. At first, the administration and parents were a little hesitant about having a school program in a church, but once they realized we were not doing so to convert them or recruit them into our church, they received our hospitality. We have provided donations and volunteers for their annual fundraiser. We are the designated safe place in the event they have to evacuate their building. We conduct drills two times a year in order to be prepared for such an event. These efforts have helped build up the trust between me, our church, and the school. The next step for me is to talk with the fifth grade teacher and see if there is an opportunity for me to tutor students who are struggling in math in their classes. I have done this at a

middle school in a previous community in which I lived. It took a while of building trust with the teachers, but once they discovered that I am effective at helping struggling math students, they were quick to find ways for me to teach these students. I have been tutoring math students since I was in junior high school. I was preparing to be a math teacher and earned an undergraduate degree in mathematics before I received a call to professional ordained ministry. It was a source of joy to help these struggling students. Not only did their math skills increase and their grades improve, but their self-esteem rose as they discovered that with a little help they could learn specific math skills. I will continue to build these relationships with Globe Charter School and see if God opens up a way for me to serve the students and teachers there weekly.

My Commitment

Frederick Buechner describes our vocation as finding the intersection of our passions, gifts, skills, and resources, with the needs of the world.⁵ As I just referenced above, I am skilled and passionate about helping struggling math students. Another need in the community I can help with is to work with people living on the margins, in poverty, such as through a food bank or feeding programs. Due to past experiences, I also have a special desire to work in programs that empower women, such as pregnant teens or abused women. I also feel compelled to work in the area of mental health. There are clearly more ways I desire to get involved than time I have available, but I will continue to invest in relationships with the agencies and their leaders in our community and see what opportunities God opens up for me to serve. The central thing for me to keep in

⁵ Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), 95.

focus is that I am serving purely as a disciple of Christ, offering love and compassion to those in need, who will in turn offer me love and compassion as we develop authentic relationships. My motive is not to recruit church members or convert people, but to live as Jesus, loving my neighbor.

Creating Balance for a Healthy Holistic Lifestyle

Another vocational practice to focus on is creating balance in an overall healthy lifestyle. To gain this balance I need to work in three areas: establish regular physical exercise program, stimulate my thinking through regular reading program, and engage my creative side through quilting. These three emphases will move me toward living a balanced healthy holistic life.

Physical Exercise

The first area to focus on is physical exercise. I have had an inner desire to take up running over the past few years, which I have dabbled at from time to time, but never got into a regular routine. In order to create motivation for myself I decided to register for and then train for a 5K run. This summer I got into a regular routine of lifting weights and running on the treadmill or around the track. I worked my way up to a combination of running and walking three miles at a time. But when fall arrived I fell out of that routine as my obligations and commitments increased. I signed up for the Creepy Crawl, a 5K run on Halloween offered through the YMCA where I have a membership. Two weeks before the race I began running and lifting weights again. Three days prior to the 5K I had a terrible workout. I could not run for even one mile. I felt ill-prepared for this 5K and I was not looking forward to running this 5K, my first in over thirty years. I had

all kinds of excuses ready: it was too cold, it was too early, and my daughter was home from college for the weekend. The night before I had a talk with myself to let go of the competitive spirit within me. I set two goals for myself; to run the first mile before I stopped and to run more than I walked. The morning came, and my daughter came with me to support me. She offered me encouraging words on the drive to the race. It was a cool fall day, but the sun was out and it was beautiful. Once I arrived and saw the people of all athletic abilities, every age, I felt more comfortable in the family-friendly event. The race started, and I started running at my own pace, not worried about how fast or slow others were running. I felt good about it. About a half mile into the race a woman came alongside me and said, "We have been running at the same pace since the race started. Do you want to run together?" She said at any time if I wanted to go faster that I did not need to feel obligated to run with her. She did not want to hold me back. We ran together and offered words of encouragement to each other. We discovered that we had the same goals. It was nice to find a running partner. It was an absolutely beautiful fall day in the Colorado mountains with deep blue sky, golden hills, green evergreens, sparkling lake, and cool breeze. We ran the first mile and then walked for a spell. Then we ran and walked the rest of the race. I finished in a decent time.

As I reflected on this experience, I realized running is a good activity for me, especially with a running partner because it takes my mind off my work and worries. That day my mind kept focused on running and not on my unwritten sermon, a troubled relationship, or my sick aunt. The 5K was challenging physically, but not too overwhelming or exhausting. Thus, the practice of running reduces stress. When it was over I had a great feeling of accomplishment, which is significant because the nature of

pastoral work is that most of our work does not have measurable results. On that day, it created a great connection with my daughter as she encouraged me. “Run for your dissertation. You can do it,” she said, cheering me on to the end. It was good to share with her even though she did not run. Despite my reluctance, this was a valuable experience, and this spring it is my intention to find another race to run in. There is value in committing to a race in order to keep motivated to work out on a regular basis.

I did not originally set a goal of weight lifting, but it has also proved to be a valuable practice I intend to maintain as an essential vocational practice. Lifting weights is empowering. When I feel strong physically, I feel stronger emotionally and spiritually. Lifting weights not only improves my health, but also reduces stress. A few weeks ago, I was feeling trapped in my living and working situation. I decided to set aside a few of my commitments for the day to go to the YMCA and lift weights. That was a great choice. It was a symbolic way for me to take control of my life and increase my sense of strength and power. It was a way to clear my head and focus on my body which reduced stress. An added, unexpected benefit, was that in the process of putting my focus on my body instead of my life and work and relationships, a new way to handle those things came to mind. Therefore, especially during the winter months when running is more challenging, I will focus on weight lifting as my core physical practice.

Intellectual Stimulation

The second area to focus on in creating a balanced healthy holistic lifestyle is intellectual development. I have discovered over the years that God gives me new insights through reading. This was especially true during my extensive reading for the

Doctor of Ministry classes. Not every book spoke personally to me, but in each class, a few books had a significant impact on my thinking and theology. I struggle however, to take time to read in my daily routine with all the demands on my time. I gravitate toward activity and those things people are asking me to do. No one ever asks me to sit and read a book. With my analytical mind and my fascination with ideas, reading is a wonderful way to increase my knowledge, challenge my thinking, and lead me to new insights. God often speaks to me through the process of reading. Therefore, I will set aside time each week for reading and honor this commitment as much as a meeting with a person. My goal is to read at least one book each month. A list of reading list to get me started is posted in Appendix B. Some of these books I have read and want to read again. Others are new. Others have been waiting on my shelf for a long time.

I included several books on missional and emerging church to continue to immerse myself in this new way of thinking, to inspire, correct, and keep me focused. I would like to overcome a lifetime of traditional attractional church, and reading in the areas of missional emerging church help me become more and more grounded into this new way of thinking and being and behaving. Reading will continue to balance me and develop the intellectual aspect of myself.

Creative Pursuits

Another area for me to focus on for a healthier, balanced lifestyle is engaging my creative side. For Christmas 1999 my husband bought me a quality sewing machine. Right away I started taking quilting classes and fell in love with the art of sewing fabric together to make quilts. I enjoy the patterns, the colors, the designing, and the piecing

together. The whole creative process is invigorating to me. As I look back on my quilting, I was most prolific during the three most significant years of my church planting ministry. This was not because I had so much time on my hands but because the artistic process of quilting fed my leadership and ministry in a positive way. These past few years, as I have struggled in my current appointment, I have created very few quilts. There are lots of reasons, but I do know that, when I am at my best, I am regularly engaging in creative activities.

A few years ago I invested in a quality camera with a few special lenses and have enjoyed taking pictures these past few years. As I hike in the mountains with my camera, my eyes see things differently. I notice small little flowers that otherwise I would step right over. I see patterns and colors in new ways as I stop to take pictures of the spectacular views. I connect with God in Creation in a way that renews my spirit. Walking with a camera in my hand changes how I view my surroundings. I have hit the limit of my photographic ability without taking classes to learn more. Thus, the next step of the creative process for me is to learn more about the art of photography.

Either of these avenues are viable options for me to pursue, for they each feed my creative side and are productive creative outlets for me. However, I have decided at this point to invest time in quilting. Once I finish writing this doctoral project, my next goal is to finish the quilt that my daughter began this summer. Quilting is a practice that increases my self-esteem as I complete each step in the process of creating a quilt. Quilting is a practice that connects me with the creative spirit of God. I use the time to pray for the person for whom I am making the quilt or for generally reflecting on God's activity in my life. It is remarkable how often God gives me new insights or solutions to

issues I am facing while I am quilting. Engaging the creative side of my brain is very fruitful and helps me be a more balanced person.

Design a Rhythm of Spiritual Practices to Increase Leadership Capacity

Another vocational practice is to establish a routine of spiritual practices to increase my leadership capacity. This routine will be a framework, like a skeleton, to support my living ministry. In the same way that a skeleton supports movement and life, so this framework of spiritual practices will support movement and life in ministry. These essential vocational practices include solitude, sabbath, and a regular pattern of withdrawing to connect with God.

My weakest leadership capacity is vision, as Mary Maggard Hays defined in class, “a clear picture of the future which is communicated in such a way that others can participate in making it happen.”⁶ Lack of clear vision has decreased my effectiveness as a leader because I hesitate to lead when I do not have it all figured out, or at least have a clear sense of what God is calling me to do. I tend to be overly critical of myself and worry too much about what others think or expect of me. I am not strong at maintaining healthy boundaries. I also lack self-discipline, which leads to poor time management, when I do not have a clear sense of purpose. Hays writes,

If it is true that vision is an essential characteristic of an effective leader and that solitude is the context in which godly vision best develops, it follows logically that solitude is an essential discipline for the leader who would be both godly and effective. Leaders who pursue solitude will be rewarded in both their inner and outer lives. Making time and space to be alone with God has never been automatic; finding solitude today may never have been harder, nor more

⁶ The class was MG735: Releasing Your Personal and Church’s Potential taught by Dr. Bob Logan at Fuller Theological Seminary on February 6-17, 2006 in Pasadena, CA. Mary Maggard Hays gave a lecture, “Leadership and Quality Characteristics,” in class on February 8, 2006.)

important. In solitude the leader may receive concrete direction from God for important decisions; new ideas may pop into mind or new ways of thinking about thorny problems may present themselves. But even if this does not happen, solitude disciplines leaders to expect God's participation in the earthy questions of running an organization.⁷

Therefore, I will set a pattern for the practice of solitude. Now that I am an empty nester, I spend much time alone. But this is different than the spiritual discipline of solitude, intentionally seeking God. I will follow the pattern that Bob Logan described for us, which includes diverting daily, withdrawing weekly, maintaining monthly and abandoning annually. For me the heart of my connection with God comes from a regular practice of daily devotions, Bible reading and journaling. This has been a consistent mainstay of my spiritual life for decades, even while other practices have come and gone. I will then continue to spend thirty minutes to an hour minimum each day for this devotional practice. Each week I will set aside a two-hour minimum window for reading. Each month I will set aside one work day to connect with God. I will do this the fourth week of each month because that is the only week I have no other standing church meetings. I will use Reuben Job's *Guide to Spiritual Retreat* as a resource. Some months I will also take advantage of the nearby Benedictine Sisters Retreat Center. This is specifically a day for no "church work" but rather to connect spiritually with God. Though to be clear, I now see this as an essential vocational practice and in that way it is church work. Annually, I will set aside a minimum of three days for spiritual renewal. This may be in a conference setting or at a retreat center with a spiritual director. These

⁷ Mary Maggard Hays, "Vision and the Discipline of Solitude," *Leadership Letter – Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh* (September 2006) 1.

four practices will form the framework of solitude in which I will seek to connect with God and renew my spirit.

In addition, I will commit to the practice of sabbath. Currently, I rarely get one whole day off in a week. There is usually some “church work” that I do each day. Frequently, in any given month I will go two to three weeks without a day off. This is not a healthy vocational practice. The lack of time off robs my spirit and drains my energy. It also skews my perspective and causes me to be too driven and too focused on the church. To combat this unhealthy pattern, and to improve my self-esteem and self-identity, I will take one day off from church work each week. I do not think realistically this could be the same day each week, but as I develop my monthly schedule I will protect one day off each week. Once it is written in my calendar, I intend to be very protective of this time, empowered to say “No” when others want me to do something that day. The reality for any pastor is that there is always more work to do than there is time to do it. If I wait until I have completed my work to take a day off, then it will never come. Practicing sabbath will deepen my trust in God for my work and for my rest. And it will remind me each week that my value does not come through my contribution to the church but as a child of God who seeks to live faithfully connected to the spirit of God.

Time Management

Time management is an essential element of authentically living these vocational practices. I can have all the best motivation and intentions, but if I cannot gain control of my time, I will continue to be tossed to and fro by my old patterns, by perceived and real expectations of my congregation and denomination, and by the chaotic demanding reality

of the life of a pastor whose work is never complete. To create the strategic time management framework, I kept track of my use of time for one month. I analyzed how I typically use my time. Then, using that information combined with the re-imagined vocational practices I established, I developed a strategic guideline to set up a monthly calendar. This will create a strategic framework to guide my vocational practices.

Time Log

During the month of April, I kept a daily log of how I used my time. I tried not to alter my normal patterns. As I analyzed this log, there were no big surprises. I used my time as I expected. One practice that was positive during April was doing daily devotions first thing when I wake up. This important practice rarely gets interrupted or supplanted at that time of day. One glaring negative was that in the whole month of April, there was only one day I did no church work, and even that day, I did check email. I will have to be very intentional about protecting a day off each week because that is not my current practice.

Monthly Guide for Setting up a Calendar

Each month, I will create a framework for time management guided by the following priorities. The vocation of pastor requires flexibility and I value this flexibility. Therefore, I will not fill in every hour of my calendar. Instead, I will fill in my calendar using the following guide and priorities, and protect these essential vocational practices. Then the rest of my commitments and obligations will ebb and flow around these keystones.

First, I will block time for spiritual practices beginning with sabbath. I will set aside one day off each week, usually Saturday. If Saturday has a church event, then I will take sabbath on Friday or Monday. Then I will set aside one hour each morning for devotional time (divert daily), a three-hour block, preferably Monday afternoon, each week to read (withdraw weekly), and one day each month, preferably the fourth Thursday, for spiritual retreat (maintain monthly). In addition, I will set aside two to three days each year for a spiritual retreat (abandon annually).⁸ I will also make it a priority to plan ahead and take four weeks of vacation each year.

Second, in pursuit of a healthy holistic lifestyle, I will set aside time to exercise one hour a day for five days a week. Next, I will set aside two to three hours per week for quilting, preferably Wednesday evening. Third, I will volunteer on the third Wednesday of each month at Marian House. I will continue to build relationships at Globe Charter School, in hopes of volunteering up to two hours per week tutoring math students. These two activities will fulfill my desire to actively engage the community in acts of compassion.

Lastly, I will set aside a maximum of fifteen to seventeen hours per week to be in the church. Then I will block out a minimum of ten hours per week of working outside the church building, as well as a minimum of ten hours per week to work at my home office on sermon preparation, studying, and writing.

The conviction to re-imagine the vocation of pastor as missionary to the community will empower me to use and protect my time as defined. I will plan ahead as

⁸ Bob Logan, "Empowering Leaders for Healthy Growth" (lecture, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, July 26, 2007).

much as possible, filling in calendar responsibilities as soon as they come up. As a minimum, I will create a monthly calendar in the third week of the previous month. This framework which guides my time management will lead me into a life of missional leadership. These vocational practices align with my re-imagined call and vision for ministry.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The intent of this project is to re-imagine the vocation of pastor for the missional church and to create a framework of personal authentic vocational practices. The cultural context in which we live has made a radical shift. The Church is no longer a dominant force in our culture. In fact, the Church has a declining influence. The traditional ways of being church are often ineffective in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The Church needs to shift its stance from expecting to be the center of the community and attracting people into the church, to being missionaries sent into the community to shape disciples of Jesus. The heart of this transition is not building up a robust missions program. It is re-orienting all the church does around embracing God's mission to the world. It is building a faith community that shapes disciples of Jesus who then go out and engage the neighborhood with tangible expressions of the gospel.

Recognizing the church needs to make this radical shift has implications for pastoral leadership. The vocation of pastor must also make a radical shift in order to lead the church into its mission, making a foundational shift from being a shepherd of the local church to being a missionary to the community. Shepherds lead and care for the sheep in their flock. Missionaries go into a new culture, learn the language and the culture, build trust with the native people, and discover ways to incarnate the gospel so that it can be understood, believed, and lived. Missionaries also establish systems to mature new believers into disciples. The ministry of a missionary balances these two movements of the church: sending out in mission and gathering in to heal and nurture.

The missional church movement, Scripture, and the ministry of John Wesley inform four essential vocational principles. First, the missional pastor must intentionally go out into the community and share the gospel of God's great love with the people there, extending kingdom values into every corner and crevice of the world. God is a sending God, continually reaching out to humanity, offering grace, redemption, and new life. The Church and its leaders must embrace this mission, spending time out of the church in order to bring the love of Jesus to the world.

The second essential principle of missional leadership is to live incarnationally—embracing the call to live like Jesus in the world in which we find ourselves and translating kingdom values into our cultural context. This requires getting out of the Christian cocoon and living as salt and light in the world. This incarnational lifestyle must be a defining characteristic of a pastor.

The third principle of missional leadership is to apprentice Jesus. The Church and its leaders are out of synch with Jesus and, thus, need to recalibrate their lives to realign with Jesus. This includes letting go of the burden of religious expectations and institutional obligations which can deter one from living and leading like Jesus. The pastor must resist the pull of the expectations of the institution and its members and seek foremost to follow the will of God.

The fourth essential vocational principle of missional leadership is to live in the tension between engaging the world in acts of compassion and withdrawing from the world to reconnect one's spirit with the Spirit of the living God. It is essential to be spiritually empowered for this critical and demanding work of a missionary.

These four essential principles of missional leadership translate into the following re-imagined framework of personal vocational practices. First, to be a missionary requires I spend less time in the church building and with church people in order to get out into the community. Therefore, I will limit my work hours at church and intentionally network within the community to be more present there. Second, in order to live incarnationally I will intentionally spend time in the community engaged in acts of compassion through local non-profit ministries. Third, to achieve a healthier, balanced life, I will engage in a regular practice of exercise, quilting, and reading in order to boost my physical, emotional, and intellectual health. And lastly, in order to be spiritually empowered, I will implement a regular practice of the spiritual disciplines of solitude and sabbath.

These re-imagined strategic vocational practices will define priorities and help me better manage my time. In my current setting, most of my time is consumed in the activities of a shepherd: maintaining the institution, managing conflict, and caring for people. This prevents me from being true to my call and convictions. It hinders me from being the missional leader I long to be. Clarifying my call as a missional pastor and aligning my core vocational practices with the principles of missional leadership will add authenticity to my ministry.

However, I recognize that this foundational shift in the role and expectation of pastor from shepherd to missionary impacts not just me but the church I lead. It is deep change. Therefore, I need to be wise in implementing this change. I must carefully let go of some current practices and expectations in order to create space for the new vocational practices. It is not realistic to add these practices without taking away those that do not

line up with the re-imagined vision. This will require I educate the congregation I serve, casting this new vision, and bringing them along in this process, so that they too can learn to live and lead missionally. Then, together, we can live into the future and the new life God has for us.

APPENDIX A

Summary of Current Vocational Practices

Administration:

- Mentor associate pastor (two hours per week)
- Oversee five staff directly and an additional four staff indirectly (1-2 hours per week)
- Work with six administrative committees of the church (8 hours per month)
- Work with six programmatic committees of the church (5 hours per month)
- Oversee church finances in cooperation with Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Finance Committee (1 hour per week)
- Answer email and texts (3 hours per week)

Worship Leadership:

- Weekly preaching including sermon planning and sermon writing (10 hours per week + 8 hours per quarter)
- Leading worship service weekly (2.5 hours per week)
- Create weekly worship service including hymns, liturgy, special elements (1 hour per week)
- Coordinate work with music department (.5 hours per week)
- Prepare information for weekly bulletin and screens and proof weekly bulletin (1 hour per week)

Teaching:

- Co-teach Pastors' Sunday School class (3-4 hours per week, when I am teaching)
- Write newsletter articles and create other discipleship tools such as seasonal devotionals (1-2 hours per month)
- Teach classes, workshops, and seminars both for the congregation and in the community (8 hours per quarter)

Congregational Care:

- Support and counsel people as needed (minimum 1 hour per week)
- Visit homebound and sick (0-4 hours per week)
- New Members (3 hours per quarter)
- Baptisms (1 hour per quarter)
- Weddings (6-8 hours per wedding)
- Funerals (8 hours per funeral)
- Church events such as Work Days, Concerts, etc. (2-4 hours per month)
- Dinner Group (3 hours per month)

Professional Development:

- Neighborhood Pastors clergy group (2 hours per month)
- Clergy Women's group (2 hours per month)
- Continuing Education events (2-3 days per quarter)

Beyond the Local Church:

- Rocky Mountain Conference New Church Development Committee Chairperson

- Mentor church planters (2-8 hours per month)
- Chair committee (12 hours per quarter)
- Representative to Legacy Committee (10 hours per quarter)
- Strategic planning (2 hours per month)
- Rocky Mountain Conference Leadership:
 - Bi-annual Leadership Summit (2-3 days twice a year)
 - Legislative Committee Leader at Annual Conference (6 days per year, including attending conference)
 - SALT team (coming alongside churches that are closing) (10-20 hours per event)

APPENDIX B

Suggested Reading List

General of God's Army: The Authorized Biography of General Eva Burrows by Henry Gariepy (About a former general of the Salvation Army whom I met when she spoke at Fuller years ago and have been inspired by her.)

Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light Edited with Commentary by Brian Kolodiejchuk, M.C.

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End by Atul Gawande

Fireflies: Finding Light in a Dark World by Heather Gordon-Young (a powerful inspiring memoir of one woman's quest to find light in the darkness of her brother's mental illness)

The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering A Life of Faith by Marcus J. Borg

Treasure in Clay Jars: Patterns in Missional Faithfulness by Lois Y. Barrett et al.

The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church by Alan Hirsch (need to re-read this to engrain this theology into my new ways of thinking)

Grounded: Finding God in the World by Diana Butler Bass

Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry by William H. Willimon

A Lever and A Place to Stand: The Contemplative Stance, the Active Prayer by Richard Rohr

The Gospel in a Pluralist Society by Lesslie Newbigin

Structured for Mission: Renewing the Culture of the Church by Alan J. Roxburgh

Full Disclosure: Exposing Church Planting Blind Spots by Stephen Gray and Barry Smith

ReJesus: A Wild Messiah for a Missional Church by Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Ray S. *An Emergent Theology for Emerging Churches*. Downers Gove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- Andrew, Janice K. “*Growing in Christ – Serving with Love*” *History of St. Paul’s United Methodist Church*. Colorado Springs, CO: St. Paul’s United Methodist Church, 1993.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Richard Blackaby. *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001.
- Boring, M. Eugene, and PHEME PERKINS. *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*. Vol. VIII. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.
- Brenz, Stanley J. *Renewing the Center*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.
- Briggs, J. R. *Fail*. Downers Gove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.
- Buckingham, Marcus, and Donald O. Clifton. *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. New York: The Free Press, 2001.
- Buechner, Frederick. *Wishful Thinking*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973.
- Carretto, Carlos. *The Desert in the City*. New York: Collins, 1979.
- Cole, Neil. *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005.
- Creps, Earl. *Off-Road Disciplines: Spiritual Adventures of Missional Leaders*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.
- Culpepper, R. Alan, and Gail R. O’Day. *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*. Vol. IX. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.
- Earle, Ralph, J. S. Blaney, and Charles W. Carter. *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*. Vol. 4. Edited by Charles W. Carter. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964.
- Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline*. San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1998.

- Gibbs, Eddie. *ChurchNext: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Gibbs, Eddie, and Ryan K. Bolger. *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.
- Heifetz, Ronald, and Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2009.
- Henderson, D. Michael. *A Model for Making Disciples: John Wesley's Class Meeting*. Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing House, 1997.
- Hirsch, Alan. *The Forgotten Ways*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006.
- Kelley, Tom. *The Ten Faces of Innovation*. New York: Currency Doubleday, 2005.
- Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*, Third Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.
- Labberton, Mark. *Called*. Downers Gove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.
- Law, William. *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. Alachuta, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2008.
- Lawrence, Brother. *The Practice of the Presence of God*. New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1982.
- Maxwell, John C. *Developing the Leaders Around You*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995.
- McNeal, Reggie. *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.
- Miller, M. Rex. *The Millennium Matrix: Reclaiming the Past, Reframing the Future of the Church*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.
- Milne, Bruce. *The Message of John*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989.
- Olson, David T. *Discovering Your Leadership Style: The Power of Chemistry, Strategy and Spirituality*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.

- Outler, Albert C. and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds. *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.
- Palmer, Parker J. *Let Your Life Speak*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Pascale, Richard T., and Mark Millemann, and Linda Gioja. *Surfing the Edge of Chaos: The Laws of Nature and the New Laws of Business*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000.
- Peterson, Eugene H. *The Pastor*. New York: HarperOne, 2011.
- _____. *Working the Angles*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987.
- Quinn, Robert E. *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.
- Rohr, Richard. *A Lever and A Place to Stand*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2011.
- Roxborgh, Alan J., and Fred Romanuk. *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.
- Schwarz, Christian A. *Natural Church Development*. St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1996.
- Shawchuck, Norman. *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2006.
- Slaughter, Mike. *Change the World: Recovering the Message and Mission of Jesus*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010.
- Snyder, Howard A. *The Radical Wesley: And Patterns for Church Renewal*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1980.
- Stott, John. *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978.
- Sweet, Leonard. *The Well-Played Life*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2014.
- Swenson, Richard A. *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial and Time Resources to Overloaded Lives*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004.
- Wesley, John. *The Works of John Wesley*. 14 Vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996.

Willard, Dallas. *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998.

_____. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988.

Willimon, William H. *Pastor*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002.

Wright, N. T. *Matthew for Everyone: Part One*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.