Home, Host, and Guest: A Practical Inquiry into the Aesthetics of Hospitality

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This doctoral project entitled

HOME, HOST, AND GUEST:
A PRACTICAL INQUIRY INTO THE AESTHETICS OF HOSPITALITY

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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

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Date Received: July 6, 2020
HOME, HOST, AND GUEST:
A PRACTICAL INQUIRY INTO THE AESTHETICS OF HOSPITALITY

A DOCTORAL 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

JAMES P. WILSON JR.
JULY 2020
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ABSTRACT

Home, Host, and Guest:
A Practical Inquiry into the Aesthetics of Hospitality
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Doctor of Ministry
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2020

The goal of this study is to explore the cultivation of new imagination for hospitality so that the congregation of Coast Vineyard Christian Fellowship is able to share life with its neighbors and to discover what the Spirit of God is doing in the neighborhoods of San Diego, California. It is argued that cultural narratives framing hospitality as providing comfort and framing the church as the host have accumulated to shape the habitus of the church. As a result, often preconscious assumptions with bodily rooting undermine the ability of the congregation to play the role of the guest and thus to share life with neighbors.

A research process of action and reflection identified the centrality of bodily practices to the formation of imagination for home, host, and guest. In order to challenge the habits and assumptions around hospitality that undermine relationships with neighbors, a missional action team was formed with commitments to table fellowship, dwelling in scripture, reciprocal hospitality, and team discernment. A team of church members was led through six months of formation in these practices to investigate whether new imagination would emerge that would facilitate reciprocal relationships with neighbors.

The study suggested that deeply held habits and preconscious assumptions around hospitality are not easily transformed. An important finding of the research was that the congregation’s understanding of and language for time seemed to be significantly inhibiting the practice of hospitality, thereby undermining relationships with neighbors. Because the language house for time is so deeply implicated in the practice of hospitality, the concluding recommendations suggest a group of practices designed to problematize the habitus of the church both with respect to imagination for hospitality and to the conceptualization of time. It is hoped that experimentation in this direction will lead to rediscovery of the gospel of Jesus.

Content Reader: Alan J. Roxburgh, DMin

Words: 298
To Michelle Diane, your courage, faith, adventurous leadership, grace, patience, and love made all of this possible.
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INTRODUCTION

Whatever is given
Can always be reimagined

—Seamus Heaney

Coast Vineyard Christian Fellowship (hereafter, Coast Vineyard) is a multi-ethnic church in central San Diego with a history of engaging undergraduate students, serving the local homeless community, and reaching out to surfers. The church has a legacy of introducing people to the message of the kingdom of God and of training people to pray for others in the power of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, the church has struggled to form meaningful relationships within its neighborhoods. In response to learning in the first year of my doctoral program, I worked with a guiding team to launch experiments in receiving hospitality from neighbors. The teams working on the experiments defaulted to attempts to get people to church which in turn limited emerging relationships with neighbors.¹

In an effort to disrupt the habits and assumptions around hospitality that undermine relationships with neighbors, a missional action team called Mission Lab was formed with commitments to table fellowship, dwelling in the Word, reciprocal hospitality, and team discernment. The project attempted to cultivate imagination in which neighbors rather than the church were perceived as the hosts. The aim was to learn

¹ Alan Roxburgh defines a default as “the way in which systems . . . build into themselves taken-for-granted explanatory frameworks that kick into place and predetermine actions.” Alan J. Roxburgh, Structured for Mission: Renewing the Culture of the Church (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 106.
whether a quartet of experimental practices would function together to make space for new imagination for hospitality which supported sustained relationships in the neighborhood.

The urgency of this project stems from the church’s disconnection from its cultural context. As the neighborhoods of San Diego rapidly diversify, the population is increasingly multi-ethnic and pluralistic. Not only are San Diegans less interested in attending a church, they have no understanding or experience of churches in their neighborhoods as valuable. The church as a gathering place is increasingly seen as irrelevant to the city. Coast Vineyard perceives itself as a welcoming church, but church members do not recognize their lack of relationship with their actual neighbors and neighborhoods.

This project matters to me because I have been unable to lead the church into practices that bring the life of Jesus into the culture of our city. At the time this project was conducted, I had been co-pastoring Coast Vineyard for thirteen years with my wife, Michelle. Prior to that, we spent six years on the staff of Coast Vineyard leading a residential care home for the homeless. Part of my hope in moving out of that role to co-pastoring the church was to train church members to live out their faith in ways that would bring the life, healing, and justice of Jesus to the hurting neighborhoods of our city. Over a decade later, I have found myself increasingly preoccupied with the work of keeping the Sunday show going and managing competing expectations among church members. I hope this project will help us rediscover and join what the Spirit of God is doing among our neighbors.
Part One examines the adaptive challenge of Coast Vineyard in its socio-cultural context. Chapter 1 will introduce the hospitality imaginary, a framework for mapping imagination for hospitality in terms of home, host, and guest. That framework will then be employed to plot the trajectory of Coast Vineyard’s imagination for hospitality through three initial experiments. This analysis sets the stage for identifying the adaptive challenge of Coast Vineyard as breaking out of deeply ingrained habits and implicit assumptions around hospitality that were undermining relationships with neighbors. Chapter 2 introduces Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of field and habitus, which are then utilized to trace a genealogy of the norms and values that shape the assumptions around hospitality in Coast Vineyard’s context. Chapter 3 reflects on hospitality in three passages in the Gospel of Luke as well as in the writing of Luke Bretherton to provide broader theological perspective on the praxis of Coast Vineyard.

Part Two will explain the project itself, Mission Lab. Chapter 4 will detail the design of the project with attention to the rationale and the hopes for the quartet of experimental practices. Chapter 5 will describe the implementation and results of the project, mapping both the development and lack of development in the team’s imagination for home, host, and guest. It will suggest that the deeply held habits and assumptions around hospitality are not easily transformed, and it will find that the congregation’s conceptualization of time seemed to be inhibiting the practice of hospitality.

Part Three will reflect on Coast Vineyard’s continued struggle to practice hospitality with neighbors, exploring the bodily generation of imagination for hospitality and time through metaphorical conceptualization of sensorimotor experiences. Chapter 6
will offer a proposal framing an aesthetics of hospitality by investigating the bodily
generation of meaning for home, host, and guest, while Chapter 7 will offer an account of
the cultural funding of our imagination for time. In light of new awareness that the
conceptualization of time by church members significantly deters the practice of
hospitality, this chapter will trace how we have come to imagine time as money, a
personal, private, limited, resource. Both chapters will employ the theoretical framing of
George Lakoff and Mark Johnson to describe how meaning and imagination are
generated in order to make recommendations for how the habitus may be disrupted.

The proposals of Chapters 6 and 7 will set the stage for the recommendations of
Chapter 8. In response to the need for more deeply embodied rehabituation, Chapter 8
will recommend that a cohort from the church commit to a triad of more rigorously
countercultural practices. These will be abbey retreats, daily offices, and what this paper
will name Luke 10 hospitality. This recommendation aims to disrupt the habitus on a
deeper level in order to incubate new capacity to discover what the Spirit of God is up to
among our neighbors. In response to my own captivity to the same late modern habitus,
the chapter will also recommend that I take an extended abbey retreat and that I attend to
the role of being a guest.

This paper roughly follows Mark Lau Branson’s practical theology cycle.
Chapters 1, 2, and 3 correspond to Branson’s first three steps: current praxis, context and
culture, and Christian texts and practices. Chapter 4 corresponds to step five,
imagination and experiments, and Chapter 5 begins a new cycle of reflection, taking the

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results of Mission Lab as the new present praxis. This organization reflects a practice-theory-practice understanding of missional change as opposed to a theory-to-practice model.\textsuperscript{3} The first task, then, is to assess the current praxis of Coast Vineyard.

\textsuperscript{3} Branson, “Disruptions Meet Practical Theology,” 45.
PART ONE

RESISTANCE TO MISSIONAL DIFFUSION AT COAST VINEYARD
CHAPTER 1
PRACTICING HOSPITALITY AT COAST VINEYARD

How one imagines space is inseparably bound to how one imagines people and their places in the world.

—Willie James Jennings

Motivated by a desire to connect missionally with neighbors, Coast Vineyard has been experimenting with hospitality in an attempt to increase its awareness of both neighbors and neighborhood. In some cases, new understanding of the church’s context has emerged. However, on deeper inspection, the church’s imagination for hospitality has not changed very much. Corresponding to the first step of Mark Lau Branson’s practical theology cycle, current praxis, this chapter describes the present praxis of Coast Vineyard with respect to hospitality. It begins by introducing the hospitality imaginary. Developed

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1 “Awareness” is the first step of the Missional Change Model. Based in part on the work of Everett Rogers, the Missional Change Model is a framework developed by Alan Roxburgh for mapping missional innovation. The basic model consists of five stages: awareness, understanding, evaluation, experimentation, and commitment. The model itself is a broad way of mapping the engagement between a congregation and its local context. This chapter will employ the Missional Change Model to map how changes in imagination for neighbors and neighborhood began to spread through the congregation. Alan J. Roxburgh and M. Scott Boren, *Introducing the Missional Church: What It Is, Why It Matters, How to Become One* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), 133-146.

2 Branson, “Disruptions Meet Practical Theology,” 44.
as these initial experiments in hospitality were unfolding, the hospitality imaginary was created in response to a need for naming the interactions which constitute the practice of hospitality and for mapping development of the congregation’s imagination for hospitality.

Using this framework, the chapter will then describe Coast Vineyard’s initial experiments in hospitality. Inspired by observations that a group of church members made about the important role of being a guest in Luke 10:1-9, the experiments aimed to explore receiving hospitality. However, church members quickly reverted to the goal of getting people to church. The final section of the chapter explains the discovery of the adaptive challenge of breaking out of deeply ingrained habits and implicit assumptions around hospitality that were undermining relationships with neighbors.

The Hospitality

The hospitality imaginary is a framework for naming and mapping imagination for hospitality. The hospitality imaginary was developed in 2011 in the context of the experiments detailed in the next section, and it was used to specify the interrelationships within hospitality and to name assumptions around hospitality. It is important to note that this framework emerged in response to developments in the practice of hospitality at Coast Vineyard and was then employed to critically reflect on that practice. Experiments led to the need for better conceptual frameworks, which in turn informed practice.

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3 This group was the guiding team that I formed in the context of the early part of my doctoral work in the Missional Leadership Cohort at Fuller Theological Seminary.
For the purposes of this paper, the hospitality imaginary is the subset of any cultural imaginary in which the practice of hospitality is imagined. The fundamental elements of the hospitality imaginary are the home, the host, and the guest. These are the basic elements of any relationship of hospitality. It is inside their descriptions and interrelationships that we see not only the power dynamics of hospitality but just how much our imaginations are socially formed and not given.

The Home

From the outset, hospitality implies a home, a dwelling. It is the place where one welcomes another, where space is generously opened up. Brian Treanor writes, “Hospitality is a virtue of place . . . Hospitality always happens in a place; it consists in giving place to another and, as such, occurs as part of a relationship between an implaced person and a displaced person.” Within a cultural imaginary, the home is the space of the host. The guest, being in the space of the host, can be said to be displaced.

The home may be a physical place of residence, or it may be more generally a space of dwelling. Henri Nouwen observes that parents, teachers, and health care workers all practice hospitality, with children, students, and patients respectively. In each case,

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the practice of hospitality is rooted in a place, be it a home, a classroom, a hospital, or a psychologist’s office. This paper will focus primarily on the home as a place of residence.

Furthermore, the home implaces us. Brian Treanor explains that homes anchor and orient their inhabitants in ways that form their identities. Homes shape and influence their inhabitants, forming the bodily experience of what is comfortable.

It follows that imagination for home shapes desire. John Koenig observes, “For most of us, hospitality is a word about comfort, security, and refreshment . . . if hot weather oppresses us, we may conjure up a picture of ourselves on the porch or patio of a neighbor’s house, sipping an iced drink in the cool of the evening.” Chapter 2 will dig into the narrative layers that dispose us to imagine hospitality in terms of comfort. To long for home is to desire an environment that is familiar to our bodies.

The Host

The second element in the Hospitality Imaginary is the host. When hospitality is imagined, the host is the master of the home. In the home, the host controls the space. To offer hospitality is to give place to another person. It follows that the role of the host is

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6 Treanor, “Putting Hospitality in Its Place,” 52.

7 Ibid., 53.


to welcome others. To speak of the host is to speak of the one who welcomes. Hospitality means embracing the one who is unknown. It is to make space in one’s life for another.

Welcoming is an act of orientation. Treanor describes the role of the host as aiding the guest in emplotting themselves. He writes, “Genuine hospitality helps the other incorporate your place into her narrative.” To be hospitable is to communicate the narrative of the home in a way that allows the guest to locate themselves. It follows then that hosting always involves both desire and power.

In the first place, hosting is a matter of desire. Desire here is not meant in the romantic sense but rather in the Augustinian sense of the things that draw us, move us, and thereby shape us. As Graham Ward observes, imagination is “not simply a ‘dimension of language’ that informs the will to act. Imagination, motivation, and action are profoundly rooted in desire.” How one imagines the role of hosting is shaped by what one desires.

As a result, extending hospitality is a choice that the host must make in view of the associated costs. Alan Roxburgh writes, “Practicing hospitality requires us to stop busy, demanding routines for a period of time and focus attention on the stranger for the

10 Treanor, “Putting Hospitality in Its Place,” 65.
11 Ibid., 66.
12 Oliver O’Donovan explains Augustine’s understanding of desire and argues that desire is the corporate function that determines and defines the structure of communities. He cites Augustine’s proposal in City of God that a community is a gathered multitude “united by agreeing to share the things they love.” Oliver O’Donovan, Common Objects of Love: Moral Reflection and the Shaping of Community (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 20-28.
stranger’s sake.”

Therefore, formation of a new imagination for hospitality will always entail formation of desire. Unless the host desires the stranger, no welcome will occur in the first place.

Second, hosting is always political in that it has to do with power. The host is the cultural architect of the home. The language of the home is the language of the host. Thomas Ogletree explains that as long as the host is at home the host “retains control.”

The home is the place where the host has cultural power. Luke Bretherton argues that hospitality is not merely a domestic practice but rather a practice in which the norms and values of host and guest collide and are shaped. To imagine hospitality is to imagine oneself in relation to another in an exchange with a power dynamic. The first two elements of the hospitality imaginary are the home and the host. The remaining element is the guest.

The Guest

The third element in the hospitality imaginary is the guest, the one who is invited into the home. The guest may be a family member, a friend, a neighbor, or a complete

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stranger. Writing on hospitality as a genuine welcoming of the stranger, Alan Roxburgh writes, “Today, the stranger can easily be the person next door, the widow whose children live far away, or many of the young people who crave conversation and acceptance from an older generation.”  

The focus of this project will be on neighbors, and Roxburgh’s comment highlights the reality that the people living next door to each other may be completely unknown to each other.

When hospitality is imagined, the guest is the one without a home. Jean Greisch writes, “A stranger is one with no home of his or her own, who comes from elsewhere, who does not speak my or our language.” The guest is the one who is foreign to the language and the culture of the home. The guest is the one displaced both in space and in language.

Consequently, the role of the guest is inherently vulnerable. The one who is welcomed is the one who is powerless, so much so that the very powerlessness of the guest calls the host toward responsible use of their resources. In fact, Thomas Ogletree argues that “to be moral is to be hospitable to the stranger.”

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guest has implications. Namely, when a choice is available between the roles of host and guest, the role of the guest may be avoided as that is the role without the power. By hosting, a person can avoid the vulnerability that is involved in the role of the guest.

In the following descriptions, this framework will be used for mapping the developments in imagination for hospitality. Using narrative analysis, the elements of the hospitality imaginary will be identified in stories and conversations. The following inquiry will explore the habits, assumptions, and conceptualizations around hospitality in the congregation of Coast Vineyard.

**Practicing Hospitality at Coast Vineyard**

This section will trace the initial development of experiments in hospitality with special attention to imagination for hospitality. It will also attend to the process of missional diffusion, which is to say the ways in which new imagination for hospitality spreads or fails to spread through the congregation. It begins with Coast Vineyard’s self-perception in 2011 as a welcoming church and then describes how dwelling in Luke 10 opened up new imagination which then played an important role in a location change for the church’s Sunday gatherings. Finally, the section describes three initial experiments in hospitality that grew out of the conversations around Luke 10.

**Beginnings: Coast Vineyard’s Self Perception as a Welcoming Church**

In 2011, Coast Vineyard was a church of approximately 300 people that met in La Jolla, California. La Jolla is one of the most affluent communities in San Diego, and,
indeed, in the United States as a whole. At that time, the church rented a school campus on top of Mount Soledad, which is, as it were, the apex of the affluence. The church was a multi-ethnic mix of college students, recent graduates, young families, and a few families with teenagers. However, almost nobody attending Coast Vineyard lived within two miles of where it met on Sundays.

At that time, Coast Vineyard perceived itself as a welcoming church. In 2011, I formed a guiding team as part of my doctoral work. That team conducted Appreciative Inquiry interviews with various church members, many of whom reported positively on the welcoming ethos of the church community. The questions were framed to explore hopeful memories and stories of how members of the church were connected with their neighbors and with the city. The responses were positive in tone but vague in detail.

Three examples represent the larger pattern. A young Korean member of the church reported, “The church is a safe place for my non-Christian friends.” Another person’s first comment on Coast was, “It’s welcoming. The church has a genuine desire to reach out to new people.” A middle-aged white respondent commented that home


24 A survey of church members conducted in 2007 showed that only about eight percent of the church lived in the zip code where the church met.

25 Three specific questions were posed. First, “In all of the ways our church connects with our neighbors, our city, and the world, what is most important to you?” Second, “How are you most encouraged and engaged?” Third, “Think about the ways that our church life—in worship, study, relationships, groups, and activities—encourages and prepares us to notice how God is active in our world and to participate with God as agents of the gospel. What are the most valuable ways we are learning to see God and to participate in his love for others?”
groups, which are midweek gathering in the homes of church members, are a place that Coast reaches out to others. He noted that home groups all have “some sort of outsider.” Respondents reported on the friendly environment of Sunday morning services or midweek home groups. However, the interviews lacked specific stories of interactions with neighbors.

With respect to imagination for hospitality, church members instinctively portrayed themselves in the role of the host. Implicit in the narrative of being a welcoming church is the imagination that the church was the host vis-à-vis the neighborhood. In fact, none of the responses imagined the church or church members in any role other than the host. Neighbors were only described as guests, and very few of the stories referred to neighbors as actual guests. They were only potential guests.

Furthermore, the “home” named in the conversations was the church. The church is the physical space that church members were imagining as the place of welcome. In a few cases, home groups were mentioned. But, even in these stories, the home group was functioning as a proxy for the church. It was imagined as a remote location of the church itself. In no case were neighbors’ homes mentioned. Coast Vineyard members were not aware of the reality of their disconnection from neighbors.

Emerging Awareness of Hospitality as a Reciprocal Practice

In the summer of 2011, the guiding team spent a series of meetings dwelling in Luke 10:1-9. During the second meeting, our conversation focused on how Jesus told

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26 Mark Lau Branson and Alan Roxburgh introduced me to this passage in the context of the Missional Leadership Cohort, and I was excited to see how the guiding team would interact with the text.
the disciples to stay in the homes in the town where they were sent. Jesus was sending them out to be hosted, rather than to host (Luke 10:7). One of the team members described the instructions as “reverse hospitality.” Suddenly, there was tremendous energy in the discussion.

Members of the group began an animated conversation about how interesting it was that Jesus was commanding his disciples to be hosted. One member of the guiding team noted that our church conversations were often about how to be welcoming but that we never talked about how to be welcomed. As the conversation continued, another guiding team member said, “This seems so smart. I think Jesus is really onto something. What if we just did this?” The group began to reflect on the reputation of Christians in America and began to identify Luke 10 as way to re-engage a culture that increasingly dismissed Christians. The guiding team was becoming aware of disengagement from the local context. For the first time, the narrative that Coast Vineyard was a welcoming church was being prodded by observations from dwelling in Scripture.

Conversations about Luke 10 began spreading through the church. A leadership retreat in the fall of 2011 centered on Luke 10, and all of the teams in the church began talking about what it might mean for them. By January of 2012, a church member joining friends at a Taiwanese restaurant and hearing them talking about their neighborhood would say, “It must be Luke 10 again!” New awareness of reciprocal hospitality and the kinds of interactions that might involve was spreading fast.

For the first time, church members were connecting following Jesus with imagining their neighbors as potential hosts and themselves as potential guests. There was excitement around the sense that perhaps the church had things backwards and that
Jesus was calling the church to be guests rather than to be the host. Awareness was also surfacing that seeing the church as home was perhaps problematic.

Emergent Understanding and a New Location

In November of 2012, in the midst of conversations about how we could engage our neighborhood and whether or not we even had a neighborhood, the school where the church had been meeting for ten years gave notice that the lease would be terminated. I panicked, seeing the loss of the lease as a system critical crisis for the church. Almost all of our leaders saw it as a great opportunity.

Two weeks later, Michelle, my wife and co-lead pastor of the church, led a meeting to discuss the church’s future. Conversation turned to Luke 10, and one of the leaders remarked, “[Luke 10] has pretty much become the vision of our church.” The leaders pointed out a number of church members had moved to the Clairemont Mesa neighborhood and that the church now had several home groups meeting there. They were making the connection that if the church was going to practice hospitality reciprocally, neighborhood and neighbors mattered. Within a month, the board had appointed a search team to find a new facility.

That team also spent time dwelling in Luke 10 and decided that they were looking not so much for a building but for a neighborhood and more specifically for a person of peace. The team prayed, visited locations, and interviewed school principals. Eventually, the search team found a principal that immediately used the language of partnership. We
had found our person of peace. In June of 2013, Coast Vineyard moved to Lindbergh-Schweitzer Elementary School in Clairemont Mesa.²⁷

The process of dwelling in Luke 10, focusing on a neighborhood, and then looking for a person of peace demonstrated emerging missional understanding at Coast Vineyard. A significant number of church members lived in Clairemont Mesa, including a number of people who had recently moved to the neighborhood. There was a new understanding that the specific neighborhood where the church gathered mattered because relationships with neighbors were important to the church’s mission. Fresh understanding of the implications of Luke 10 for the life of the church was taking hold. A team had looked for and identified a person of peace, and that relationship had become the bridge to a new location.

The discernment around the location change was framed in the context of being a guest rather than being a host. This represented a development from initial awareness of the importance of being guests into a desire to inhabit the role of the guest. Furthermore, the conversations revealed that the desire was both for the gathered body of the church to be a guest but also that individual members would embrace the role of the guest in their neighborhoods. Imagination for how the church would relate to neighbors and neighborhood was developing.

²⁷ From the outset, the church’s relationship with Lindbergh-Schweitzer was been different than our previous locations. Through conversations with the principal, purchasing school supplies was identified as a way that church members could be a blessing to the campus. More than two-thirds of the students at the school are eligible for free and reduced lunch as a result of their low family income. Since 2013, Coast Vineyard members have been providing school supplies for students in need. Furthermore, Coast members have served as volunteers in the school’s annual carnival and hosted an end of the year party for all of the teachers.
Cultivating Experiments in Hospitality at Coast Vineyard

As the congregation continued to discuss Luke 10 and reciprocal hospitality, the church began to feel like a laboratory. Conversations led to experiments and to groups of experiments. Three areas of experimentation were Cinema Café, a new relationship with the San Diego Islamic Center, and home group block parties.

**Cinema Café**

One of the first experiments in receiving hospitality was Cinema Café. In September of 2012, a local group of pastors met with our City Council Representative, Sherry Lightener, to discuss how we might be involved in our community in a more constructive way. She suggested that we meet with the new librarian at the North University City Community Library. The pastors group followed up by meeting the new librarian. As advertised, he was full of life, open to new ideas, and happy to have us get involved. The pastors decided that we would focus together on this library, each talking to our churches about how we might get involved.

On this basis, Michelle gathered a team interested in working at the library. They were given the challenge of discovering how the church might be a blessing to the library. This was framed in Luke 10 language. The team aimed to seek the peace of the

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28 This meeting took place on October 25, 2012, at the North University Community Library.

29 At one point he told us, “I don’t want a quiet library. I want a loud library. Libraries today are a third space. They’re for conversations between work and home.”
city, specifically the library, in concert with other local churches. Out of that
conversation, one group agreed to host a film night.\(^3\)

The film team met with the librarian, who was very excited about the prospect of
a regular film night. They settled on the plan of a monthly film night that would involve a
movie, snacks, and then a World Café style discussion afterward. The first event far
exceeded the team’s expectations. The team had been told to be prepared for a small turn-
out, but the room was nearly filled to capacity. The film night came to be called “Cinema
Café.” Cinema Café met monthly for five years, enjoying a great reputation at the library.

The development of imagination for hospitality represented in Cinema Café is
complex. It began with an intention to be guests, following the Luke 10 pattern of
looking for a person of peace. However, in pursuing the idea of a movie night, the team
began to function like hosts. The “home” as it were was the library, but the “hosts” were
Coast Vineyard members. At the same time, initial guests from the neighborhood were
invited to help select movies, bring food, and set up. Some of the team members from the
church wanted to pick movies with evangelistic potential and to talk about ways to get
people to church. However, a succession of team leaders for Cinema Café kept the focus
on seeing what God might do in the library context. New imagination for the church as
guest was fragile and contested, but it was leading to fresh encounters with neighbors.

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\(^3\) Initially, three sub-teams formed. One team committed to the film night while two others
committed to mentoring second language children and to helping care for the library’s garden. The
mentoring and garden teams were short lived.
A Surprising New Relationship with the Islamic Center of San Diego

A second area of experimentation was a growing relationship with the San Diego Islamic Center of San Diego, a mosque located across the street from the new Sunday meeting location. No activity with the mosque has been the result of a discreet plan to conduct an experiment. Nevertheless, in the midst of conversations about exchanging hospitality with our neighbors, opportunities to share life with Muslims began to emerge.

In February of 2012, as part of a Sunday message series called “Tough Questions” that fielded questions from the congregation, Michelle addressed the question of whether Muslims, Christians, and Jews all worship the same God. She invited Imam Taha Hassane and Rabbi Scott Meltzer to speak on a panel with her. After that lively morning, relationships started to grow and strengthen. A few months later, church and mosque members got together for a friendly soccer game hosted by Coast Vineyard but suggested by Imam Hassane. A chef from the mosque brought a falafel cart, and there was a great turnout of people from both houses of worship.

In the following years, a number of remarkable events took place. There have been follow up men’s and women’s soccer games, and the games have been played at a variety of neighborhood fields. The congregation has realized that it is possible for Muslim and Christian women to play a friendly soccer match with a group of men cheering on the sideline. Church members had not heard of anything like this before.

In 2013, Coast Vineyard, the mosque, and a nearby Lutheran church joined together for a group of Thanksgiving activities. The week began with a Thanksgiving dinner, hosted by the mosque, where members of the three congregations ate together and shared stories about their cultural backgrounds. One Coast Vineyard member described
her surprise that the woman sitting next to her had grown up as a conservative Baptist, joined the Navy, and later converted to Islam. Stereotypes broke apart all over the room.

The following day, the respective youth groups met together at the mosque to prepare food and care packages for the homeless community. Later that afternoon, about fifteen people drove downtown and gave the food and care packages away to people on the streets. Afterward, youth group members from the three congregations shared their reflections on serving together. Conversations about sharing life with Muslim neighbors were taking place across all age groups at Coast Vineyard.

Imagination for hospitality can be seen shifting within these stories. From a starting point where only the church was imagined as host, church members were now energetically talking about events hosted at the mosque. Importantly, they were talking about what the Spirit of God might be doing in these newfound relationships. Awareness of new configurations of hospitality was developing into new understanding of both neighbors and neighborhood. Conversations were leading to experiments in sharing life.

**Home Group Block Parties**

A third experiment was home group block parties designed to facilitate relationships with neighbors that might lead to reciprocal hospitality. These parties originated from a board discussion about how home groups could better engage our neighborhoods. The question of how to engage neighbors was put to the home group leaders as a team, and they discussed several possible experiments to test the question.31

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31 Monthly social nights and monthly commitment to serve the poor were also discussed as options.
The leaders ended up committing to working through Alan Roxburgh’s *Practicing Hospitality*\(^{32}\) with the intention of learning how to better engage our neighbors as home groups.

During the discussions, a home group leader shared a story about a Thanksgiving block party that they had held every year and described how they had invited their home group to the party. The discussion was energetic, and one leader decided to invite their group to try a block party. Following an enthusiastic report, other groups tried block parties as well. The block parties resulted in a large number of Coast members meeting neighbors. Initial reports from the parties were positive, and most of the home groups held one or more block parties.

However, the momentum declined quickly. One home group leader reported that relationships from the block party had not gone deeper since the initial party.\(^{33}\) Trying to generate greater energy, he had designed a high-quality flyer and passed it out to all of his neighbors as well as to his home group. Despite the flyer, fewer home group members came to the follow up party. When asked what it would take for relationships to go deeper, he replied, “I think in the space where there’s food and you’re actually in someone’s home, I think that’s where relationships are built.” This leader’s responses


\(^{33}\) Using Everett Roger’s diffusion analysis, this can be mapped as an example of discontinuance. Rogers identifies two causes of discontinuance: replacement and disenchantment. In this case, it would be disenchantment. The Coast members had a block party, met new people, and they were not sufficiently impacted to further pursue those relationships. The following analysis examines the embodied narratives that make this discontinuance close to inevitable. Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, (New York: Free Press, 2003), 190.
demonstrate the complexity of missional change. On the one hand, he was defaulting to a marketing strategy. On the other hand, he was recognizing that spending time in the homes of neighbors was critical to the development of relationships.

Furthermore, several home group leaders commented that neighbors did not end up coming to the church on Sunday morning as a result of the block parties. Some leaders framed this as a disappointment. Other leaders framed it as a question about what needed to change in order to get neighbors to the Sunday gatherings, and still others framed it as frustration that home group members had not invited people to church.

The collective focus on neighbors’ lack of Sunday visits revealed a powerful default to imagining the church as the host. The groups were stepping into the role of host with the hope that relationships would develop and lead to reciprocal hospitality. However, the intention to share life with neighbors quickly reverted to the imagination in which the church is the real host.

Critical reflection on these block parties demonstrates the non-linear trajectory of missional change. New awareness and understanding of the role of the guest led to an experiment with a block party. Encouraging stories about that experiment led to more block parties. However, block parties did not necessarily lead to a new imagination for hospitality or to a transformation of relationships with neighbors. The defaulting of the leaders’ imagination for hospitality surfaced an important adaptive challenge for the whole church.

**Framing the Adaptive Challenge of Coast Vineyard**

For the purposes of this project, a technical challenge is any challenge that a group can address with knowledge and resources that it already has, whereas an adaptive
challenge is any challenge where the response is unknown and the group itself will have to change in order to meet the challenge. Technical challenges have known methods, rely on current resources, and entail manageable change, while adaptive challenges require new learning, unidentified resources, and entail unpredictable change. Alan Roxburgh explains the depth of adaptive challenges, “An adaptive challenge requires more than setting new priorities or developing new programs. It demands a basic change in the hearts, minds, attitudes and habits of the people involved.” As a result, framing adaptive challenges not only requires critical reflection on processes, programs, and outcomes, but it also requires deep self-reflection that digs into how the team is implicated in those symptoms.

The stalling of the home group block parties represented an opportunity to reflect on adaptive challenges with a key group of leaders. I convened a meeting of home group leaders to frame the adaptive challenge of this group but also to reflect on the adaptive challenge of the church. The meeting started with dwelling in Luke 10:1-12.

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37 I made one prior attempt to help church leaders name an adaptive challenge. At a fall leadership in 2012, the board convened to name and assess adaptive challenges facing Coast Vineyard. The challenges names at that time were technical in nature. However, the follow-up from that meeting did help initiate the home group block parties.

38 See Appendix A for the agenda of this workshop.
Leaders were asked to name an adaptive challenge in light of Luke 10. Initially, energy appeared to be low. After some silence, one leader observed that they had no idea how their group might spend time in neighbor’s homes.

This was a spark that ignited the frustration in the team. One leader responded that they doubted that our neighbors would like us if they knew us. That leader summarized, “We have totally different lives.” Leaders mentioned that they rarely saw their neighbors, that they hardly know their neighbors, that they have nothing in common with neighbors who mostly like to drink alcohol, and that there was no place to start. Then one leader said, “They don’t even like us!” Other leaders agreed.

The conversation paused, and the focus turned to the assumptions underneath the frustrations being named. Now an adaptive challenge was in view. The adaptive challenge of Coast Vineyard was that habits and assumptions around hospitality were undermining relationships with neighbors. The group was carrying the assumption that they were unliked as well as other disabling assumptions both about their neighbors and about their neighborhoods. Not only was the group unable to see a way forward, they were unaware that their implicit assumptions were derailing neighborly relationships.

Within the assessment that “they don’t even like us,” several aspects of the imagination bear on the church’s situation. First, it makes a broad and untested claim about neighbors’ opinions of church members. The assessment was not based on a

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39 An attempt to name adaptive challenges with the board, briefly noted in the last section, led to exclusively technical challenges being named. Luke 10 was employed as a way of problematizing the situation as well as giving the Holy Spirit space to illuminate our practice.
negative encounter or a pattern of negative interactions with neighbors. This was a background assumption filtering church members’ views of their neighborhoods.

Second, this assumption was not just an idea, it was rooted in bodily experience. There was tension in the room as it was named, and it was clear that church members were experiencing physical hesitation preventing them from meeting their neighbors. This was a conception about neighbors functioning on an aesthetic register. It was a feeling that neighbors did not like them. If James K. A. Smith is correct that “narrative is the scaffolding of our experience,” then this narrative demarcates a confined perimeter for potential relationships in the neighborhood.⁴⁰ The reflections that follow in Chapters 2 will explore the physical rooting of our assumptions around hospitality.

Finally, this adaptive challenge points to the reality that the church struggles to perceive itself in any role other than the host. The imagination of the church was stuck in a bodily comportment, an imagination embedded in our flesh, that impaired relationship both with God and our neighbors. The preference for hosting was not just a matter of worldview or language house, rather it resided deep within the bodily inclinations of the church members. The conversation was voicing bodily hesitation and inhibition. Members’ bodies were used to the role of the host and comfortable with the role of the host. Their bodily predisposition was to host rather than to be received.

Summary of Chapter One

In this chapter, the hospitality imaginary was introduced as a framework for mapping the interrelationships that constitute the practice of hospitality. It was then employed to describe initial experiments in hospitality and the development of imagination for hospitality at Coast Vineyard. Development has been far from straightforward. Initial awareness of neighbors as hosts reverted to frustrated disconnection. As Robert Schreiter observes, “The conversion process, we now know, is much slower than we had first thought.” 41 Reflection on the frustrations revealed that habits and preconscious assumptions around hospitality at Coast Vineyard were undermining relationships with neighbors.

Addressing this adaptive challenge will require more than new learning, a new practice, or a new experience. Rehabituation will be necessary. The next chapter will dig into the sociocultural context of these assumptions around hospitality. In order to frame an experiment, the following analysis will explore how church members came to imagine hospitality in the way that they do. Once the sociocultural context is established, Chapter 3 will draw on the resources of Scripture and contemporary Christian writing on hospitality to provide a wider perspective on the church’s praxis. This will be followed by Chapter 4 which describes the design of the experiment created to address this adaptive challenge.

41 Robert J. Schreiter, Constructing Local Theologies (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1985), 158.
CHAPTER 2
HABITUS AND HOSPITALITY

The body is in the social world, but the social world is in the body.
—Pierre Bourdieu

Corresponding to step one in the practical theology cycle, current praxis, Chapter 1 introduced the hospitality imaginary and described the practice of hospitality at Coast Vineyard, mapping how new imagination for interrelationships within the hospitality imaginary led to experimenting with hospitality as a reciprocal practice.\textsuperscript{1} It named the adaptive challenge of overcoming the assumptions and presuppositions around hospitality that were undermining relationships with neighbors. Corresponding to step two in the practical theology cycle, context and culture, Chapter 2 attempts to establish the sociocultural context of Coast Vineyard with special attention to the imagination for hospitality.\textsuperscript{2} It will explore the historical development of how home, host, and guest have been imagined and how that progression has come to shape hospitality at Coast Vineyard.

\textsuperscript{1} Branson, “Disruptions Meet Practical Theology,” 44.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid.
This investigation will shed light on the depth of the resistance to the diffusion of new imagination in the congregation. Pierre Bourdieu’s notions of *habitus* and *field* will be used as frameworks to pursue this inquiry. The chapter will proceed in three steps. First, Bourdieu’s theories of habitus and field are introduced. Second, an archaeology is offered suggesting that ancient, medieval, modern, and late modern narratives shape the present hospitality imaginary in San Diego. Third, the chapter situates the social imagination of Coast Vineyard in its local context and reflects on the implications of this situation.

**Pierre Bourdieu’s Theory of Habitus and Field**

This analysis begins with the introduction of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of habitus and field. Bourdieu’s theory accounts for the preconscious way that habituated behavior functions in a given social context. If hospitality is pictured as a game with multiple participants, habitus could be described as “a feel for the game,” while field would refer to the game itself. Bourdieu’s theory lays bare the depth at which cultural narratives about home, host, and guest are inscribed on the bodies of people in a social context. As a result, it is a powerful explanatory framework predicting that shifting imagination for hospitality will be slow and difficult.

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3 James K. A. Smith analyzes the connection between habitus and the formation of imagination in *Imagining the Kingdom*. His work inspired me to think about habitus with respect to the formation of imagination for hospitality in particular. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 75-102.
Pierre Bourdieu’s Notion of Habitus

For Pierre Bourdieu, habitus are those embodied structures that orient us toward the world. On the one hand, habitus are structured structures.⁴ They are formed through interaction with the environment around us. Habitus are embodied history.⁵ On the other hand, they are structuring structures.⁶ They generate the practices that make up our daily lives.⁷ They are the acquired system of generative schemes that create the range of potential actions a person takes in a given situation.⁸

Habitus structures our inclinations. It predisposes us to construct meaning in certain ways rather than others.⁹ To use the example of soccer, a player who has practiced for years will instinctively carry out a number of body motions when shooting. That player will aim the non-shooting foot at the target, look down at the ball, and cock back their shooting foot simultaneously without thinking about what they are doing. Years of practice have made those actions preconscious.

Habitus functions like what Bourdieu describes as a “feel for the game.” He writes, “The habitus is this kind of practical sense for what is to be done in a given situation—what is called in sport a ‘feel’ for the game, that is, the art of anticipating the

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⁵ Ibid., 56.
⁶ Ibid., 53.
⁷ Ibid.
⁸ Ibid., 55.
⁹ Ibid., 81.
future of the game, which is inscribed in the present state of play.”

Our practices are the result of a habituated sense of what happens in a given cultural game. Anticipation, then, is a key marker of habitus. The habitus generates our sense of what will come next in a given circumstance. The trained soccer player heads to where the ball will be in advance of the pass. In the same way, the actions which comprise hospitality in a given culture are driven by assumptions and anticipatory inclinations that become preconscious over time.

Habitus is formed through a long process of social interaction. Bourdieu can describe human existence as “the social made body.” People are deeply formed by the social structures within which they live, and this takes time. Because habitus is the embodiment of history, narratives could be described as the DNA of the habitus. The narratives of a community give shape to the disposition of the members toward the world. Habitus is the practical sense which our bodies acquire as they are immersed in narratives. As a result, entering a habitus cannot be rushed.

Habitus and the Hospitality Imaginary

Our imagination for home, host, and guest are deeply embedded within our habitus. Picking up Bourdieu’s language, home is a place where we have a feel for the game. Home is not a matter of being able to articulate cultural norms. Rather, home is

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12 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 95.
where our bodies know what to anticipate. Home is comfortable precisely because the rhythms and routines of that physical space have become second nature. Conversely, when the home is a dangerous place it is deeply uncomfortable for the body. This means that entering a new imagination for home will require new daily routines in which our bodies are slowly habituated to the environment.

Likewise, the host is the one who has acquired the habitus of the home. The body of the host knows what to anticipate in the home, and the host viscerally understands the habits that fit with the structures of the home. The home shapes the host even as the host shapes the home. Furthermore, hosting is learned through habitual interactions with a host. New imagination for hospitality will not be formed through a new teaching or tactic. We must act our way into a new imagination. Indeed, imagination invariably shapes potential responses in an encounter involving hospitality, enabling some responses and closing off others. As Graham Ward writes, “The imagination empowers us to act.” To name the habitus of the host is to name the dispositions of the host with respect to home and to the guest. The habitus represents the culturally formed desire of the host.

The guest is the one who does not share the habitus of the home. Even if the stranger lives in the home next door, that person is not initially oriented to the narratives of the family in the home of the host. As a result, this person lacks the anticipation that constitutes the feel for the game. To be the guest is to risk anxiety precisely because the other is not sure what will come next in the home. Perhaps one reason Christians cling to

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the role of host is to avoid the stressful uncertainty of environments where we genuinely lack a feel for the game.

Habitus and Resistance to Missional Transformation

When Jesus sends his followers out in Luke 10, he tells them to settle down, to remain in the home where they are welcomed (Luke 10:7). Charging them to eat and drink with their new hosts, Jesus is aiming precisely at their daily routines. In Bourdieu’s language, Jesus is calling his followers to be formed in a new habitus. Alan Roxburgh writes, “Luke is sketching out a primary way, through sitting together at meals, in which these Christians might discover the shape of gospel life in an environment where it made no sense and had no context.”14 By sitting in the place where we lack practical sense, the door is open to new imagination, an imagination that will emerge as our bodies are recruited by new routines.

The habitus framework sheds light on why missional transformation is challenging, particularly for a group formed in a different imagination. Because habitus is formed by repeated exposure to the routines of daily life, it is not prone to sudden transformation. Moreover, the early formation of habitus is crucial. Acquiring a new habitus will never happen as a result a program or plan for outreach. Rather, new habitus requires time spent dwelling with the other. For churches with a long history of imagining themselves as the host, missional transformation entails dislocation from that

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14 Alan Roxburgh, Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 144.
ecclesiocentric habitus. This means spending time being hosted until that becomes the habitual way of life. While Bourdieu’s habitus describes the “feel for the game,” his theory of field describes the norms and values that make up the game itself. The second section of this chapter will outline Bourdieu’s notion of field.

Pierre Bourdieu’s Notion of Field

For Pierre Bourdieu, the structured and structuring dispositions that are the habitus give rise to practices that take place in a given field, a social context. Describing the interplay between habitus and field, he writes, “It is in the relationship between habitus and the field, between the feel for the game and the game itself, that the stakes of the game are generated and ends are constituted.”¹⁵ The field, then, is the game itself. The norms, values, and rules which legitimate or de-legitimate actions are what constitutes the field. To return to the soccer analogy, handling the ball on the field is only permissible for the goalie. Otherwise, that action is a penalty. Similarly, each local context will have implicit rules for the game of hospitality.

When a person is thoroughly immersed in a field, they know what to do without having to think about it. Bourdieu writes, “Someone who has incorporated the structures of the field (or of a particular game) ‘finds his place’ there immediately, without having to deliberate, and brings out, without even thinking about it, ‘things to be done.’”¹⁶ At the same time, the field imposes its norms and ends on people who live there.¹⁷

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¹⁶ Ibid., 143.

exerts pressure on the habitus even as the collective interactions of the habitus shape the field.

As a result of pressure from the field, social imagination for hospitality works its way into the bodies of the participants. To give one example, the person who grew up taking their shoes off when entering their own home is likely to be want others to take their shoes off when entering their home as an adult. Furthermore, that person’s body is likely to be disturbed if guests fail to do so. The social habit has become a bodily disposition.

In the suburbs, the shape of the homes, the layout of the homes, the spacing of the homes, and the design of the neighborhoods represent values and norms. The built environment then functions to sew those values and norms into the residents of the suburbs. To enter a suburban home, an urban flat, or ranch home on the prairie is to enter a narrative about hospitality that rests on many layers of narratives. Bourdieu’s theory of habitus and field provide analytical tools for an investigation of the narrative layers that comprise the social imagination for hospitality in San Diego.

An Archaeology of the Hospitality Field in Suburban San Diego

This section offers a preliminary archaeology of the social imagination for hospitality in San Diego by tracing the development of imagination for home. The following archaeology will examine three layers. The first and oldest layer is the ancient imagination for hospitality. The next layer is the medieval European imagination for
hospitality. Following that is an examination of the modern imagination for hospitality which will be introduced with an assessment of how the cultural logic of capitalism drove the developments of modernity. The chapter closes by situating San Diego and with it Coast Vineyard in the late modern suburban context.

Ancient Imagination for Hospitality

The bedrock layer for the social imagination for hospitality in San Diego is Eurotribal. As will become clear, the narratives that shape the neighborhoods of San Diego are narratives that accumulated, layer after layer, over the past two millennia in Europe. Looking back to the roots of European civilization, home was the place of family worship.\textsuperscript{18} Describing ancient homes, Larry Siedentop writes, “The family hearth, or altar, and with it the divine ancestors or gods of the family, provided the focus of a sedentary life, of a fixed relationship with the soil . . . The boundaries of the family property were also the boundaries of a sacred domain.”\textsuperscript{19} The family, not the individual, was the basic unit of society.\textsuperscript{20} Siedentop describes the ancient family as “a self-contained moral universe.”\textsuperscript{21} To enter the home was to enter the space of the family gods.

\textsuperscript{18} The inquiry that follows traces urban and suburban imagination for hospitality in order to provide a thick description of the socio-cultural context of Coast Vineyard. The rural story line would be substantially different, as would story lines with roots in Asia or Africa.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 12.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 351.
The outworking of this imagination can be seen in the legal codes. In the first Greek and Roman cities, houses had to be separated by two and half feet, and that space was dedicated to the god of the enclosure.\textsuperscript{22} The sale of property was essentially forbidden precisely because, as Siedentop observes, “Family property was integral to family worship.”\textsuperscript{23} The home as a place was not a place purchased out of preference.\textsuperscript{24} Moreover, the development of cities was not about building pleasant places for individuals to live. It was about the assertion of religious identity in the form of residences for the ancestral gods.\textsuperscript{25}

In this imagination there was a vast gulf between host and guest. Commenting on the ancient practice of beating the bounds of the family domain, Siedentop observes that this created both a physical and a moral frontier.\textsuperscript{26} A family walked the perimeter of the family domain to distinguish their realm from the realm of outsiders. Outsiders were both strangers and enemies. Siedentop writes, “No common humanity was acknowledged, an attitude confirmed by the practice of enslavement.”\textsuperscript{27} The moral obligation was within the sphere of the family.

\textsuperscript{22} Siedentop, \textit{Inventing the Individual}, 13.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 16.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 24.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 12-13.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 13.
Furthermore, in the politics of ancient imagination, the paterfamilias held all the power. The father was priest, judge, and sole arbiter of the resources of the home.\textsuperscript{28} Explaining the exalted role of the father, Siedentop writes, “The father, representing all his ancestors, was himself a god in preparation.”\textsuperscript{29} Virtuous habits had to do with preserving family worship and honor, rather than, for instance, treating all guests as equals.\textsuperscript{30} This narrative serves as a foundational layer upon which the medieval and modern imagination for hospitality were built.

**Medieval Imagination for Hospitality**

The medieval period represents a second distinct layer of narratives about hospitality. By the time of the late medieval period, the European home was no longer primarily the domain of family gods. It had become a public ceremonial space deeply embedded within a social imaginary that had been slowly Christianizing for a millennium. The morality of Christendom was inscribed on the practices of everyday life in the home.

Nothing in the home was purely functional. Everything from fabric color, to the way people washed their hands, to the baking of bread had ceremonial and religious significance.\textsuperscript{31} To acquire a feel for the game in this home, one would need to know the

\textsuperscript{28} Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 15-17.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 15.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.

color to wear, when to wash one’s hands, and how that washing should occur. The moral
topography of the home was intricately linked to the church or cathedral at the center of
the town. To give one example, headgear with social and religious significance was worn
by nearly everyone, and people wore their hats while eating, sleeping, and bathing.\textsuperscript{32} The
habits of the home were not only imbued with ceremony, they were also public.

This public imagination can be seen in the medieval hall. Witold Rybczynksi
writes, “The hall was in constant use, for cooking, for eating, for entertaining guests, for
transacting business, as well as nightly for sleeping.”\textsuperscript{33} The average bed was ten square
feet, and it was not unusual for as many as four couples to sleep in the same bed.\textsuperscript{34}
Furniture had to be movable, and, indeed, portable, which is why both the French and
Italian words for furniture mean “the movables.”\textsuperscript{35} Medieval households of as many as
twenty-five people were not uncommon, as they included employees, servants,
apprentices, and friends. As Rybczynski observes, “privacy was unknown.”\textsuperscript{36} In his
brilliant analysis of the structures of everyday life, Fernand Braudel notes that the first
division between workplace and the private home began in the early eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{32} Rybczynski, \textit{Home}, 32-33.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 26-27.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 28. Lewis Mumford points out the existence of private bedrooms in castles as early as the
13\textsuperscript{th} century, but this was an elite phenomenon with no demonstrable connection to popular imagination.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 27.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 28.

\textsuperscript{37} Fernand Braudel, \textit{The Structures of Everyday Life, vol. 1 of Civilization and Capitalism 15\textsuperscript{th}-18\textsuperscript{th}
In 1619, every baker in London still had children, servants, and apprentices living under the same roof.38

In the medieval hall, the desire with respect to hospitality was for honor, not comfort. All guests would sit on hard benches at a meal, but seat position mattered. Rybczynski comments that manners dictated where members of different social classes sat and that “to be placed ‘above the salt’ was an honor reserved for a distinguished few.”39 What mattered was where one sat, not how one sat.40 The ancient and the medieval narratives formed the first two layers of sediment, this investigation now turns to the modern layer.

Medieval narratives about hospitality form the ground upon which the modernity narratives were deposited and took shape. Dramatic changes occurred during the enlightenment that profoundly reshaped social imagination for hospitality. Late modern suburban imagination for hospitality is the result of the progressive commodification of living space. In order for the space of the home to become commodified, a fundamental shift in social understanding of the self would need to occur. The emergence of the cultural logic of capitalism would precipitate that change.

39 Rybczynski, Home, 32.
40 Ibid.
The Cultural Logic of Capitalism and the Modern Imagination for Hospitality

With the beginnings of global capitalism came the rise of possessive individualism. Larry Siedentop traces the idea of the individual right to private property back to fourteenth century debates over the Franciscan rejection of property and possessions. He identifies the Franciscan, William of Ockham, as the first to introduce “rights” language with respect to individual moral agency into discussions about property. However, it would be three more centuries before the implications of those debates would reshape the demography of Europe.

As markets began to spread and models of state government began to shift, Enlightenment thinkers began to theorize about the individual in new ways. C.B. Macpherson’s nuanced investigation of Hobbes and Locke argues that they represent the seventeenth century foundations of possessive individualism. In Hobbes’ model of society, every person’s powers are opposed that of the other, a model Macpherson calls a “full possessive market model.” In this account, human society is nothing more than a series of market relations. However, Locke proposed a theory of natural law as a result of his recognition of the class differences in his own society. Locke argues that a person’s labor, by natural right, is one’s own. As a result, the individual’s right to gain

42 Ibid., 298.
43 Ibid., 265.
44 Ibid., 264.
45 Ibid., 269.
overrides the moral claims of society. Summarizing the implications of Locke’s position, Macpherson writes, “The traditional view that property and labour were social functions, and that ownership of property involved social obligations, is thereby undermined.” Property now could be construed as an object for personal gain.

The door to a new imagination for home as private property had swung open. In the medieval period, social imagination for the home was of one cloth with the church. Now, the thread had been pulled and the norms for the home could start to be set by individual property owners, in other words, wealthy white males. Within decades of Locke, people in cities across Europe would begin purchasing homes for their immediate families that were physically separated from their workplaces. The cultural logic of capitalism had created imagination for the private home as a stream of profit. In time, that stream would become a river.

The Birth of Suburbia and the Modern Imagination for Hospitality

It would take another century before true suburbs would be born in London. People initially bought townhomes in the city, and, soon, the bourgeoisie began buying country villas just outside the city for weekend retreat. The suburbs were born when the elite merchants changed their permanent residence to the villas.47 From the outset,


suburbs represented the commodification of desire. That is, people were purchasing ideals in the form of homes.\textsuperscript{48}

Specifically, suburbanization was driven by the marketing of values for security, comfort, and privacy, all of which have come to shape and limit the practice of hospitality in the suburbs. For a fee, a safe, comfortable, and private paradise could be purchased. In turn, life in these suburban homes accustomed their residents to this habitus, creating intensified desire for safety, comfort, and privacy. The habitus of suburbia has proven to be a structuring structure, amplifying the ideals it instantiated in a self-reinforcing system of feedback. The following analysis will examine each of these values separately.

**Suburbia and Security**

The process of suburbanization has been driven from the start by fear of the other. Positively put, suburbs reify social desire for safety and security into the built environment. Robert Fishman explains, “Even in eighteenth century London, the impetus for suburbanization contained a large element of class fear, the desire to isolate oneself and one’s family from the turbulent lower orders of the urban core.”\textsuperscript{49} For example,

\textsuperscript{48} Suburbanization has always been driven by the marketing of utopian eschatology. The image of the garden symbolizes the eschatological nature of the escape that suburbs embody. The suburbs were developed to be the ideal combination of town and country. See Fishman, 128. To cite one example of the explicitly theological framing of the marketing, Ebenezer Howard, creator of popular diagrams depicting suburban neighborhoods, argued that town and country were meant to be enjoyed together because the country was the symbol of God’s love and care for people. Ebenezer Howard, “Garden Cities of Tomorrow” in *The City Reader*, 5th ed. Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout ed. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 331. Still prevalent today, the phrase, “town and country,” is an echo of this utopian eschatology.

\textsuperscript{49} Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias*, 82.
suburban development in Philadelphia occurred as railways were extended out from the urban core. Each new stop marked another step of class segregation, and the structure of the rail system came to resemble a diagram of the class structure of the city. The class divisions were not only implied, they were enforced. Neighborhood covenants not only set minimum values for homes, but they also frequently barred Jews and blacks. In the history of suburban expansion, inaccessibility has been as important as accessibility.

It is not an exaggeration to say that suburban development represents a physical accumulation of fear. Philip Bess writes, “But a striking fact in the history of American suburbanization is precisely its class specificity, and thus its symbolic embodiment of class conflict.” The landscape of the suburbs is a geography of fear. To live in the suburbs is to live a life structured by class anxiety.

Suburbia and Comfort

Secondly, suburban expansion in both Europe and North America has been driven by marketing comfort. Rybczynski argues that this idea of comfort began to develop in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As families began to search for little private utopias, houses got larger and rooms were added. Physical amenities

50 Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 136.
51 Ibid., 151.
52 Ibid., 135.
54 Rybczynski, Home, 22.
55 Ibid
began to improve. Rybczynski traces the modern fascination with furniture to the seventeenth century. Stools evolved into backed chairs. Padding was added, and furniture became seen as valuable rather than a necessity.\(^{56}\) Comfort in the physical sense would take a great leap forward in the eighteenth century with the development of new technologies like water supply and heating as well as refinements of how homes were made and organized.\(^{57}\) By the end of the eighteenth century, comfort was a major part of European imagination.\(^{58}\)

The nineteenth century brought gaslight, ventilation, and other breakthroughs in efficiency that added to the comfort of the home. The home was becoming mechanized. Rybczynski writes: “The great American innovation in the home was to demand comfort not only in domestic leisure, but also in domestic work.”\(^{59}\) Work in the home, done almost exclusively by women, was becoming far more comfortable as labor saving machines and tools were added. This trend continued as homes were electrified. Soon, the most widely used appliance would be the electric iron, which weighed a quarter as much as the older flat-irons.\(^{60}\) Work in the home was getting much easier. As the value for comfort strengthened, the opportunities for consumption diversified.

\(^{56}\) Rybczynski, *Home*, 40.

\(^{57}\) Ibid., 49.

\(^{58}\) For example, Jane Austen’s novels are full of the expression “English comfort.” Austen’s novels take for granted that her audience imagines that homes are places of comfort. The view from a parlor, the walk up a lane to the home, the arrangement of the furniture in the sitting room all call to mind comfort. Rybczynski, *Home*, 121.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., 158.

\(^{60}\) Ibid., 153.
The rules of the game structure how the inhabitants play the game. Hospitality in suburban imagination is about comfort. Returning to Bourdieu’s notion of field, hospitality is successfully practiced to the extent that a guest is made to feel comfortable. Comfort is both the goal and the metric for hospitality in suburbia. The greater the comfort, the greater the hospitality. The conversations around hospitality at Coast Vineyard suggest that the equation of hospitality with comfort is taken for granted.

Suburbia and Privacy

Suburban homes were not only marketed as safe and comfortable, but they were also marketed for their privacy. According to Rybczynski, one of the first physical signs of the imagination for home as private space began to develop in Holland in the early seventeenth century. He identifies the habit of requiring visitors to take off their shoes as a sign of this new imagination. Shoes were left on in the lower floor of the house because that was still public space, but visitors had to put on slippers to go upstairs. The practice of dwelling together upstairs gave rise to a new imagination for that space, which then generated the routine of asking visitors to change into slippers. This new habit reinforced the imagination for private space.

The timing of the distinction between public and private space in the home is no surprise. Europe was in the middle of a secularization process in which public and private

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spheres were being separated. Modernity was emerging within an individuated model of society. As Siedentop observes, “The individual rather than the family, clan or caste is the basic social unit.” A new sense of the self was leading to a new sense of time and space. Siedentop argues that the Christian notion of liberty was driving the change. Summarizing the birth of modernity, he explains, “The foundation of Europe lay in the long, difficult process of converting a moral claim into a social status. It was pursuit of belief in the equality of souls that made the conversion possible. A commitment to individual liberty sprang from that.” As society came to be imagined as an association of free individuals, space began to be imagined from the perspective of a free individual. New imagination for a private, inner, realm of belief would lead to imagination for private physical space distinct from public space.

By the eighteenth century, the association between privacy and the home had spread across northern Europe. According to Rybczynski, “The household had changed both physically and emotionally; as it had ceased to be a workplace, it had become . . . less public.” By the end of the eighteenth century, the concept of privacy was deep within the social imagination for home. Activity in the home was vertically separated, with public activities happening on the ground floor and private activities above.

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62 Siedentop, Inventing the Individual, 335. Siedentop argues here that the distinction between the private realm and the public sphere represented the distinction between outward conformity and inner belief and that this distinction was made possible by the conviction that freedom is a prerequisite of moral conduct. In his framing, the private realm corresponds to inner, authentic belief.
63 Ibid., 337.
64 Ibid., 339.
65 Ibid., 77.
Rybczynski notes that, “'Going upstairs' or ‘coming downstairs’ meant not just changing floors but leaving, or joining, the company of others.”

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the threshold between public and private space became a border not just between family and visitors but also between family members themselves. Men, women, and children soon all had their own rooms. Victorian homes not only had playrooms for the children, but they were designed so that children could move from playroom to bedroom without disturbing adult activities. Private space was fragmenting within itself.

In America, the individual house had become the center of urban life. According to American architect Jaquelin Robertson, “The colonial urban vision was of an idealized, even mythic, domesticity, with the individual house not only as the center of urban life, but as the city’s most representative secular temple.” The privatization of the home had become a sanctified reality. Like the Roman households with their household gods, the suburban home had become its own sacred center with a male “priest.”

Three centuries later, the suburban hospitality game has been played for so long that comfort and privacy are both taken for granted, pre-conscious, aspects of the imagination for hospitality. When the host offers a drink or a seat or asks a polite and superficial question to help the guest relax, the host does so without needing to think about the goal of comfort. When a guest crosses through a front doorway, the guest does

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66 Siedentop, Inventing the Individual, 110.

67 Ibid., 165.

68 Witold Rybczynski, City Life (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 81.
not process consciously the reality that they have just stepped into private space. Nevertheless, the rules of the game profoundly shape how the game is played. Having seen the ancient, medieval, and modern layers of social imagination for hospitality, this inquiry now turns to the sociocultural context of Coast Vineyard.

The Social Imagination of Coast Vineyard Set in Local Context

This section will attempt to situate the habitus of Coast Vineyard within the field of San Diego. Employing Bourdieu’s theory, it will locate the dispositions for the practice of hospitality within the norms and values around hospitality in San Diego. Late modernity has seen a proliferation of suburbs and new developments in their shape. San Diego is an example of this progression.

San Diego is a multi-hub suburban city with major employers dispersed throughout the suburbs. As such, it is part of a late modern trend characterized by explosive proliferation of suburbs, de-centralized workplaces, and multi-directional commuting. Demand for privacy, security, and comfort has fueled the dispersion, structuring our built environment which in turn structures the routines that constitute how we live bodily in the world.

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69 Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 182-184.

70 Robert Fishman names cities following this pattern “technoburban.” He specifically cites San Diego as an example of this trend, and he argues that the decentralization of workplaces is driven by a desire to reconnect homes and workplaces in the midst of the sprawl. Ironically, bringing workplaces into the suburbs has backfired. People are no more likely to choose homes near workplaces than they were before, so traffic has become wide-ranging and multi-directional. Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 190-207.

71 Rybczynski, City Life, 67.
A Field Analysis of Hospitality in Suburban San Diego

Taking field in Bourdieu’s sense to refer to the norms and values that constitute the rules of the game, this section will examine the hospitality field in San Diego, exploring three signs that the imagination for hospitality in San Diego is deeply embedded in the field of late modern suburban imagination. Those signs are the assumption of commuting, the slogan for my neighborhood, and a neighborhood watch email.

First, San Diegans take commuting for granted. According to a 2013 San Diego Association of Governments report, San Diegans collectively commute seventy-five million miles per day.72 Their commutes are multi-directional, and rush hour sees congestion in all available directions from all parts of the city.73 Consequently, San Diegans take for granted disconnection from their neighborhoods. Suburban residents assume that they will eat, work, recreate, and shop in different neighborhoods than they live in. The multi-directional shape of this iteration of suburbia also entails the assumption that neighbors on the same block will eat, work, recreate, and shop in different neighborhoods from each other.

A second signpost of imagination for hospitality in San Diego is the slogan of my neighborhood: “Tierrasanta: An Island in the Hills.” There are two main feeder roads that

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73 Ibid. Neighborhoods bordering the ocean have no roads to the west, and neighborhoods bordering Tijuana see less southbound traffic.
connect my neighborhood to the nearest interstate freeway. The neighborhood was constructed with isolation in mind. Tierrasanta is bordered by a Marine base to the north and a regional park to the east. It has codes prohibiting the construction of roads that would connect it to the neighborhood immediately to the south.

Both those roads feature prominent signs, framed with bright flowers year-round that say, “Tierrasanta: An Island in the Hills.” In addition, many residents of the neighborhood have license plate holders with this slogan. The branding of the neighborhood is proudly displayed as an identity statement by the residents. Here, the late modern suburban imagination is on full display. The neighborhood is holy ground.

To buy a home is to buy a piece of an eschatological vision. In addition, it is marketed as an island. A home here is nothing short of a tropical paradise in a setting of uninterrupted privacy, security, and comfort.

Thirdly, an email my wife and I received from our local Neighborhood Watch captain demonstrates the anxiety running right beneath the surface of our suburb. We receive regular Neighborhood Watch emails reporting everything from stolen pots to missing moss strands and suspicious cars. In one email, we were encouraged to be on the lookout for “a very short Mexican male.” One of our neighbors said the man had been exhibiting “suspicious behavior” and that “when he knew he had been spotted, the man walked away.” The email concluded, “be on alert for . . . a man who doesn’t look like he belongs. If you see him, call the police!” In the imagination of the email, the man who is called Mexican is presumed to be an outsider, and his presence is suspicious even though

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74 The neighborhood was constructed with isolation in mind. Tierrasanta is bordered by a Marine base to the north and a regional park to the east. It has codes prohibiting the construction of roads that would connect it to the neighborhood immediately to the south.

75 The slogan on both the signs and license plates is accompanied by a small, Spanish style cross. A predominantly white suburb is marketed using a Spanish name meaning “holy land” and a Spanish cross, romanticizing and dislocating the narrative of the conquest of California. This signals a dramatic migration of imagination for the holy.
there is no claim to specific wrongdoing. In our case, the island in the hills sits on an aquifer of insecurity.

In suburban San Diego, commuting has disconnected the daily routines of work, recreation, and eating from where people live. This reality combined with the widespread presence of Neighborhood Watch groups with a culture of suspicion of perceived outsiders and the marketing of neighborhoods as miniature paradises points to an imagination for home that has to do with privacy, security and comfort. This is the sociocultural context in which Coast Vineyard is located.

The Habitus of Coast Vineyard

The habitus of hospitality at Coast Vineyard corresponds to the suburban field in which it is situated. The habitus cannot be investigated directly, but it can be seen through the habits of the congregation. These habits are not the habitus, but they evidence the habitus. The dispositions that are the habitus generate the habits. The following analysis explores the habit of commuting and the habit of hosting.

The Habit of Commuting

Coast Vineyard is a congregation whose members are in the habit of commuting. In 2012, a survey asked church members where they worked and lived, and it also asked about the location of other routine activities. Two results stood out. First, Coast Vineyard is an entirely commuter congregation. Second, the daily lives of church members are dramatically multidirectional. These results have important implications for the church’s imagination for hospitality.
Of all the people surveyed, not one works in the neighborhood where they live. The distribution of large companies throughout the suburbs has not led to church members choosing to live near where they work. The uniform separation of residence and workplace suggests that it is not accidental. Consciously or unconsciously, church members are choosing to commute in spite of the availability homes of similar quality close to workplaces with similar skill needs.

Second, the lives of the church members are dramatically multidirectional. Our Sunday gathering place is in Clairemont Mesa, about eight miles north of downtown San Diego. Ninety percent of the respondents said that they live within fifteen minutes of where we meet. However, the work lives of our church members take them all over San Diego. Sixty percent of the respondents said that they commute north or northeast, away from downtown. In a paradigmatic example, the respondent who lives the furthest south, just five minutes from the Mexican border, commutes well over an hour north each day to work in one of the northernmost workplaces identified in the survey.

An important implication of the survey feedback is that the lives of the church members lack organic connections with their neighborhoods. Coast members not only commute to work, but it is common for church members to commute to different neighborhoods to buy groceries, for recreation, to visit friends, and even to take children to school. This disconnection plays out in at least two ways. First, church members spend very little time outside their homes in the neighborhoods where they live. Second, church members often do not know their neighbors. When church members think about hospitality, they think about people whom they know, not their neighbors, who are often unknown.
The Habit of Hosting

A second important habit of Coast Vineyard is the habit of hosting. Chapter 1 demonstrated that church members have a strong tendency to default to hosting, even when they are intentionally trying to practice reciprocal hospitality. Assumptions around their role as host have been undermining relationships with neighbors. This section will drill down into the imagination for hosting in order to frame a response to the adaptive challenge. Further research indicates that this preference for hosting has to do with bodily comfort. In preparation for the experiment detailed in Chapter 4, I worked with the guiding team to conduct further interviews of church members about the practice of hospitality specifically.\(^{76}\) The responses frequently connected hosting and comfort.\(^{77}\)

Church members picture hospitality as helping guests feel comfortable. In response to a question about what hospitality looks like, one member said, “We want to be welcoming hosts; helping others feel at home; helping someone feel like they are noticed.” Describing how she gets ready for guests, another member responded to the same question by explaining, “I get ready by making sure before that I will be prepared meal wise, cooking wise, asking beforehand if they have food restrictions, cleaning the home, lighting a candle, and timing it so I will have ample time to greet/hug the person and have a real conversation, not a superficial one about the weather. I try to make sure that I have encouraged or affirmed them at the beginning so they can put their guard

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\(^{76}\) One round of interviews was conducted in May and June of 2014. Another round was conducted in January and February of 2015.

\(^{77}\) See Appendix B for a list of the questions.
down. I also pray before that the guest would feel so comfortable that they would feel like our home is their home.” These responses evidence a deep assumption of and a preference for hosting because they were not in response to a question about hosting but rather about hospitality generally.

Church members are inclined to imagine hospitality from the perspective of the host. In that context, to be the good host is to be the host who makes the guest feel comfortable. The tone of the responses suggests that church members are comfortable with the idea of helping others feel comfortable in the space in which they themselves feel safe and comfortable. The inclination to imagine themselves in the role of the host has a bodily anchor.

One of the most prominent themes from the survey responses was inviting others to our homes or to our church. Coast Vineyard members describe inviting others verbally, through social media, and through flyering. These responses were remarkable because none of the questions mentioned the church or asked about invitations. All of these descriptions point to an assumption of the role of the host.

This analysis bears on the adaptive challenge of breaking out of the habits, inclinations, and preconscious assumptions around hospitality that undermine relationships with neighbors. Bodily attunement to the comfort of one’s own home combined with the predisposition to see the church as host are making it difficult or

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When asked about good experiences of being a guest specifically, church members also replied with stories about comfort. For example, one church member describes a great memory of hospitality, “When I first stepped into [the home group leader’s home], the atmosphere of the home was open, warm, nonjudgmental, and inviting. Every imagined need was taken care of and more.” Underneath the language of warmth is the narrative that home is a place of comfort. The connection between hospitality and comfort is so strong that it approaches an equation.
impossible for the church to inhabit the role of the guest with neighbors they do now know. Being a guest in an neighbor’s house is to risk discomfort. The archaeology of hospitality offered in this chapter suggests that this narrative has accumulated over time and that it has worked its way into the habitus of the church. An experiment aiming to address this adaptive challenge will need to disrupt deeply held imagination.

Summary

This chapter has endeavored to situate Coast Vineyard’s practice of hospitality in its sociocultural context. Employing the hospitality imaginary and Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of habitus and field, it has traced a genealogy of the norms and values that constitute the rules of the hospitality game in suburban San Diego. It has explored how home, host, and guest came to be imagined as they are, arguing that the cultural logic of capitalism drove suburbs to be built and marketed as sanctuaries of privacy, security, and comfort. The homes built to represent those ideals then shaped the habits of their residents.

Chapter 1 names Coast Vineyard’s adaptive challenge as breaking out of the habits and assumptions around hospitality which have been undermining relationships with neighbors. This chapter suggests that addressing this adaptive challenge will mean disrupting bodily expectations around hospitality. It will mean disrupting bodily attunement to the comfort of one’s own home. Chapter 3 will investigate the imagination for hospitality in the Gospel of Luke as well as in the writing of Luke Bretherton in order to provide broader theological perspective on the praxis of Coast Vineyard and to prepare for the framing of an experiment designed to address the adaptive challenge.
CHAPTER THREE
HOSPITALITY IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Chapter 1 described the current praxis of Coast Vineyard, focusing on how hospitality is embodied and imagined by the congregation. Chapter 2 used Pierre Bourdieu’s frameworks of habitus and field as resources to analyze the cultural context of Coast Vineyard. The many layered cultural narratives around home, host and guest create deep resistance to missional diffusion. Following Branson’s practical theology cycle, Chapter 1 corresponds to the first step, current praxis. Chapter 2 corresponds to step two, context and culture, and this chapter corresponds to step three, Christian texts and practices.¹ This chapter will draw on the resources of scripture and recent theological reflection on hospitality in order to reflect on what God might be up to in our midst and to evaluate what sort of experiment might generate fresh imagination and practices for hospitality.

¹ Branson, “Disruptions Meet Practical Theology,” 44.
The first section details reflections on Luke that shed light on the praxis of Coast Vineyard.² As the experiments named in Chapter 1 began to unfold, it became clear that Luke 10 was a source of energy and imagination in the conversations at the church. The theme of reverse hospitality caused me to begin reflecting on hospitality in the Luke. At the same time, I had developed the hospitality imaginary as a tool for reflecting on our conversations about hospitality. This chapter documents those reflections on Luke using the lens of the hospitality imaginary.

Section two presents theological reflection on hospitality in the work of Luke Bretherton. His framing of hospitality will provide additional perspective on Coast Vineyard’s adaptive challenge. Furthermore, his work may serve as a resource for future reflection. The reflections on the Gospel of Luke and Bretherton’s work will be used to inform the experiment design in Chapter 4.

**Hospitality in the Gospel of Luke**

Christians have a long and rich tradition of practicing hospitality as welcoming others into the hospitality of God.³ The startling reality in Luke is that Jesus is constantly taking the role of guest, so much so that John Koenig can suggest that Jesus is always the guest in Luke.⁴ Of all the gospels, Luke pays the most attention to homes, hosts, and

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² Branson, “Disruptions Meet Practical Theology,” 45.
³ For example, Amy Oden points out that beginning in the fourth century followers of Jesus established *xenones*, refuges for travelers and strangers, often staffed by physicians and nurses. These quickly diversified into poorhouses, orphanages, old age homes, and hospices. See Amy G. Oden, ed., *And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Hospitality in Early Christianity* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 215-217.
guests. Hospitality is one of his central themes. To give one comparison, Luke uses the terms for “house” twenty-eight more times than Mark.  

This section examines hospitality in three Lukan passages. The striking through line is Jesus’ bodily performance of the role of guest. From the birth to the burial, Luke frames his narrative to emphasize Jesus as guest. Jesus often acts like a host, but he does so in the role of the guest. His body is in someone else’s home. Luke describes the social settings in ways that highlight that Jesus is on the cultural turf of a host other than himself.

This section will employ the hospitality imaginary as a framework for analyzing the imagination for hospitality at work in the narratives. For each passage the analysis will scrutinize Luke’s portrayal of home, host, and guest. The section will conclude with brief implications of this analysis for Coast Vineyard.

The Incarnation (Luke 1:26-2:20)

Luke’s description of Jesus’ birth is compact, so the details are telling. The Angel Gabriel announces to Mary that the Holy Spirit will visit her and that she will become pregnant (Luke 1:35). She will give birth to God’s Messiah, and so God will dwell among God’s people (Luke 1:31-33), fulfilling the covenant promises by taking on flesh. The narrative of Jesus’ birth places brief but poignant emphasis on his status as guest.

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“She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom” (Luke 2:7).7

The dwelling in which Jesus was born was likely not a family home. While there is some ambiguity in the Greek, katalumati, probably this was some sort of caravansary where travelers could find secure shelter as opposed to a commercial inn.8 The striking detail about the lodging is that there is no room for Jesus. Often translated, “no room,” the Common English Bible captures the sense of ouk topos with “no place.” The home in which Jesus is born is compromised in its ability to provide even the most basic hospitality. The incarnation takes place among the animals.

Furthermore, Luke frames the narrative to evoke questions about the host. For the first of many occasions, Luke prods the reader to wonder who the real host is. In this case, the owner or keeper of the caravansary is not named nor do they appear at all in the passage. On the other hand, following an angelic visitation, shepherds arrive eager to see Jesus, and they report to Mary what they have heard regarding Jesus’ Messianic identity (Luke 2:8-12). Shepherds play the host, but Luke has alerted his readers in that Jesus is born already Lord (Luke 2:11). If the host is ambiguous, the guest is clear.

The spotlight in the passage falls on Jesus’ status as guest. First, Jesus arrives as the guest for whom no place can be found. Brendan Byrne points out that from the outset this raises the question: “How will this guest, this visitor, be received?”9 For Luke, Jesus

7 All Scripture quoted is from the Common English Bible unless otherwise noted.


9 Ibid., 4, emphasis original.
is an announced guest, a divine guest, a marginal guest, and a guest for whom there is no physical space. He is a displaced guest whose origin, mission, and identity are initially unrecognized. In Luke, the birth narrative sets the theme of Jesus as guest which continues throughout his ministry.

Who is the Real Host? (Luke 7:36-50)

In Luke 7, Jesus attends a dinner party, and the hospitality roles are wonderfully complicated. A Pharisee named Simon invites Jesus to dinner. While Jesus is seated at the table, a woman whom Luke describes as a sinner arrives with an alabaster jar of ointment (Luke 7:36-37). She proceeds to wash his feet with tears and to dry them with her hair (Luke 7:38). In a scene of provocative intimacy, she kisses his feet while anointing him with the ointment (Luke 7:38). Luke observes that Simon silently judges Jesus for allowing a woman like her to do that. However, Simon failed to greet Jesus with a kiss, offer water for his feet, or anoint his head with oil (Luke 7:45-46). The woman, on the other hand, has done all three.

The home in this passage is the home of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36). In other words, it is a high-status home, the dwelling of a man accorded honor for his training, commitment, and faithfulness to the Israelite’s historic values. Located in the town of Nain (Luke 7:11), a rural town southeast of Nazareth, Simon’s home was embedded in the social imagination of the Pharisaical Judaism of the Second Temple period. Seeing the woman let down her hair and wash Jesus’ feet, Simon interprets her behavior in
accordance with that field. Simon’s thoughts about Jesus’ interaction with the woman make clear that he expected such associations to be avoided in his home (Luke 7:39).

The roles of host and guest are contested in this narrative. In a formal sense, Simon is the host, while both Jesus and the unnamed woman are guests. It is his home after all. However, Jesus rebukes Simon by contrasting his lack of hospitality with the woman’s lavish hospitality (Luke 7:44-47). She is the one who has washed him and kissed him and anointed him with oil. Indeed, Simon has failed to fulfill the basic bodily conventions of hospitality, and in so doing he has dishonored his guest. Whereas Simon has failed as a host, the woman has not only embodied the role of the host, she has done so lavishly.

Jesus’ role further complicates the narrative. As he was in Luke 5:27-39, Jesus is the guest at a party. In this case, his words as well as his actions function to subvert and delegitimate the field in which he finds himself. By allowing his feet to be washed by a woman with a reputation as a sinner, by according her honor, and by naming Simon’s shortcomings as a host, Jesus exposes a social imaginary shot through with hypocrisy. Simultaneously, Jesus legitimates the woman’s behavior, applauding the hospitality that she has extended to him. Embodying the role of the guest, Jesus goes further still, announcing that the woman’s faith has saved her (Luke 7:50). Byrne writes, “In return [for her hospitality to Jesus], she receives from him a new outflow of the ‘hospitality of

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11 Ibid., 312.
12 Ibid., 313.
God’s as, publicly and authoritatively, he declares her forgiven and at home in the community.”  

13 Jesus the divine guest has revealed himself to be the divine host.


Both in his sending of the twelve and in his sending of the seventy-two, Jesus commissions his followers to participate in his mission. First to the apostles and then to the seventy-two, Jesus gives a core set of instructions which are a programmatic resume of his intentions for them. He enjoins them to announce the reign of God, to heal the sick, to travel lightly, and to stay in whatever home welcomes them. This last instruction, to stay in homes where they are welcomed, sheds light on the imagination for hospitality into which Jesus sends them. In order to follow him, in order to obey him, they will need to adapt to new relationships between home, host and guest.

Jesus sends his followers to stay in the homes of others. In his commissioning of the seventy-two, this is one of two instructions that Jesus repeats. Proclaiming God’s reign, healing the sick, traveling lightly, traveling in pairs, and the caution to expect persecution receive only singular mention. However, after telling them to remain where they are welcomed, Jesus adds, “Do not move from house to house” (Luke 10:7). From the outset, the disciples will have to navigate the challenge of finding homes where they are welcomed and accustoming themselves to the habitus of their host.

13 Byrne, The Hospitality of God, 75.
With respect to their hosts, the emphasis is on dependency.\textsuperscript{14} Brendan Byrne writes, “They are, in other words, to go out in great vulnerability, relying upon whatever hospitality they may find.”\textsuperscript{15} Jesus says nothing to his disciples about how to host or how to welcome others. Rather, he tells them how to recognize a host. In order to discern where they are to stay, the disciples are told say, “May peace be upon this house” (Luke 10:5). As they do that, they are to look for the one on whom the peace rests (Luke 10:5). Jesus not only tells his followers how recognize a host, but he also tells them how to be guests.

In addition to calling them to dependency, Jesus gives his followers specific bodily practices to perform as guests. He tells them to eat and drink whatever is set before them because workers deserve their pay (Luke 10:7). Curiously, eating what is set before them is the second instruction that Jesus repeats (Luke 10:7-8). The reader senses that adapting to the habitus of the host will be more challenging than announcing the reign of God or healing the sick. Jesus’ addendum that workers deserve their wages signals the expectation of that time that guests would participate in the business of the home where they stayed.\textsuperscript{16} While modern readers are predisposed to see the instruction to remain in the home in terms of lodging, Jesus is sending out his followers to embed themselves within the lifeworld of the hosts they find.


\textsuperscript{15} Byrne, \textit{The Hospitality of God}, 84.

Implications for Coast Vineyard

Taken together, these passages have two significant implications for the practice of hospitality with neighbors at Coast Vineyard. First, it will be important for the church to press further into the role of guest. Second, it will be important for the church to pay attention to the habits of hospitality.

The vocation of the disciples to go out as guests in Luke suggests that Coast Vineyard would do well to inhabit the role of guest. The experiments detailed in Chapter 1 were catalyzed by observations about Luke 10. Further investigation has shown that Jesus’ sending instructions in that chapter are not passing or occasional. Rather, they represent the shape of the whole narrative. Despite the setbacks, this study suggests that the role of guest may be central to the role of the church in the neighborhood.

Luke’s sustained focus on Jesus as guest raises the question of what it means to follow Jesus. Coast Vineyard, in keeping with the Vineyard movement, thinks of itself as a church that follows Jesus. Emulating his actions is a core part of our self-identity. It is stunning that almost all of my training as a leader has been in how to be a good host, whereas almost all of Jesus’ training of his disciples in Luke assumes that it will be lived out in the role of the guest. Perhaps it is time to invest in learning how to be guests.

A second implication of this review of Luke is that the church should attend to the habits of hospitality. Jesus’ descriptions of hospitality in Luke are notably granular. He pays attention to details. From his critique of Simon’s failure to kiss him or anoint him, to his command to eat what is set before you in Luke 10, to his recommendation of which place at the table to take (Luke 14:7-11), Jesus’ focus is on the particulars of bodily hospitality. Consequently, it is likely important for the church to be intentional about how
hospitality is performed on a bodily level. In order to provide further theological perspective on Coast Vineyard’s praxis, the next section evaluates Luke Bretherton’s framing of hospitality.

Luke Bretherton on Hospitality as a Framework for Neighborly Relations

In addition to the resources of scripture, contemporary Christian writing offers diverse perspectives on hospitality. Winsome, articulate, and provocative, Duke professor Luke Bretherton is an increasingly important voice in the hospitality conversation. Bretherton’s description of Jesus’ role as a “journeying guest/host” and his framing of the church’s practice of hospitality as recapitulating Jesus’ life commend the role of the guest to Christians. This makes him a potentially generative resource for Coast Vineyard. This analysis will begin with Bretherton’s assessment of hospitality in the ministry of Jesus, move to how he commends the guest/host role to the church, and conclude by assessing his theologically rich definition of hospitality. Bretherton’s work provides an additional perspective on the dynamics of Coast Vineyard’s struggle to sustain reciprocal hospitality with neighbors and will prepare the way for framing the experiment described in Chapter 4.

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17 As I reflected on the adaptive challenge of Coast Vineyard in preparation for this doctoral project, I reviewed the work of a number of authors. Appendix E contains analysis of the hospitality imaginary in the work of Christine Pohl and Henri Nouwen.

18 Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness*, 135-151, emphasis original.
Luke Bretherton on Hospitality in the Ministry of Jesus

For Bretherton, hospitality is central to the ministry of Jesus. Indeed, he describes hospitality as the means of Jesus’ holiness.\textsuperscript{19} He explains, “It is in Jesus’ hospitality of pagans, the unclean, and sinners that his own holiness is shown forth.”\textsuperscript{20} Bretherton’s unique contribution with respect to this project is that he pays attention to the role of the guest in Jesus’ ministry.

Bretherton describes Jesus as a “journeying guest/host.”\textsuperscript{21} His primary example is the cycle of feasting parables in Luke 14-15 in which Jesus is both a guest of and host to tax collectors and sinners.\textsuperscript{22} Exegeting the parable of the great banquet in Luke 14, Bretherton explains that the social context of the great banquet parable is one in which Jesus is a rejected guest on his way to Jerusalem (Luke 14:15-24).\textsuperscript{23} Likewise, in the Emmaus episode, Jesus is a guest who becomes the host (Luke 24:28-35).\textsuperscript{24} Bretherton emphasizes that Jesus embodies in his life the role of the guest even as he plays the role of the host.\textsuperscript{25} While a guest in the home of a Pharisee, Jesus tells a parable about how to host, thereby taking the role of the host at the party (Luke 14:13-24). Bretherton moves

\textsuperscript{19} Bretherton, \textit{Hospitality as Holiness}, 130. Bretherton argues that Jesus inverts the Old Testament relationship between hospitality and holiness. Instead of having to be set apart from pagans to maintain holiness, Jesus’ embrace of pagans demonstrates his holiness and, in the process, “infects” sinners with his own purity.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 131.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 135.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 128.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
from investigating the guest/host dynamic in the ministry of Jesus to commending that dynamic to the church.

Luke Bretherton on the Church as Guest/Host

Luke Bretherton argues that, for the church, following Jesus means embracing the role of the guest. Following his exegesis of the parable of the great banquet, Bretherton turn to Acts 10 where Peter is a guest in the home of Cornelius. “The church, as it follows after Jesus Christ, is itself a journeying guest/host,” he explains. In contrast to much of the contemporary Christian dialogue, Bretherton imagines the church embodying the role of the guest.

As a result of the guest/host dynamic, Bretherton suggests that hospitality should always be reciprocal for the church. He points out that Peter, a guest of Cornelius, becomes the host as he interprets Cornelius’ vision (Acts 10:34-35), and he argues that this pattern should be normative for the church. Summarizing his proposal, Bretherton writes, “Thus, a reciprocity, or a giving and receiving from each, of a new understanding of who God is revealed to be by Jesus Christ, is matched by a giving and receiving of hospitality.” This reciprocal enactment of hospitality is both an expression and an indication of the character of God.


27 Henri Nouwen and Christine Pohl are two influential voices on the church’s practice of hospitality. They both move from reflecting on Jesus’ practice of hospitality to ways in which the church can be a better host. Appendix E.

28 Ibid., 136.

29 Ibid., 136-7.
Bretherton’s analysis of the church as guest also includes the important observation that the Spirit of God is moving beyond church gatherings. Commenting on the encounter between Peter and Cornelis, he explains, “[Here] we see the Spirit at work outside the church, calling the church out from its settled place in order to follow God’s mission to the world.” Bretherton’s exegesis contains vital imagination for agency of the Spirit outside of the church. How one imagines oneself in the hospitality imaginary shapes how one imagines the agency of God. Having seen Bretherton’s description of hospitality in the ministry of Jesus and in the ministry of the church, this analysis turns to his definition of hospitality, which provides a theological framework for the church as guest/host.

Luke Bretherton’s Theological Framing of Hospitality

Bretherton defines hospitality as “the Christian social practice that corresponds to the church’s recapitulation of Christ’s ascension and the sending of his Spirit at Pentecost.” He further suggests that the social practice of hospitality structures relationships between Christians and non-Christians in such a way as to recapitulate ascension and Pentecost. Framing hospitality as recapitulation provides scaffolding to

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31 Ibid., 142.

32 Ibid., 143.
support the imagination for the church’s role of guest as an imitation of Jesus’ role of the guest.

Borrowing from Oliver O’Donovan’s ecclesiology, Bretherton explains that each Christian social practice corresponds to a moment in the Christ-event and has an accompanying sacrament. In turn, each sacrament both symbolizes and embodies the way in which the church is recapitulating the story of Jesus. O’Donovan’s argument is that the church participates in the acts and experiences of Christ’s life through its practices. He writes, “The shape of the pre-structured church, then, is the shape of the Christ-event become the dynamics of a social identity.” Bretherton argues that hospitality recapitulates ascension and Pentecost. The sending of the Spirit allows the church to participate in the life of the ascended Christ. Hospitality is inaugurated at Pentecost and bears witness to the eschaton in its feasting.

Consequently, for Bretherton feasting is the sacramental enactment of hospitality. The banquets and feasts which characterize the practice of hospitality embody what Bretherton calls a “proleptic disclosure of the eschaton.” Feasting celebrates the messianic feast and creates space for true freedom. This conception of

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33 Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness*, 143.

34 Ibid., 143.


36 Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness*, 143.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 144.

39 Ibid.
hospitality not only articulates a theology, but it also points toward how Christians ought to practice it. Hospitality is an eschatological social practice in which the Holy Spirit empowers the church to sacramentally share life with their neighbors, bearing witness as they do so to the messianic feast. The following assessment of Bretherton’s work will finish the groundwork necessary to frame an experiment to address Coast Vineyard’s adaptive challenge.

Assessing Bretherton’s Proposal

For the purposes of this project, Bretherton’s proposal has both a major contribution and a significant drawback. The most promising aspect of Bretherton’s work for this project is that it commends to the church the role of guest. For Bretherton, the guest-host dynamic is programmatic for Christian relationships with neighbors. Summarizing his proposal, he writes, “The church, following Jesus, is both the guest and host of its neighbours and in being a good guest and a faithful host, the holiness of the

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40 Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness*, 146.

41 The ecclesiology of recapitulation that Bretherton develops from O’Donovan also has generative possibilities for the Vineyard. While full evaluation of O’Donovan’s framing of the life of the church as recapitulation of the advent, passion, restoration, and exaltation of Christ lies beyond the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that this framing synchronizes well with both an embodied view of meaning making as well as with the informal, day to day theology of the Vineyard. Further work could explore how recapitulation might situate the learning and development of the people of God within Spirit empowered enactment of the life of Christ. This points to a bodily pedagogy under the leadership and stewardship of the Holy Spirit. Additionally, with its strong emphasis on “following Jesus” and living the life of Jesus, this framing fits well with Vineyard leadership discourse and could be generative for the development of a more robust ecclesiology as a movement.
Bretherton pictures the church as listener and learner, not just as speaker, messenger, and teacher.\textsuperscript{43}

Coast Vineyard’s various experiments with reciprocal hospitality confirm the importance of the role of the guest. However, as church members have drawn on resources in the Christian tradition, those resources have often served to amplify the default to ecclesiocentric imagination.\textsuperscript{44} Bretherton’s work is a generative fund of understanding that could function in a practice-theory-practice cycle to catalyze imagination for future experiments.

A drawback of Bretherton’s work is that he functions in the Enlightenment tradition of locating meaning making primarily on a cognitive register. His is a rationalist approach operating with the implicit assumption that getting the thinking right will lead to reformed action. The subtitle of the section for his theological analysis of hospitality, “The doctrinal framework within which hospitality is situated,” is a clue.\textsuperscript{45} Bretherton’s method is to articulate the history and authority of the church’s theology of neighborly relations. While he does not use this term, his approach is dogmatic in the sense that he leans on the authority of the church’s historical teaching to frame the church’s behavior. His argument that “this conception” of hospitality “defines the way Christians should relate to their neighbours” is pregnant with an imagination that humans are thinkers

\textsuperscript{42} Bretherton, \textit{Hospitality as Holiness}, 198.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 150-151.

\textsuperscript{44} Several church members referenced Henri Nouwen’s work in the conversations around hospitality during the initial experiments in hospitality. The analysis of Nouwen in Appendix E demonstrates that, for all his eloquence, Nouwen’s imagination presumes that Christians are the hosts.

\textsuperscript{45} Bretherton, \textit{Hospitality as Holiness}, 142.
Here is precisely the conceptual-propositional theory of meaning making that Johnson and Smith critique.

Summary

Chapter 1 demonstrated that Coast Vineyard’s initial experiments with hospitality in the neighborhood were defaulting to ecclesiocentric goals and to playing the role of host. Chapter 2 employed Pierre Bourdieu’s frameworks of habitus and field to provide an account of the deeply rooted dispositions and presuppositions that shape the imagination for hospitality at Coast Vineyard. This chapter has reflected on hospitality in the Gospel of Luke as well as Luke Bretherton’s writing in order to provide richer theological perspective on the praxis of Coast Vineyard.

These reflections have suggested that narratives throughout Luke, not just Luke 10, may be vital for problematizing Coast Vineyard’s praxis and for suggesting specific bodily habits of hospitality. Furthermore, both the hospitality narratives in the Gospel of Luke and Luke Bretherton’s proposal suggest that attention to the role of the guest may be significant for the formation of new imagination. These suggestions will be incorporated in the design of the experiment detailed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 will then describe the results of the experiment.

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46 Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness*, 146.
PART TWO

EXPLORING ASSUMPTIONS AROUND HOSPITALITY
CHAPTER FOUR

MISSION LAB

The first two chapters argued that habits and assumptions around hospitality were undermining relationships between Coast Vineyard members and their neighbors. The church is comfortable in the role of hosting without even realizing it avoids the role of the guest. Chapter 3 suggested that addressing the assumptions and defaults that were undermining relationships with neighbors would involve new habits and that the role of the guest would likely be important. Corresponding to the fifth step of the practical theology cycle, imagination and experiments, this chapter will describe an experiment called Mission Lab designed to help the church break out of the habitus that had been inhibiting their practice of hospitality. Chapter 5 will report the results of the experiment.

Mission Lab

In order to overcome the habits, dispositions, and assumptions around hospitality that undermine relationships with neighbors, a missional action team called Mission Lab will be formed with commitments to table fellowship, dwelling in the Word, reciprocal hospitality, and team discernment. Both words in the title, “Mission Lab,” carry
intentionality. “Mission” indicates that this will be a group living life on mission with Jesus. Volunteers will join the group with the understanding that this will not be a care group or a Bible study group but rather a group evoking the environment of the laboratory. This will be a place for experimentation. The name itself invites volunteers to expect tinkering and testing.

Mission Lab will be formed from a cross section of Coast Vineyard, but several members of my original guiding team will be invited. By inviting guiding team members into the lab, I hope for an infusion of the language and learning of the last four years. These people will have familiarity with naming adaptive challenges and the Missional Change Model. The cohort will also include members new to the conversation. They will bring a fresh set of eyes to both the text and our context. The mixed composition of the group is designed to produce cross pollination along the way.

The group will gather every other week for six months. On the weeks that the group does not gather, group members will be expected to practice hospitality in some way with their neighbors, whether as host or as guest. Because the experiment aims to both instill and evaluate new habits, the six-month time period is important. Group members will have many opportunities to practice and reflect on reciprocal hospitality with neighbors.

**The Practices of Mission Lab**

Mission Lab members will commit to four core practices: table fellowship, dwelling in Scripture, reciprocal hospitality, and team discernment. Informed by the analysis of Chapters 2 and 3, this quartet of practices is intended to help the group break
out of its constricting habitus. The following descriptions will explain each practice as well as the rationale and hopes for each practice.

Table Fellowship

Building on the reflections in Chapter 3 around the habits of hospitality, the first commitment of Mission Lab is to table fellowship, which is the practice of sharing life through conversations around food. Participants in Mission Lab will be asked to take turns providing food for the group, and the first hour of the group will be dinner and conversation. The food, as well as unstructured time for talking, are important components of the practice. Because the church is very ethnically diverse, participation in Mission Lab means eating food from other cultures. The unstructured table time entails committing attention to each other without an ulterior purpose.

Taking Jesus’ practice of instructing his disciples in the context of public meals as a model (Luke 14:1-24), the practice of table fellowship will create space for the group to reflect on the micro-skills of hospitality. The reflections on Luke demonstrate the central importance of table fellowship in the ministry of Jesus. He is constantly eating with people, and table fellowship is the immediate context for much of his training of his followers. Furthermore, Jesus pays close attention to specific dynamics of table fellowship including who is invited, how guests are welcomed, and where people sit (Luke 14:1-24). This practice will allow members of mission lab to focus on strengthening their capacity for hospitality.

The hope for this practice is that it will prepare Mission Lab members for reciprocal hospitality in their neighborhoods. By eating food that others make, members will be practicing the posture of guesting. Moreover, I plan to call attention to the dynamics of table fellowship in real time. By talking about which seats are chosen and which foods are more or less comfortable for us to eat, the hope is to cultivate awareness of the bodily habits of the guest. Arguing for the importance of recovering table fellowship as a practice, Alan Roxburgh suggests that it is “in the midst of these kinds of relationships [that] we stand a chance of rediscovering the gospel.”

Intentional table fellowship is intended to be one component of a re-habitation process.

Dwelling in the Word

The second practice of Mission Lab is dwelling in the word. Dwelling in the word is a practice that gives space for the Holy Spirit to speak. Alan Roxburgh writes, “Dwelling in the Word invites the Holy Spirit to enliven a biblical text among us, so that we become aware of and responsive to what God is doing.”

Each week as the group gathers, members will spend time dwelling in the hospitality narratives of Luke. Over the course of Mission Lab, the group will spend time in the passages reflected upon in Chapter 3 as well as five other passages about hospitality from Luke. This practice is designed to provide space for the group to reflect on the imagination for

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2 Roxburgh, Missional, 143.

3 Ibid., 60.

4 See Appendix D for reflections on these passages.
hospitality in Luke. It carries with it the hope that the group will be able to identify both discrepancies with current praxis as well as ideas and images that might catalyze future praxis.

Dwelling in the word can be a challenge for us because it invites us to lay down the rational pursuit of meaning and to listen to the Spirit. While Vineyard churches in general and Coast Vineyard in particular cultivate the habit of listening to God, we do not typically do so as an approach to scripture. Coast Vineyard members have been historically trained to interpret scripture through a three step process of observation, interpretation, and application. Roxburgh writes, “Dwelling is not guided by the need to get the text right . . . but by the desire to listen through one another for how God might be addressing us.”

I am mindful of the need to gently keep the group focused on listening rather than trying to get the meaning right.

I am excited about dwelling in the word because this was a catalytic practice for my guiding team. Looking back, there was a burst of energy when one group member named Jesus’ instruction to find a person of peace and to stay with them, “reverse hospitality.” In many ways, it felt like an explosion occurred that has been rippling through the congregation ever since. I am hoping that once again the Spirit will speak new life to us and through us as we listen to scripture.

5 Roxburgh, Missional, 62.
Reciprocal Hospitality

The third practice of Mission Lab will be reciprocal hospitality. Members will commit to both extending and receiving hospitality from their neighbors and co-workers. In between each gathering of the group, members will be invited to look for opportunities to exchange hospitality with their neighbors. The rhythm will be gathering, sending, gathering, sending.

In Luke 10, Jesus tells the disciples to go into the towns and villages he is about to visit and to receive hospitality from the people there. On a personal level, I am eager to live into this text with others. Our church members often do not know where to start when we talk about receiving hospitality. Alan Roxburgh clearly names our experience when he writes, “The call of the Spirit to go and listen in the neighborhoods is a real challenge for many church communities. Reimagining church as more than an affinity group serving people who look, think, and behave like the original members is a huge undertaking.”

Conversations among our leaders around receiving hospitality have proven Roxburgh’s point.

The practice of receiving hospitality generates a very emotional response in many cases. The sudden realization that neighbors and co-workers are unlikely to extend an invitation out of the blue creates grief in some, frustration in others, and apathy in others still. Chapter 1 described how the mere suggestion of receiving hospitality generated untested assertions about neighbors’ negative attitudes toward church members.

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6 Roxburgh, Missional, 67.
Furthermore, pragmatic defaults surface almost immediately. Whenever members talk about receiving hospitality, people ask some version of the question, “Then what?” They wonder where this journey is going. Up to this point, raising the possibility of receiving hospitality has surfaced ecclesiocentric imagination that worries about how these actions might grow the church.

By incorporating reciprocal hospitality, Mission Lab will create space for reflection on the emotions and experiences of sharing life with our neighbors. If members cannot identify opportunities to receive hospitality, they are free to offer hospitality to cultivate the sort of relationships where they might receive invitations. This is a practice that presses us into the unknown, and it is a practice designed to jolt the group into reflection on its habitus.

Throughout the lab, I will remain aware of our default to hosting. It will be important that reciprocal hospitality does not lapse back into inviting people to church. Reciprocal hospitality will only be a bridge into the imagination of Luke 10 if extending hospitality aims toward receiving hospitality and not vice versa. The telos of Jesus’ instructions is dwelling with the other. Receiving hospitality seems vital for missional transformation. I hope that by aiming to receive hospitality our ecclesiocentric view of mission will be dis-lodged, as it were.

Team Discernment

The fourth practice of Mission Lab will be team discernment. Members of Mission Lab will be invited to share stories of reciprocal hospitality from the past week, and then we will reflect together on what we hear God doing in the midst of the story.
Each time they gather, the group will ask, “What is the Spirit of God up to in our neighborhoods and workplaces?” Roxburgh explains that discernment is “about bringing God back into the center of our conversations and actions.” This practice will keep the conversations focused on God’s agency rather than our plans and strategies.

Team discernment of what the Spirit is up to in our neighborhoods will be new ground for us. Coast Vineyard has a long established of practicing discernment as a part of praying for one another. From the beginning, the Vineyard movement has encouraged a prayer model that encourages what is often called “L” shaped listening. In the context of praying for each other, we listen to God and also to the request of the person being prayed for. Hence, the vertical and the horizontal lines of the “L.” Discernment as a group will require reframing our individualized model of identifying the Spirit’s work.

The key hope of team discernment is that the team will learn to identify what the Spirit of God is doing beyond the walls of the church, out in the neighborhood. Alan Roxburgh writes, “Discernment is the way we practice the conviction that the Spirit is already out ahead of us.” As a result, testing will be a crucial part of growing in discernment. This is where the praxis-theory-praxis cycle will be fleshed out. An observation one week about what God might be doing can be tested in the following weeks. Then, the test can be reported back and followed by another round of feedback. In conjunction with table fellowship, dwelling in the word, and reciprocal hospitality, team

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7 Roxburgh, Missional, 74.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
discernment over months will be part of a rehabilitation process aiming to cultivate missional imagination for God’s activity in our neighborhoods.

Listening: The Practice that Runs through all the Practices

The four core practices of Mission Lab could be renamed listening to each other around food, listening to scripture, listening to neighbors, and listening to the Spirit in the neighborhood. Each of the practices requires listening, and listening takes practice.10 The core capacity of listening is giving attention to someone other than oneself.11 This raises a critical challenge for the group as well as an important opportunity.

In order for the experimental work of Mission Lab to thrive, the group will together need to lay down our need to be heard.12 This entails a dramatic change in our habits and attitudes.13 At the heart of the change is a willingness to be challenged. Clemens Sedmak argues that listening is vital to developing what he calls “little theologies,” and he unpacks the journey with a series of questions: “Am I willing to be challenged by the question? Am I willing to expose myself to the question without taking a ready-made answer out of my ‘theological refrigerator’? Am I willing to cook a ‘theological meal’ just for this occasion?”14 Sedmak is pointing to the openness and

10 Roxburgh, Missional, 58.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., 56.
vulnerability that listening requires. Moreover, he is naming the reality that listening to the Spirit and to each other deeply implicates our views of God.

The work of the first three years of the missional leadership cohort gave me tools to help cultivate listening in a culture that prefers speaking. One of my lasting learning points from our missional leadership cohort was Alan Roxburgh’s and Mark Lau Branson’s steady, persevering practice of asking us to share what we heard in small discussion groups. Initially, I could feel the gravitational pull of my desire to share what I thought about a given text or topic. Moreover, I watched others wrestle not to share their own opinions. This practice has informed my leadership approach in many different contexts, and I plan to implement it in Mission Lab as well.

Evaluation: Probing for New Imagination and Naming New Experiments

The project will conclude with a meeting where the team takes time to discern new praxis based on learning over the course of Mission Lab. The meeting will include a meal, a conversation reflecting on the experiences of Mission Lab, and a time for dreaming up new experiments. It will conclude with new commitments and a time of prayer. Notes from this meeting will be compared with notes from the initial gathering with the hope of identifying new imagination for how God is at work.

The conversation will be framed as a time of community discernment. Reflecting on the process of shaping new praxis, Branson writes, “Focus on what you believe God is doing in your lives and in your context, and experiment with alternatives – not mainly for
achieving successes, but to extend and expand learning and discernment.”¹⁵ The initial experiments described in Chapter 1 reveal a tendency to default to strategic planning when expectations are not fully realized. The questions generating the conversation in the final meeting will be designed to keep the group’s attention on the agency of the Holy Spirit in our neighborhoods.

The group will take time to celebrate what the members saw God doing over the course of Mission Lab. As we name where we saw the Spirit working, the whole team will be invited to affirm and enjoy the stories. This posture of hope will be important as new experiments are crafted and new commitments made. The next chapter will detail what happened as Mission Lab unfolded.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE RESULTS OF MISSION LAB

Chapter 4 described the design of Mission Lab and explained the rationale and hopes for the quartet of practices at the heart of the project. This chapter describes the results of the experiment, which took place in late 2014 and early 2015. In effect, it represents the start of a new practical theology cycle, taking the results of Mission Lab as a new present praxis. Mission Lab demonstrated that the assumptions and dispositions around hospitality are very difficult to disrupt and transform. Some encouraging development of imagination for hospitality occurred in a few of the group members, but even in these cases there was a tendency to revert back to the role of the host. A critical finding of the experiment was that church members’ perception of time as a limited resource was a significant deterrent to their practice of hospitality.

The following analysis will trace the recruiting process, the initial meeting, the implementation of the four practices, and the closing debrief. The focus throughout the analysis will be on the team’s imagination for hospitality. This will set the stage for the closing three chapters which utilize cultural and religious resources to reflect on this experiment and to make recommendations for further experimentation.
The Recruiting Process

The recruiting process was both challenging and frustrating. The project design called for recruiting from a broad cross section of the church including both insiders to the missional conversation and newcomers to the church. Members of the original guiding team would bring the experience and learning from three years of reflection on Luke 10 and participate alongside new church members who would bring fresh eyes and assumedly stronger relationships with neighbors and co-workers.

Invitations went out in three forms. First, I personally invited guiding team members as well as select church members, describing over coffee or lunch the aims of the group as well as the four practices that everyone would commit to over six months. Second, emails were sent out to the guiding team as well as to a number of church members. Finally, announcements were made on Sunday morning to the whole church. These included a graphic slide that a member of the guiding team designed for the group as well as a description of the aims and commitments.

The recruiting process revealed a general lack of interest in the project. The Sunday announcements and emails generated a single response each. On two occasions, the Sunday announcement was accompanied by a table after the service where a guiding team member and I were available to answer questions or to sign people up. Church members visited the table to talk about the church service, to ask how we were doing, and to ask for prayer, but not one person came to the table to ask about Mission Lab. One on one conversations with church members were fraught with questions, hesitations, and reluctance. Interest was so low that the project itself was jeopardized. I realized that it
would take meeting with multiple people multiple times just to get the project off the ground.

The recruiting process exposed two striking aspects of the imagination for hospitality in the congregation. First, exploring and extending hospitality beyond existing networks of friends was perceived as too expensive to be worth it. People were struggling to find time for the group. One person said, “That sounds great, but I’m not sure I have time right now. I’m really trying to be careful how I spend my time so that I don’t get overloaded.” People asked questions about how long each meeting would be, how many meetings there would be, and how important the commitment to hospitality in between meetings was to group participation.

Secondly, church members doubted the value of being hosted. Several people asked about both the purpose and the goal of the reciprocal hospitality part of the group. They also asked questions about how reciprocal hospitality was supposed to happen. One person asked point blank if they could just host rather than guest, saying, “Is it okay if I just invite people over for dinner.” Members were having difficulty imagining themselves in the role of the guest.

Furthermore, the recruiting process exposed an ecclesiocentric bent in my own imagination for the group. I was profoundly discouraged by the process of gathering the group. Reflecting on my disappointment, I noticed that amidst feelings of sadness and frustration, I was wishing that more people had joined the group. Bigger would have felt better. In addition to the size, I was disappointed by the composition of the group.

I was discouraged that only one member of the guiding team and none of the key leaders at the church had agreed to participate. To give one example, I had really hoped
that a former intern would join the team. He had been an integral part of the missional conversation at Coast. Moreover, he was on the board of the neighborhood business development district and worked in local community-based non-profit, making for exciting connections in the neighborhood. Just before Mission Lab started, he told me over lunch that he had taken a spot in a boot camp for high tech start-up companies and that he would be moving to San Francisco in two weeks. I smiled and told him that I was excited for him. I was devastated. Probing this disappointment, it became apparent that I did not think this group had the capacity to build or influence the church. In spite of all the reflective work I had done, I was still hoping that the experiment would lead to church growth. Now it felt like a waste of time. In other words, my own thinking and feeling about the project was defaulting to the very imagination I was hoping to lead the group beyond.

Eventually, eight people committed to join the group, and we decided to launch in November of 2014. Ironically, as soon as a date was chosen, one of the members told me that they would be moving to Uganda and would only be able to attend one meeting. Due to the nature of the practices that we were committing to, I let her know that it did not make sense to join for just one meeting. Mission Lab was down to seven before we actually met. Having examined the recruiting process, the analysis turns to a detailed report on the initial gathering which will be followed by description of how the four practices were implemented in the remaining gatherings.
Initial Gathering

The first meeting of Mission Lab aimed to orient the group to the overall goal of the project as well as to explore the practices to which the members were committing.\(^1\) Previous experiments demonstrated a pattern of defaulting to the old norm of ecclesiocentric intentions and convictions. I hoped to clarify the design of the project and to secure commitment that sustained throughout the course of the experiment. The gathering began with dinner, which was followed by dwelling in the Word, an introduction of the goal of the project, and a discussion of the four practices. This report will explore each phase of the meeting with attention to the imagination for hospitality.

The meal the first evening was a masala curry. The day of the meeting, two people said that they would be late and miss the meal. One of the people who arrived on time declined to eat as they were on a special diet that month. These details highlight the challenges of table fellowship in suburban San Diego. Anxiety around eating is common, and the imagination for hospitality frequently does not extend to eating food that might be uncomfortable.

Conversation swirled around two members of the group experiencing difficulties in their respective jobs. Both of them wondered if there would be time to pray for the needs of group members during the meeting. Wanting to be compassionate, I assured them that there would be time to pray. Nevertheless, I could feel my discouragement deepening. After a challenging recruiting process, it was becoming apparent that participants in Mission Lab signed up hoping to receive care from me as the pastor. A

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\(^1\) See Appendix C for the agenda for this meeting.
project designed with the intention of breaking new ground was off to a decidedly familiar start.

After dinner, the group spent time dwelling in Luke 10:1-9. Two members of the group shared at length about their desire to find people of peace in their own neighborhoods. Both of them were starting neighborhood focused non-profit organizations, and there was a lively conversation around what might develop.\(^2\)

Unpacking the imagination for hospitality in this part of the conversation, both members were imagining themselves in the role of the host. In this case, as it were, the hosts were moving into the neighborhood. Nevertheless, the group members were excited about hosting in new ways as opposed to finding contexts where they might be hosted.

Two other members of the group talked about how the passage brought up feelings of loneliness. This second wave of the conversation centered on how the passage seemed to be meant for families and how the group members felt isolated and even excluded. As with the table fellowship time, personal needs were taking center stage. Imagination for any sort of relationships with neighbors was being crowded out by emotional needs.

After the time of dwelling in the Word, I shared a simple goal for the group. I told them that our purpose was “To discover together what the Spirit of God is up to in our neighborhoods.” I also shared what I called a “slightly more complicated goal that you don’t have to worry about if you don’t want to.” The second goal was to map the

\(^{2}\) One was launching City Heights Coffee House, a non-profit coffee shop created to provide employment for community members with employment challenges like refugees and juvenile delinquents. The other was launching Thousand Rainbows, a non-profit based in San Diego’s largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer neighborhood purposing to build bridges between churches and the community.
emergence of missional imagination in our group. I gave space for questions, but there was only awkward silence. I asked the group if they had thoughts on how we might discover what the Spirit was up to, but an extended silence indicated that life had gone out of the conversation. Unsure how to navigate the silence, I decided to move on to introducing the four practices.

Discussion of the practices was lively. The first practice we talked about was table fellowship. Members of the group expressed excitement both about eating together and about bringing food. A Korean American woman said that she loved to cook and that she felt like hospitality was one of her spiritual gifts. Members of the group affirmed her assessment.

The conversation around her gift of hospitality was a window into the group’s imagination for hospitality. Whatever else was meant, providing food was part and parcel of practicing hospitality. Again, the role of hosting was central. The one who provides the food is practicing hospitality. Moreover, the group was naming making and sharing food as a gift the Spirit of God gives. In other words, the Spirit is active in helping the people of God provide for others out of the abundance of their own kitchen. For the purposes of this project, it is worth noting that this imagination, while typical and in many ways commendable, stands in stark contrast to the imagination of Luke.

The second practice introduced was dwelling in the word, and the conversation remained full of energy. I carefully framed the aim of this practice as listening through one another in order that we might together discern how God is addressing us, and then I explained that our subsequent gatherings would work through seven passages about
hospitality in Luke. One member commented on how much they enjoyed spending time meditating on the Bible. Another member lamented that groups have gotten away from Bible study. I redirected the conversation to the importance of listening by asking about stories of hearing others discern what the Spirit is doing through scripture. The conversation moved right back to how much the group members value their own growth through Bible study.

The discussion around dwelling in the word demonstrated that listening to others was going to be a challenge. Although this was not stated explicitly, it was clear that members could be excited about what they thought of as hospitality without any real desire to listen to other members of the group, much less their neighbors. Reverse engineering the conversation, the evidence points to an imagination in which hospitality is about controlling the conversation.

Reciprocal hospitality was the third practice the group discussed. I reset the rhythm that Mission Lab would meet together one week and then meet with neighbors the next week. I also shared that my family had been cultivating a relationship with a rabbi and his family across the street from us. They had recently invited us to their home for lunch in their backyard sukkah to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. My hope was to open up imagination for the rich experiences that occur when we share life with actual neighbors. I also hoped to emphasize the potential to be hosted. After the resistance to the practice in the recruiting process, my expectations were low even though the group had already committed to this.

3 Roxburgh, Missional, 62.
The group was asked to share about the specific context where they wanted to practice reciprocal hospitality. Everyone was invited to explain the context so that the group could begin a journey of discerning together what the Spirit was up to. People shared honestly, and there was a buzz in the room as people explained their workplace cultures and the types of neighborhoods that each of us lived in. A married couple had just moved into a new neighborhood where they were excited to have meals with neighbors and to hear their stories. Another group member was involved in the gaming community and envisioned hosting a game night for friends and neighbors.

As the group talked about these ideas for practicing reciprocal hospitality, flickerings of new imagination were present throughout the conversation. Group members voicing excitement and anticipation about hearing the stories of neighbors was something new. Here was imagination that would empower the group to inhabit spaces of either hosting or being hosted. It felt like an authentically missional imagination was beginning to take shape.

The final practice discussed was group discernment. Riding on the energy of the reciprocal hospitality discussion, the group expressed desire to collaborate. There was a sense that in stepping out into the neighborhood, additional sets of eyes and ears would help. People volunteered to join each other as they gathered with neighbors just as quiet observers. The imagination in the group was pointing to a larger reality that God was up to something and that members would need each other to discover what that was.

After the group concluded, I spent time reflecting. I found myself questioning the whole experiment and experiencing the weight of the challenge of missional transformation. In retrospect, my own imagination was stuck in an ecclesiocentric rut that
made it difficult for me to celebrate small flashes of missional imagination. Once again, my deeply ingrained desire for church growth was causing me to question the value of the group. I felt depressed and sluggish because my expectations had been disappointed. The self-reflection required for missional leadership was being degraded by my deeply rooted emotional responses. I was experiencing bodily hesitation to move forward with planning for the rest of the group meetings.

Having analyzed the opening meeting in detail, the stage is set for reflection on the remainder of Mission Lab. The next section will assess the remainder of the meetings of the group by looking at the implementation of each of the four practices. This will be followed by a section on the concluding debrief process.

The Four Practices

Mission Lab gathered five more times. Scheduling was challenging, and it became apparent that the group was not very high on the priority lists of the members. This section will analyze each of the four practices as they were implemented in those meetings with attention to the imagination for hospitality.

Table Fellowship

The practice of table fellowship broke down substantially after the first gathering. The second night, three people cancelled at the last minute, and the person who was scheduled to make the meal reported that they were unable to do so that week. The group ended up gathering an hour late and skipping dinner. Only two of the later gatherings
included dinner, and those were attended by three and four people respectively. At both of those meals, members of the group arrived late.

Explaining absence and tardiness, group members regularly referred to the busyness of their lives. Apologizing for having to miss the dinner, members described their weeks as “hectic,” “packed out,” or “really rough.” When asked about whether they actually wanted to attend, one member responded that they valued the group but need to do better “budgeting their time.”

Unpacking the imagination for hospitality in the group, the implementation of table fellowship provided further evidence that members were imagining hospitality in terms of time cost. Time was being viewed as a limited resource that was individually owned, as it were. The decision to eat together was requiring a prior decision that it was a better use of time than the competing options. In other words, hospitality requires a cost benefit analysis on a case by case basis.

Simply eating together proved to be pervasively difficult. In light of our struggles to eat a meal together, the importance of Jesus’ double emphasis in Luke 10 on eating what is set before you becomes clear. James K. A. Smith writes, “Christian liturgical formation has long understood what Bourdieu finally names: that pedagogies can extort the essential from the seemingly insignificant.”\(^4\) The habits of sitting down next to each other, eating the food set there, and listening to the other person have the potential to open space for communion that is otherwise unavailable.

\(^4\) Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 167.
Dwelling in the Word

The times spent dwelling in the word reverted to old patterns of observation and interpretation. Despite the weekly instruction to listen to the Spirit, the responses were primarily the results of cognitive engagement with the elements of the narrative. To give one example, the group spent time dwelling in Luke 7:36-50, the passage in which Jesus is anointed with oil by a woman while a guest at Simon the Pharisee’s home. During the response time, the conversation began with one member commenting that it was beautiful how the woman was preparing Jesus for his crucifixion. A person in the group responded with a question about how discouraging it can be to read the Bible when one lacks that sort of knowledge. The group was struggling to engage the passage by listening to the Spirit.

Another feature of the conversations around dwelling in scripture was the consistent surfacing of personal needs. Members of the group made connections between the biblical narrative and current needs in their own life, often with a prayer request. For example, as the group discussed the Emmaus road encounter in Luke 24, one member commented that the journey reminded them of how they had recently moved to San Diego from a different state and how that brought up feelings of loneliness. The group was operating in a framework where engaging scripture is the prelude to prayer for personal needs. Instructions to listen to what the Spirit might be highlighting and to listen to each other were not shaping the conversation in any discernable way.

5 The historic meeting flow of Coast Vineyard home group meetings has roughly followed the pattern: worship, bible study, prayer for personal needs, and social time at the beginning, the end, or both.
The conversations during the time dwelling in the word pointed to an absence of imagination for hospitality. Passages explicitly about hospitality were not giving rise to conversation about hospitality in general or about the micro-practices associated with hospitality in particular. Loneliness, busy-ness, and sadness were trumping curiosity about sharing life with others. If the Spirit was saying anything to the group through scripture, the volume of personal needs was drowning out their ability to hear it.

Reciprocal Hospitality

Like table fellowship and dwelling in scripture, practicing reciprocal hospitality proved to be a struggle. Stories of hospitality in the neighborhood were slow in coming, but, when they were shared, these narratives generated life, energy, and glimpses of new imagination. In spite of the enthusiasm about this practice, at our first gathering after the introductory night, only two members of the group had actually met with people in their neighborhood.6

When the time came to share stories of reciprocal hospitality at the group’s subsequent gathering, one participant shared about his dream to start a coffee house that would empower the refugee community. In that context, he recalled this encounter with a new friend:

Although he isn’t a follower of Jesus, our differences in beliefs are rooted in friendship, laughter, and a love that goes beyond labels. Recently, he decided to partner with me and a few friends to bring wholeness and redemption to the neighborhood of City Heights. He’s working with me on a business plan that we hope – when executed – will empower the refugee community. He gave up a consulting opportunity to follow the heart of God, whether he’d call it like that or

6 One was me.
not. I’m learning that one way of being missional is doing life with people you love and calling out God’s work in them.\(^7\)

The group celebrated the report and peppered him with questions. Members expressed that they were inspired to press into conversations in their own neighborhoods.

The imagination for hospitality in this report is interesting in that it was presented as an example of hospitality, but it was not about a home at all. Rather, there was a sense in which the neighborhood itself was functioning as a home. Inasmuch as it identified a movement of the Spirit of God in the neighborhood, it may have signaled a development in missional imagination. He was able to name the friend’s sacrifice of a consulting opportunity as the work of God, and he was able to see his role as interpreting that movement. However, he was framing his interpretive action in a way that took credit. He was responsible to call out God’s work. To a significant extent, this narrative framing still portrays the church as the real agent in the neighborhood.

A third member of the group had scheduled a dinner with new acquaintances from a neighboring apartment complex. It was two months before the dinner actually occurred. But, when it did, the group member excitedly reported that, over dinner, they had been invited to attend a meeting of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (hereafter, LGBTQ) organization in San Diego. Cultivating relationships with neighbors was leading to surprising invitations.

With respect to imagination for hospitality, it is notable that a description of a meal led to an enthusiastic description of a new opportunity with the Human Rights

\(^7\) Quoted from an email sent to the whole group. This collaboration led to City Heights Coffee House, a non-profit organization that provides employment for otherwise unemployable neighbors. They hired their first two employees in April and May of 2016.
A crack had opened in ecclesiocentric imagination, and suddenly a story of community collaboration was taking root in its midst. What started as a story of hosting had become an opportunity to be a guest, and the Spirit was stirring up new relationships with a yet to be discerned trajectory. Sparks like this demonstrate the promise of the intentional practice of reciprocal hospitality.

Another member had planned a game night and begun inviting friends. It was three months before this gathering happened, and the group member cited a series of family and work problems as obstacles to having friends over. She described the game night as a time of eating snacks, playing different games, and laughing together. This member of the Mission Lab is new to faith and had no prior church experience. She wondered what God might want to do among her friends. She pointed out that she has heard a number of people seeing or hearing the Holy Spirit at work, and she asked the group how to tell what the Spirit was doing at a game night. The game night became a springboard for a fresh conversation around discernment.

Despite the promise of this handful of events, over the course of the six months, reciprocal hospitality proved to be a struggle much like table fellowship and dwelling in the word. Week after week, group members reported being too busy to meet with others. The group only met five times after the initial meeting due to schedule conflicts, and those gatherings only included a few more stories. At the fifth and final gathering, the three people who came brought prayer requests but no stories of sharing life in their neighborhood. The scarcity of stories from the neighborhood meant that the fourth practice, team discernment, was constrained from the outset.
Team Discernment

Team discernment felt like stretching a previously untried muscle. The way it functioned in Mission Lab was that, when participants shared stories of hospitality, I would prompt the group to name and reflect on what they saw God doing in the story. I also encouraged group members to consider what the Spirit of God might be saying to us in the midst of the situation. I used varying language, but my goal was to see if the group could learn to discover the initiatives of the Spirit through the narratives of hospitality.

The conversations around team discernment had mixed results. The following three examples demonstrate how the group tentatively explored this practice.

The story about the partnership to empower refugees in the City Heights neighborhood led to celebration followed by questions about the plans. The team wondered what it would take to get the coffee shop started and what the timeline was. My effort to reframe the conversation with a question about the Spirit’s initiatives did little to alter the discourse. The group was energized by the potential outcome of a coffee shop designed to employ refugees. The more ambiguous question of what God was up to was of less interest.

Delving into the imagination for hospitality undergirding the dialogue, human agency was the focus. In the midst of a formal theology that values the Holy Spirit as leader and agent, the emotional reality of the group was that the group member’s plan for a coffee shop was the exciting part of the story. The energy coalesced around technical rather than adaptive work, and the imagined work was creating a coffee shop wherein church members would once again be the host in the neighborhood. They were
envisioning building a safe and comfortable space into which they would invite refugees. This was not a conversation that involved giving up control.

A more successful discernment conversation demonstrated that imagination was beginning to be influenced by Luke 10. The Mission Lab participant invited to the Human Rights Campaign meeting had attended the meeting and had since been invited to be the faith liaison for that organization. At the meeting, he was struck by the diverse ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds of the participants, but also by their unity and passion for supporting each other. As the faith liaison, he would have the opportunity to let churches around the city know about ways in which they could partner with the Human Rights Campaign.

Members of Mission Lab celebrated the story and were excited about the faith liaison invitation. They asked questions about his role and his hopes. The conversation considered what God would do with him in that role. Another member expressed confidence that the Spirit was opening a door. Furthermore, everyone agreed that the woman who had invited him to be the faith liaison was a person of peace. Here were the beginnings of team discernment. The group was identifying an initiative of the Holy Spirit based on a narrative from the neighborhood.

This was a conversation in which discernment was functioning within an emergent imagination for hospitality in which God was the agent and the neighborhood was in focus. The group was making connections between the person of peace in Luke 10 and an encounter in the neighborhood. The expectation driving the energy in the conversation was that the Spirit of God was up to something. This was not about a plan or
a project, but about confidence that God had arranged this opportunity and that something good was up ahead.

Another positive example of team discernment came as the group processed the story about the game night. In response to the question about how one might tell what the Spirit is doing, members offered generative questions. They asked why she thought God brought her to this group, and they asked if she thought that God might want to see community for community’s sake. The conversation had a quizzical tone, and the questions remained open ended. The group did not seem in a hurry to get to an answer.

The imagination in this conversation had a distinctly open quality. There was a sense that God might be up to something, but the group was not rushing to answers or solutions. The Mission Lab participant’s home was not just a bridge to the church, but a possible theater for God’s movement among neighbors and friends. In the midst of the genuine inquiry into what the Spirit might be doing among friends at a game night, the unnamed assumptions were anticipating that God was moving among the guests. While this appeared to be a significant development in the imagination for hospitality, it was one of a very few such stories. The implementation of table fellowship, dwelling in the word, reciprocal hospitality and team discernment had been halting, uneven, and difficult over the course of six months. With attendance in decline, it was time to debrief.

**Debriefing**

Debriefing Mission Lab proved to be a challenge in and of itself. Sensing that Mission Lab was running out of steam, I asked the group about meeting one more time to process what we had been learning and to give space for dreaming about new
experiments. The room was filled with palpable apathy. One member mentioned that their work schedule made evenings hard for them. Another member suggested that we try to regather in the fall. I stressed that talking about what we had learned before we forgot it would be important. The group ended up picking a date two weeks later. However, as the date approached, all three of the people apologetically let me know that they would not be able to attend. As a result, I made plans to meet people individually to ask about what they had learned.

In the design of the project, the primary goals of debriefing were to give space for the team to discern and name what we had learned together and to propose new experiments based on the learning to date. Without a group meeting, these goals were effectively compromised from the start. I recalibrated the aim from brainstorming new experiments as a team to capturing individual learning.

I did speak with two members of the experiment at length. Both of them were energetically committed to investing in their neighborhoods and seeing what the Spirit might do to bring wholeness to the city. By the time the group ended, the outlines of what would become City Heights Coffee Shop were taking shape. Likewise, another member was putting together a board and preparing to formally launch Thousand Rainbows, a ministry to the LGBTQ community in the Hillcrest neighborhood. Both of these neighborhood-based non-profits would thrive over the next several years, and both would include members of Coast Vineyard working alongside neighbors for the sake of the peace of the city.

With respect to imagination for hospitality, it is significant these two Coast Vineyard leaders both ended up spearheading non-profit organizations. As exciting as
these projects were and continue to be, after almost four years of interaction with Luke 10 including participation in the initial experiments as well as Mission Lab, the leaders were still thinking in terms of strategic projects in which the church would function as the host. This represents a development from the starting point prior to the initial experiments in terms of the focus on the neighborhood and in terms of a greater engagement with actual neighbors. However, in terms of the hospitality imaginary, the home had only migrated from the church’s Sunday gathering space to a non-profit building. The roles of host and guest were still pictured ecclesiocentricly.

**Concluding Reflections**

The implementation of Mission Lab showed signs that a quartet of practices including table fellowship, dwelling in the word, reciprocal hospitality and team discernment could begin to generate glimpses of new imagination for God, ourselves, our neighbors, and our neighborhoods. However, even after a significant cycle of action and reflection, new imagination was very limited. Most of the group struggled to implement the four practices and to occupy the role of guest. These struggles suggest that the assumptions, predispositions, and habits around hospitality which undermine relationships with neighbors are very deeply rooted and not easily overcome.

Perhaps the most significant finding of the experiment was the extent to which assumptions about time were implicated in assumptions about hospitality. Throughout the experiment, from the recruiting process to the debrief, time surfaced in the conversations as a limiting factor. At every step there was evidence that sharing life with neighbors simply was not perceived as a worthwhile use of time, even for participants of a group.
with a core commitment to practicing reciprocal hospitality. Chapter 7 will explore the cultural funding of our problematic experience of time.

This chapter has detailed the results of the project, setting the stage for Chapters 6 and 7 which offer theological proposals in light of learning from the project. These in turn will prepare for the recommendations in Chapter 8.
PART THREE

BODILY MEANING MAKING AND HOSPITALITY
CHAPTER SIX

TOWARD AN AESTHETICS OF HOSPITALITY

The necessary remedy for our current problematic state must be a non-dualistic, embodied view of meaning, concepts, mind, thought, language, and values.

—Mark Johnson

Chapters 4 and 5 detailed the design and implementation of Mission Lab. The project demonstrated hopeful signs of missional imagination emerging from within the practices of table fellowship, dwelling in the Word, reciprocal hospitality, and team discernment. At the same time, the project results indicated persistent captivity to an ecclesiocentric habitus. In order to prepare recommendations for further experiments with the capacity to address persistent captivity to this habitus, this chapter will offer a proposal framing an aesthetics of hospitality by attending more deeply to the bodily sources of imagination for home, host, and guest. This chapter corresponds to step two in a second practical theology cycle, analyzing the praxis described in Chapter 5 in light of new learning.

Framing a transformative response to the observed captivity calls for an aesthetics of hospitality, an understanding of hospitality that takes into account the bodily
production of meaning. Smith explains that how humans make meaning is aesthetic because “our fundamental ‘feel for the world’ makes sense of our experience in a way that is more akin to poetry that propositional analysis.” Imagination for hospitality originates in bodily experiences which are irreducibly affective.

The central claim of this chapter is that imagination for hospitality is generated within praxis and funded via metaphor; therefore, missional transformation must occur on an affective register. Bourdieu’s theory of habitus and field provided a robust framework for describing how cultural narratives accumulate to form dispositions and assumptions around hospitality. This chapter will drill down into how bodily actions generate meaning via metaphor in order to frame recommendations aiming at the disruption and transformation of the habitus.

The argument develops in three steps. First, it demonstrates both the depth of the need for and the trajectory of transformation by contrasting the hospitality imaginary of Coast Vineyard with the hospitality imaginary of Luke 10. Further research, experimentation, and reflection make possible a more robust comparison between the imagination of Coast Vineyard and the imagination of Luke 10. Second, it locates imagination for hospitality within bodily habits. This contrasts with rationalist theories framing imagination as a primarily cognitive process. Finally, the chapter will conclude by suggesting the implications of its aesthetics of hospitality for the transformation of imagination for hospitality.

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1 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 116.

2 Ibid.
The Trajectory of Transformation

The results of Mission Lab indicate a deep captivity to ecclesiocentric imagination for home, host and guest. Prior to Mission Lab, the initial experiments had pointed in this direction. The research and experimentation indicate deep resistance to change which has continued to undermine relationships between the church members and their neighbors, and it has created profound contradictions in the life of the church. Members almost uniformly think of the church as a welcoming community, and yet few have interest in even meeting their neighbors. This suggests that what is needed is not merely adjustment but rather deep transformation. The following analysis will suggest a trajectory for transformation by contrasting the imagination for hospitality at Coast Vineyard with that of Luke 10:1-9.

Transforming Imagination for Home

In Coast Vineyard’s imagination, the real home is the church. As members discussed hospitality, the most frequent physical space talked about was the Sunday gathering space. When conversations named church members’ physical homes of residence, the home mentioned was typically a home group leader’s home. In these instances, the home pictured in the story was the home of a church member functioning as a gathering place for the church. It was described as an extension of the church. Even in the conversations about the coffee shop, the language of welcoming and comfort signaled that the potential business was being thought of as a home of sorts, still inhabited and controlled by church members.
This has important implications with respect to physical structures. Buildings used as gathering places for church members where church members have control both represent and reinforce their sense of comfort and ownership. As the church gathers over time, these structures function to further embed expressive individualism in the church community. The church designs signs, lighting, and curtains to help a school auditorium feel like a welcoming home and that process strengthens their own narrative as the welcoming community that they want to be. This is true not just of the Sunday gathering place, but of homes, apartments, and, as we have seen, potential coffee shops.

The imagination for home at Coast Vineyard remains far removed from the imagination of Luke 10. In the immediate social context, the homes Jesus is inviting his disciples to dwell in are the homes of Samaritans (Luke 9:52). These are homes of people with different cultural norms, not least including different norms for food, for purity, and for worship. In Bourdieu’s language, Jesus is calling them to dwell in homes in a field different than their own. As a result, Jesus is calling them into discomfort. He is staging a frontal assault on their bodily associations with home. He is challenging their taken for granted notions of identity.

This suggests that the sense of home of the church needs to be transformed. Perhaps the modes of gathering we have become accustomed to are derailing not only relationships with neighbors but also our ability to follow Jesus, especially if that is construed as taking seriously either his actions or his words. This contrast implies that dwelling in the homes and spaces where neighbors with alternative norms and routines control the cultural architecture will be important.
Transforming Imagination for the Host

The results of Mission Lab demonstrated that church members see themselves as the hosts. This research extended and amplified the indications of this tendency noted within the initial experiments of Chapter 1. This imagination is so deep that few church members display interest in challenging it. Moreover, even when this reality is named and an experiment is designed to subvert it, church members still gravitate toward hosting. They are very reluctant to give up control. Church members imagine themselves doing the inviting and the welcoming. In all cases, they picture hospitality scenarios in which they themselves are comfortable.

The goal of hosting in this habitus is to grow the church. The conversations around hospitality point to an instrumental understanding of the practice. In particular, questions around the utility of hospitality point to an imagination in which the time expenditure is only validated if it results in church growth. Hospitality then is not so much a practice as a strategy. Within this habitus, the role of the host is to invite the guest, the neighbor, the stranger, the friend into the church.

By contrast, a key feature of the imagination for hosting in Luke 10 is reciprocity. Jesus tells his disciples how to recognize a host, and he is picturing homes in which a Samaritan is hosting them (Luke 10:5-7). At the same time, he commands them to heal

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3 Properly put, each church member has a unique habitus. They each have a unique history in different homes from different cultures. However, the narratives of church members display enough commonality to make a generalizing description of their habitus analytically valuable.

4 At times, church members named salvation as the goal of engaging neighbors. A number of the conversations point to a self-understanding among church members that the real goal is salvation. However, the questions asked around receiving hospitality pointed to an anxiety that the real problem with receiving hospitality is that it does not demonstrably connect to growing the church.
the sick and announce the present availability of the reign of God (Luke 10:9). In the broader context of Luke, Jesus is inviting his disciples to imitate his role as a journeying guest/host.\textsuperscript{5} Alan Roxburgh writes, “Hospitality is a reciprocal relationship, a two-way street in which the host is changed and transformed in the relationship.” Jesus intends his disciples to relate to others in a reciprocal guest/host dynamic.

Entering Luke’s imagination for hosting will mean letting go of control. It will also mean substantially letting go of the role of host and allowing others to be the host. It will mean that when behaviors of the host are embodied, they are normally done so in the role of the guest. This picture suggests that hosting behaviors would be most faithfully enacted when in response to the invitation of an actual host. Lesslie Newbigin observes, “Almost all of the proclamations of the gospel which are described in Acts are in response to questions asked by those outside the church.”\textsuperscript{6} It could be added that many of these proclamations occur either in the homes of gentiles like Cornelius (Acts 10:24-48) or in public spaces outside of Christian control and influence such as the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-31). This entails a dramatic reconfiguration of neighborly relationships for Coast Vineyard.

The persistent attraction to the role of the host calls into question whether the present forms of congregational life are capable of generating the depth of change needed. The preconscious assumptions and inclinations around hosting have continued to

\textsuperscript{5} As noted in Chapter 3, “journeying guest/host” is Luke Bretherton’s description of this dynamic. Bretherton, \textit{Hospitality as Holiness}, 135.

coopt experimental attempts at change. The results of four years of experimentation suggest that dramatic dislocation from our spaces of comfort may be required.

Transforming Imagination for the Guest

Coast Vineyard’s imagination for hospitality is characterized by the objectification of the guest. On a simple level, guests in the narratives rarely are actual people. They are not neighbors with specific names. Most of the time they are talked about in terms of potential church members. As a result of their instrumental imagination for hospitality, conversations about hospitality name neighbors as people who might join a church gathering of one type or another. Rarely were neighbors depicted as subjects with real agency. Despite my aversion to the idea of objectifying other human beings, I found myself implicated in this imagination as I worried about church growth throughout the implementation of Mission Lab.

When the conversations among church members name guests, they normally picture strangers and outsiders as people in need. In their discourse, the role of the guest is to receive, while the host is never the one in need or the one lacking. Guests named in these narratives serve to reinforce the self-identity of church members. In order to specify the trajectory of the needed transformation, the argument now turns to the hospitality imaginary of Luke 10.

The imagination of the role of the guest in Luke 10 stands in dramatic contrast to this picture. Jesus calls his disciples to be guests, and he gives them specific instructions for how to be guests (Luke 10:5-9). Significantly, he tells them to expect the Spirit to heal
people as they are guests. Jesus tells them to anticipate God’s activity outside physical spaces in which they exercise cultural control.

For the church, this suggests a move from objectification of the guest to embracing the role of the guest as a pattern of life. It will mean learning to practice the habits of the guest. Moreover, this suggests that the church needs to learn to anticipate God’s activity in different places. Newbigin writes, “Mission is not just something that the church does; it is something that is done by the Spirit, who is himself the witness, who changes both the world and the church, who always goes before the church in its missionary journey.” The church that understands this will be the church that expects the Spirit to be present in the neighborhood. For many of us, this will mean entirely reimagining the role of the guest.

The sharp contrast between the hospitality imaginary at Coast Vineyard and that of Luke 10 suggests the need for transformation at the church. The failure of four years of experimentation to significantly reshape how home, host, and guest are imagined points to a deeply rooted captivity. The next section will locate meaning making for hospitality in bodily interactions. This will prepare for a proposal suggesting a transformative process.

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Imagination for Hospitality and the Bodily Generation of Metaphors

This section will propose that imagination for hospitality is generated by bodily interactions that give rise to metaphors which fund the hospitality imaginary. Evidence from my work to date, from Mission Lab, and from the sociological and theological frameworks employed in this paper point to the conclusion that imagination for hospitality is birthed from bodily sources. This section will attempt to specify the process through which this occurs in order thicken the frameworks introduced in Chapters 1 and 2. As Mark Johnson explains, “Meaning is grounded in our bodily experience.”8 Our bodies, brains, and the environment function together to create meaning and produce imagination via metaphor.9 Johnson continues, “Meanings emerge ‘from the bottom up’ through increasingly complex levels of organic activity.”10 Any accounting of imagination for home, host and guest must take seriously the bodily origins of that imagination.

The ways in which we image home, host, and guest depend on sensorimotor interactions with physical homes and actual neighbors. Johnson proposes that abstract concepts “are defined by conceptual metaphors that recruit the semantics and inference patterns of sensorimotor experience.”11 The ways in which an individual imagines the home are shaped and funded by that person’s sensorimotor interaction with the physical

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9 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 111.

10 Johnson, Meaning of the Body, 10.

11 Ibid., 176.
home. Smith explains that we “acquire ‘primary metaphors’ from our sensorimotor experience of enacted meaning.”\textsuperscript{12} The metaphors that people use for hosting and welcoming draw on and indeed are impossible without specific, particular, physical encounters with other human beings in particular places.

It follows then that our conception of what hospitality is and how it ought to be practiced is formed as sensorimotor interactions with our environment generate metaphors. Language develops as we make associations between physical experiences. A person growing up in a home with a living room with a soft chair and a warm fire in the winters eventually thinks of great hospitality as giving one the feeling of sitting in a soft chair next to a warm fire. Johnson continues, “Our understanding, which is our way of making sense of the world, is embodied, precisely because our meaning-making capacities are embodied.”\textsuperscript{13} The valuation of different micropractices draws on bodily sources. To give an example from Mission Lab, participants’ varying conceptions of and expectations for table fellowship are not just cognitive constructs but deeply felt patterns emerging from their sensorimotor history. Prior physical experiences fund metaphors that shape the current expectations.

This framing challenges a rationalist construction of imagination. Targeting the legacy of thinkers like Descartes and Kant, Johnson writes, “The key components of disembodied views that I want to challenge are the seriously mistaken claims that meaning and thought are exclusively conceptual and propositional in nature and that the

\textsuperscript{12} Smith, \textit{Imagining the Kingdom}, 119.

\textsuperscript{13} Johnson, \textit{Meaning of the Body}, 279.
apparatus of meaning, conceptualization, and reasoning is not intrinsically shaped by the body.”¹⁴ Johnson, Smith, and Bourdieu all undercut the modernist tendency to frame humans as disembodied thinkers. Get the thinking right, and the body will follow. At stake is not only the understanding of hospitality but any serious assessment of how neighborly relations might be transformed. Transforming imagination for hospitality entails new habits and practices, not just new ideas, strategies, or programs.

Transforming the Hospitality Imaginary

Having seen how imagination for hospitality originates from bodily sources, the foundation is laid to propose how imagination for hospitality is actually transformed. This proposal will develop in four steps. First, what is needed is re-narration of the hospitality imaginary. Second, re-narration occurs on a bodily register. It is aesthetic. Third, practices carry within them stories, and so practices recruit imagination via bodily formation. Finally, this proposal will outline implications of this transformative framework for missional leadership.

Re-Narrating the Hospitality Imaginary

Imagination for home, host, and guest is transformed through re-narration. The practice of hospitality is not just a set of microhabits performed in concert between host and guest. The practice of hospitality is an embodied narrative. Wherever and however

hospitality is extended, it tells a story. Hospitality is a story telling practice that witnesses through bodily performance to the inbreaking of the reign of Jesus Christ.

In other words, what is needed is not a new idea of home or a new technique for hosting. Rather, transformation entails a new story with new metaphors. Smith writes, “Sanctifying perception requires restor(y)ing the imagination.”15 This re-narration must capture the elements as well as the scenarios that constitute the hospitality imaginary. As that occurs, the related metaphorical conceptions will also develop incrementally. As Luke Bretherton points out, for Christians, hospitality recapitulates the story of Jesus.16

To tell the story faithfully, the church must embody Jesus’ pattern of life. This suggests that re-narration will only occur as the church lives into the guest/host habitus. To give an example, for a church member to perceive a neighbor fully as a subject with agency, as a host in the neighborhood, a new story about church and a new story about discipleship will have to take hold. As that narrative begins to displace the default story, new conceptions about what it means to be hospitable have room to grow.

The Aesthetics of Transformation

Formation aiming at lasting transformation of the imagination needs to shape bodily performance in a way that recruits new emotional responses. Johnson writes, “Emotion and feeling lie at the heart of our capacity to experience meaning making.”17

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15 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 160.

16 Bretherton, Hospitality as Holiness, 150. This section nuances Bretherton’s proposal by situating hospitality in an aesthetic rather than a doctrinal framework.

17 Johnson, Meaning of the Body, 53.
He gives the example of doubt. The idea of doubt is accompanied by restriction and tension in the diaphragm, the breathing, and often the gut. He summarizes, “Such felt bodily experiences are not merely accompaniments of doubt; rather, they are your doubt.”

When members of Coast Vineyard doubt that their neighbors like them, their predicament is bodily. Consequently, affective change is required.

This means that formation must attend to preconscious dispositions. Smith writes that formation needs to “capture that preconscious, emotional register on which we perceive the world and that, in turn, drives or ‘pulls’ our action.”

In other words, formation aiming at the habitus trains followers of Jesus to take the right things for granted. Transformation must be aesthetic, grabbing the emotions at the roots of how we imagine. Framing the needed transformation as an aesthetic process prepares the ground for a robust case for the centrality of practices in the shaping of new imagination.

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19 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 158.

20 Ibid., 161.

21 This suggests the possibility of an aesthetic nuancing of Roxburgh and Romanuk’s Missional Change Model. While beyond the scope of this inquiry, the following observations might serve as the basis for further work. Because meaning making is a bodily process, awareness itself occurs via sensorimotor input mediated through emotional filters. Depending on the filter, different subjects will recognize or screen out information in different ways. Likewise, understanding is far more than cognitive assessment of new information. Understanding is a complex function of bodily meaning making shaped by bodily resistance or receptivity. Experiments are engaged or not engaged as a function of bodily readiness that includes sensorimotor history, emotional structures, and cognitive structures. It follows that the logical processes which comprise evaluative processes are embedded bodily. At stake are not merely opinions or even plausibility structures. Members of experiments experience varying gut level responses. Evaluation is an aesthetic process in which language is employed as part of a whole-body response. Finally, the bodily basis of commitment should be explored further. The work in this project appears to signal that the observed pattern of defaulting to previous imagination in the midst of verbal commitment should be understood as an aesthetic response.
Practices as Pedagogy

Practices are of primary importance to the generation of new imagination for hospitality. Practices are critical because the practices themselves carry a story. Smith writes, “Christian practices are not just practices that Christians do; they are those practices that ‘carry’ the true story of the whole world as articulated in the scriptures, centered on Christ.” Re-narrating imagination happens through bodily engagement with the story of the kingdom. Practices are not just new skills, they fund imagination that allows for the recovery of a way of life that was once central to Christianity. Reciprocal hospitality is not just novel activity, it carries within itself the revolutionary story of Jesus.

The practices then, are the pedagogy of missional transformation. Smith calls for a “monkhood of all believers” and celebrates “the pedagogical wisdom implicit in the monastic disciplines.” Writing on why practices are the vehicle of culture change, Roxburgh observes, “Practices are the key ways to enabling people to discover new maps in the strange, new spaces where they find themselves.” This suggests that leaders would do well to frame practices not as one component of a transformative process but rather as the form of the process itself. If practices are the pedagogy, then micropractices are crucial.

22 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 163.
23 Roxburgh and Romanuk, Missional Leader, 169.
24 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 155.
25 Roxburgh, Missional Map-Making, 150.
Micropractices, the small habits that together form a practice, are vital to the transformation of imagination. Building on Bourdieu’s insights, Smith writes, “Micropractices have macro effects: what might appear to be inconsequential microhabits are, in fact, disciplinary formations that begin to reconfigure our relation to the wider world—indeed, they begin to make that world.”26 This calls for attention to the microhabits of hospitality, to table fellowship, to eating food that is set before us, and to listening.

Furthermore, the centrality of practices calls for attention to how these microhabits are performed. Bourdieu writes, “The hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy . . . can instill a whole cosmology through injunctions as insignificant as ‘sit up straight.’”27 The little performances of our bodies make the world. Apparently mundane details of receiving and being received by others shape imagination and fund the metaphors that comprise discourse about and among neighbors. With the centrality of practices in missional transformation established, this analysis will draw several implications for leadership relevant to the experimental proposals in the final chapter.

Implications for Leadership

The analysis thus far demonstrates that missional transformation involves a rehabituation process that shapes our desires and loves on an unconscious and preconscious level and gives birth to new imagination for home, host and guest.28 This

26 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 143.


28 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*
points to four implications for leadership. Transformational leadership means attending to the habits of hospitality, attending to the importance of repetition, attending to bodily reflection, and attending to the role of lay people.29

**Attending to the Habits of Hospitality**

If practices are pedagogy, then leaders aiming to transform the hospitality imaginary will need to attend to the specific habits that comprise the practice of hospitality. In the first place, this means moving past the old form/content and teaching/application distinctions that are living artifacts of Cartesian dualism. The form of hospitality is the logic of the practice.30 Ecclesiocentric hospitality tells a story about God, church and neighborhood. Focusing on welcoming others to Sunday gatherings effectively and efficiently embodies a narrative about the agency of the Spirit, about the role of the church, and about the neighborhood itself, a narrative that says that the Spirit of God moves in response to the initiatives of the church and that the gathered church is the arena of God’s activity. Receiving hospitality as a practice tells a counter story, a story in which God is active in the neighborhood and in which God, rather than the church, is the agent moving to bring life and wholeness to society.

This is an argument that leaders need to pay close attention to the form of the practice of hospitality, to which habits are adopted. Two specific examples are entering

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29 These four implications adapt and extend James K. A. Smith’s conclusions in *Imagining the Kingdom*. Summarizing how worship works, Smith calls for redeeming ritual, repetition, and reflection. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 166-191.

30 Ibid., 169.
housing and eating what is placed before us. Both of these habits will be challenging. On entering other’s homes, Roxburgh writes, “This is going to feel very strange and disrupting for many Christians, even those in leadership, because it will mean we are no longer in control of the conversation.”

Leaders must interpretively identify that it is precisely within new habits of entering others’ homes and eating what is set before us that the Spirit is moving.

**Attending to the Importance of Repetition**

A second implication of this argument is that leaders will need to attend to the critical value of repetition. In order for practices to lead to rehabituation, they must be engaged repeatedly. Smith writes, “Only through immersion in the same practices over and over again can we hope for the inscription of those ‘neural maps’ that will reconfigure our disposition.” The repetition itself is where rehabituation occurs. To return to Bourdieu’s tennis player, the way that new imagination for neighbors develops is within methodical habits repeated and strengthened day by day.

This will require overcoming cultural resistance to repetition in churches and among leaders. Smith insightfully points out that Protestants affirm the value of repetition in diverse areas of life from study to sports to music, but they have a “built-in allergy to

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31 Roxburgh, *Missional*, 141.

32 Maurice Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the importance of familiarity in the acquisition of habits. He points out that habits are neither forms of knowledge nor automatic reflexes. Acquiring a habit means reworking and renewing the body schema until the knowledge of the thing resides in our bodies. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes (New York: Routledge, 2012), 143-145.

33 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 182-3.
repetition” when it comes to worship and Christian formation.\textsuperscript{34} Nowhere is this more true than in the Vineyard movement.

As a result, leaders will need to cultivate patience. One of the striking revelations of Mission Lab was my own lack of patience. Alan Roxburgh observes that missional practices take time to inculcate and that leaders must be grounded in the practices themselves before they can lead others into them. Summarizing, he writes, “Missional formation is a long process that can’t be achieved overnight.”\textsuperscript{35} The bodily basis of meaning formation explains in part why this is so true.\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{Attending to Bodily Reflection}

Having seen the need for attention to the habits of hospitality and the importance of repetition, there is also a need for leaders to attend to bodily reflection. Reflection in the Vineyard context tends to occur in one of two modes. Reflection on scripture tends to occur in the mode of study. That is, reflection means observation, interpretation, and application. Reflection on action tends to occur in the mode of performance review. Colonized by the corporate world, leaders explicitly or implicitly evaluate the successes, failures, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of actions taken. Transformative leadership requires the capacity to reflect on how practices are enacted.

\textsuperscript{34} Smith, \textit{Imagining the Kingdom}, 181.

\textsuperscript{35} Roxburgh and Romanuk, \textit{The Missional Leader}, 169.

\textsuperscript{36} I co-wrote a paper that addresses this theme with Jon Bialecki, professor of Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh, for the Society of Vineyard Scholars.
The framing of the bodily basis of meaning in this paper is not an argument against rational analysis. Rather, it is an argument that all rational analysis is originated and situated within bodily interactions with the environment. The intent is not to oppose practice to reflection or action to reason. The hope here is to cultivate reflection on practice in order to facilitate deeper immersion in practice.\(^{37}\)

Missional leaders need to be able to reflect on their habitus. That means being able to identify unconscious and preconscious habituation and being able to name the sources of that habituation. Smith writes, “Recognizing that my habitus has been marshaled by one body politic to ends that I don’t want to affirm, I will intentionally pursue the practice of an alternative body politic in order to recalibrate my heart.”\(^{38}\) As leaders reflect on how hospitality is being practiced, they will grow in their capacity to discern the sources of their practice. They will learn to name the ways that it has been formed as well as deformed by our cultural context.\(^{39}\)

This boils down to being honest with ourselves not only on an intellectual level, but also about our bodily engagement with the world. Clemens Sedmak argues that doing theology means being honest with ourselves and others and making explicit what he calls our “implicit theologies.”\(^{40}\) Keeping in mind the bodily sources of meaning, this means

\(^{37}\) Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 186.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., 186-187.


\(^{40}\) Sedmak, *Doing Local Theology*, 75.
attending to our emotional responses. Indeed, emotional reactions are a powerful clue to our implicit theologies.

Put another way, new imagination emerges in and through social interactions. Meaning making is always social. Johnson explains that shared language and communicative interactions give us the resources for exploring the meaning of things. Within the process of group discernment, new language and metaphors are tested and tried and new imagination has the space to take root. This all has implications for the role of lay people.

**Attending to the Role of Lay People**

Finally, a fourth implication for missional leaders is the need to attend to the role of lay people. Because new imagination emerges from within bodily interactions with neighbor and neighborhood, it is in no way privileged to existing leaders. New imagination is not the purview of professionals or stars. It is born in streets and living rooms not on stages. The burden of this paper has been to show not only that this is the case, but to establish a robust explanation for why it must be the case. Sedmak proposes that “doing local theology is like cooking with local ingredients.” The argument of this paper points to ordinary people in ordinary churches as the source of new language, new metaphors, and indeed new imagination for home, host, and guest.


42 Roxburgh, *Missional*, 129.

43 Sedmak, *Doing Local Theology*, 17.
Letting go of the top down assumptions about vision and direction, missional leaders will cultivate what Al Roxburgh calls “parallel cultures”\textsuperscript{44} or what Clemens Sedmak calls a “contrast society.”\textsuperscript{45} Resocialization occurs not as a leader transfers a new idea to followers but as a community together engages in and reflects upon new habits and practices.\textsuperscript{46} Roxburgh argues that this requires ordinary people “gradually, but with determination . . . developing new habits.”\textsuperscript{47} Furthermore, he suggests that the most effective way to develop a parallel culture is to develop “demonstration plots.”\textsuperscript{48} This means that missional leaders must not default to their own expertise, vision, or position. Rather, missional leaders must vigilantly remain aware that new imagination emerges within interactions among ordinary people.

**Summary**

This chapter has proposed an aesthetics of hospitality. It has argued for the bodily generation of our understanding of hospitality via metaphorical conceptualization of sensorimotor interactions with our environment. As a result, this chapter argues that bodily formation through new habits is the path to transformation of our imagination for hospitality. The mission of Jesus entails rehabituation in the context of a counter society. The implications for leaders wishing to embark on such a journey include attending to the

\textsuperscript{44} Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, 143.

\textsuperscript{45} Sedmak, 40.

\textsuperscript{46} Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, 143.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 145.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 148.
habits of hospitality, attending to the importance of repetition, attending to bodily reflection, and attending to the role of ordinary people. These implications will significantly frame the recommendations for moving forward made in Chapter 8.

The results of Mission Lab also point to participants’ experience of time as a significant obstacle to missional diffusion. Before moving to recommendations, Chapter 7 will examine the bodily formation of our language for and experience of time, preparing the way for recommendations that account for this challenge.
CHAPTER SEVEN
THE CULTURAL FUNDING OF OUR IMAGINATION FOR TIME

In the course of Mission Lab, conversations among potential participants and among the participants themselves repeatedly named time as a limiting factor. This chapter will investigate our language and experience of time in order to prepare for proposals with the capacity to address the challenge of perceived time shortage. Chapter 6 proposed an aesthetics of hospitality in order to frame a transformative response to the church’s ongoing captivity to an ecclesiocentric habitus. Chapter 7 will argue that the congregation’s experience of time is implicated in its practice of hospitality and that an aesthetic understanding of our experience of time is needed to frame recommendations with the capacity to address the challenge of perceived time shortage. The congregation’s conceptualization of time is shaped by bodily understanding. As a result, habits with the capacity to transform our experience and language for time are vital to our capacity to live into the imagination of Luke 10. Functioning in tandem with Chapter 6, this chapter also corresponds to step two of a second practical theology cycle.

The argument of this chapter will develop in five steps. First, this chapter will describe my process of realizing that time is a critical issue for the practice of hospitality.
Second, it will show that conceptualization of time draws on bodily sources. Third, the chapter will analyze the metaphorization of time. Fourth, it will sketch a brief history of the cultural funding of our imagination for time, and, fifth, having shown how we come to speak about and imagine time as we do, the chapter will suggest implications for transformational leadership.

**Realizing that Time is an Issue**

At the beginning of the project, I had an uninterrogated sense of time. I took for granted how members of Coast Vineyard experience time, myself included. To use Bourdieu’s analogy, I took for granted the rules of the game. Bourdieu names the perspective, “time-as-thing,” as part of the idealist Cartesian vision. He calls this the “scholastic point of view.” From this vantage, time is a pre-given reality that is external to practice. Bourdieu argues that we can break through this point of view by realizing that “practice is not in time but makes time (human time, as opposed to biological or astronomical time.” Without thinking about it, I was operating from Bourdieu’s “scholastic point of view.” I realized that time was an issue in two phases: growing awareness and moving to understanding.

The process through which I became aware of my own habitus was frustrating. Throughout the formation and implementation of Mission Lab, members of Coast Vineyard cited time as an obstacle to participation. As comment piled on top of comment,

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1 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, 206.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.
I became frustrated with people. My body was tense, and my responses were increasingly abrupt. The more I thought about it, the more I had the sense that I was always competing with other schedule priorities. I was able to identify presuppositions that time was a limited commodity and that individuals were assessing how to spend that commodity. In this calculus, hospitality needed to exceed the perceived return on investment of other options. The more I reflected, the more anxious and frustrated I became. I was becoming aware that our perception of time was a challenge, but I did not yet understand how it was functioning.

A conversation with a Benedictine monk and long-time friend named Father Francis helped me move to understanding. Following Mission Lab, I stayed at St. Andrew’s Abbey for a week. Over the course of the week, I talked to Father Francis each day. He graciously listened to my frustrations and talked with me about the Benedictine vows of stability, obedience, and constant conversion. During one conversation, I mentioned my fatigue and frustration with church members’ ongoing dilemma over how to spend their time. He looked startled and paused before responding. Then he said, “Hmmm, yes, we monks would never say something like that. We do time. We don’t spend time. But, yes, you people, I guess you do think you spend time. You know, time is a gift. You do know that?” It was my turn to be startled. I did not know what to make of his comment.

Throughout the rest of the week, I began to pay attention to life by the bell. I noticed how the lives of the monks flowed to the rhythm of the bells. Ronald Rolheiser confirms Father Francis’ observation. He writes, “Monks’ lives are regulated by the bell . . . to remind them, always, that time is not their own. Monks don’t get to sleep, eat,
pray, work, or relax when they feel like it, but when it’s time to do those things.” The monks were not deciding what to do next. I noticed that even at dinner, everyone was silent except for a reader until the ringing of a small bell. Then the monks began talking to each other. Their activities, all the way down to their time for conversations, were guided by the bell.

I was experiencing what Bourdieu calls “an encounter between two histories.” The history inscribed in my body in the form of language and habits was pressing against the monastic history instantiated in the bells and lived out in the daily routines of the monks of St. Andrews. I began to realize that my language for time and my experience of time was a result of my habitus and that the same was true for Coast Vineyard. I was frustrated that church members were hesitant to spend their time on hospitality, and that made me feel like I was wasting my time. Our suburban assumptions about time had been socially formed and our dispositions regarding time had been given a specific shape. By experiencing an alternative habitus, I began to understand my own. Having described my discovery process, the groundwork is laid for a description of the bodily sources of our knowledge of time.

**On the Bodily Basis of Knowledge of Time**

Human conceptions of time are formed by bodily interactions with the environment. Lakoff and Johnson explain, “Our experience of time is dependent on our

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5 Ibid., 150.
embodied conceptualization of time in terms of events.” In Bourdieu’s language, time is an act of construction. He describes time as “the work not of thinking consciousness, but of the dispositions and practice.” Time is embedded within the relationship between the habitus and the social world. In other words, the rich and complex notion of time that is built into all conceptualization is a property of bodily interactions. Johnson describes time in terms of experiential correlations. He gives the example that marching, skipping, and tiptoeing each give a different experience of the passage of time. Time, then, is rooted in specific experiences of specific bodies.

This account of the bodily basis of understanding for time counters what Johnson calls an “objectivist” view of time in which meaning is seen as an abstract relation between a symbolic representation, in this case the word, “time,” and an objective or mind-independent reality. In the objectivist account, the conceptualization of time is disembodied in the sense that it does not rely on the experiences of a particular mind that experiences time in a particular way through particular bodily interactions. Johnson’s critique of an “objectivist” view of time is analogous to Bourdieu’s critique of a

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6 Lakoff and Johnson, Philosophy in the Flesh, 139.
7 Bourdieu, Pascalian Meditations, 213.
8 Ibid., 208.
9 Lakoff and Johnson, Philosophy in the Flesh, 137-8.
12 Ibid., xxii.
“scholastic” view of time. Both want to deconstruct disembodied theories of human meaning making.

This raises the question of how people make the meaning of time out of bodily experiences. Lakoff and Johnson point to the crucial role of metaphor. The next section describes how time is conceptualized via metaphors based on bodily experiences. This prepares for the following section which will analyze how it is that we have come to imagine time as money.

**Time, Metaphor, and Embodiment**

Simply put, humans make meaning for time through comparison. Lakoff and Johnson argue that time is conceptualized through metaphor and that we use a number of metaphors to conceptualize time.\(^\text{13}\) They propose that the metaphors we use for time arise from everyday embodied experiences in the world.\(^\text{14}\) They explain, “Time metaphors are grounded in literal motion-situations, in which the time and motion domains come together in experience.”\(^\text{15}\) We make meaning for time by comparing the passage of time to our bodily experiences of spatial motion.

They give the example of what they call the time orientation metaphor.\(^\text{16}\) In English, the basic metaphor system for time conceptualizes the location of the observer as

\(^{13}\) Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, 139.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 151.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 152.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 140, capitals original.
the present, the space behind the observer as the past, and the space in front of the observer as the future.\(^7\) They give several examples: “That’s behind us now,” “We’re looking ahead to the future,” “He has a great future in front of him.”\(^8\) This metaphor works in combination with what they call the “Moving Time” (time conceptualized as moving toward or away from us) and the “Moving Observer” (the observer conceptualized as moving through time) metaphors.\(^9\) Lakoff and Johnson make the important point that these metaphors “are not arbitrary, but are motivated by the most basic of everyday experiences.”\(^20\) Having established that time is conceptualized in terms of metaphorical, spatial comparisons grounded in daily routines, Lakoff and Johnson turn to other metaphors for time including one that is crucial for reflection on this project: time as money.

Lakoff and Johnson contend that time as money is a special case of the broader conceptual schema in which time is viewed as a resource.\(^21\) This merits close attention as the way in which this conceptualization of time was employed proved to be a consistent challenge during Mission Lab. Lakoff and Johnson frame the time-as-resource schema in terms of elements, a scenario, and related concepts.\(^22\) The elements include a resource, a user of the resource, a purpose that requires an amount of the resource, the value of the

\(^7\) Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, 140.

\(^8\) Ibid., 140, emphasis original.

\(^9\) Ibid., 141-2, capitals original.

\(^20\) Ibid., 153.

\(^21\) Ibid., 161.

\(^22\) Ibid., 161.
resource, and the value of the purpose.\textsuperscript{23} The scenario includes the background that the user wants to achieve a purpose requiring an amount of the resource, that the user has a specific amount of the resource, and that the action that user takes uses up an amount of the resource. The result of the action is that the portion of the resource used is no longer available to the user.\textsuperscript{24} The related concepts they name are of particular importance. Among the concepts they name are “Scarcity: the lack of enough of the Resource to achieve all of one’s Purposes,” “Efficiency: The ratio of the Ideal Expenditure to the Actual Expenditure,” “Waste: The difference between Actual Expenditure and the Ideal Expenditure,” and “Worthiness: The degree to which the Value of the Purpose exceeds the Value of the Resource required.”\textsuperscript{25} This metaphorical schema names a cognitive mapping for time in which time is conceptualized based on daily routines. In cultures where money is exchanged for goods, this can become a mapping for how we conceptualize time and our relation to it.

This is the mapping that surfaced over and over again in the course of Mission Lab. Members of Coast Vineyard routinely conceptualize time as a limited resource. The research of Lakoff and Johnson indicates that this metaphorization of time is not arbitrary. Rather, it is a conceptualization rooted in the habits and routines of the everyday lives of church members. In Bourdieu’s language, this is part of our habitus. Habits and routines enacted over time shape linguistic and conceptual structures. In this

\textsuperscript{23} Lakoff and Johnson, \textit{Philosophy in the Flesh}, 161.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 162-3.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 162, capitals original.
case, a particular metaphorization of time forms our dispositions, inclinations and actions which in turn further structure us. This prepares for an assessment of how we came to imagine time as money.

The Cultural Funding of Our Imagination for Time

In order to frame recommendations that might transform this imagination, it is vital to reflect deeply on our habitus. This section will map the cultural funding of our imagination for time. Beginning with medieval Europe, moving to the rise of industrial capitalism, and concluding in the modern era, it will trace the layers of narratives that have become embedded in our bodies. Crucial to this mapping is the framework that time is conceptualized through metaphor based on bodily experiences. Those metaphors are then employed in narratives, the stories we tell ourselves and others about our identity, place, and role in the world. Those narratives are embodied in our everyday choices.

Medieval Experience of time

In medieval Europe, to experience time was to experience the time of the church. Bodies were regulated by the rhythms of the church. The periods of the day in both towns and countrysides were demarcated by the ringing of bells. As Witold Rybczynski observes, “People lived by the bell.”\textsuperscript{26} The day was divided into eight periods, and the ringing of the bells not only called monks and priests to prayer but also governed

\textsuperscript{26} Rybczynski, \textit{Home}, 32.
commerce and life in the home.\textsuperscript{27} People woke, ate, worked, and went to sleep based on the bells.\textsuperscript{28} There were no all-night markets. They opened and closed by the bell. Even the availability of products in the markets was governed by bells. Rybczynski points out that in medieval London foreign cheese could not be sold until the nones bell while meat could not be sold after vespers.\textsuperscript{29} Two further examples demonstrate how deep this imagination went.

First, a common complaint against merchants was that profit implied a mortgage on time.\textsuperscript{30} In his investigation of the medieval experience of time, Jacques Le Goff gives an example from a Franciscan lector-general forbidding charging a higher price for later payment on the basis that “doing so would be selling time” which belong belongs to God and not to the merchant.\textsuperscript{31} It is jarring for a citizen of late modern global capitalism to even try to grasp the internal logic at work here. Le Goff summarizes, “Time was supposed to belong to God alone.”\textsuperscript{32} Time was understood as entirely a gift of God that could not be sold.\textsuperscript{33} The medieval critique of profit is one example of how deeply time

\textsuperscript{27} Rybczynski, \textit{Home}, 32.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 51.
was imagined to be God’s time, the time of the church. A second example comes from Jacobus de Voragine’s *Golden Legend*.

In medieval Europe, Jacobus de Voragine’s *The Golden Legend* was second only to the Bible in both popularity and circulation. Translated into the vernacular in Italian, French, Dutch, High German, Low German, Czech, and English, *The Golden Legend* offers a window into the popular imagination. Jacques Le Goff argues that de Voragine’s purpose in composing *The Golden Legend* was nothing other than “to lay a foundation for a Christian time.” *The Golden Legend* arranges the lives of various biblical figures and saints into four periods, following the church calendar. Le Goff explains, “Voragine declares that his aim is to construct a summa that explains the meaning of human time and makes it possible to experience it. It is the time of the relations of humanity with the supreme God: time is subjected to God and not the reverse.” *The Golden Legend* represents a conceptualization of time, the meaning of which is shaped by bodily experiences.

In following the liturgical calendar, *The Golden Legend* narrates the reality embodied and enacted in the rhythms and routines of the annual liturgy. In fact, Voragine argues in the closing chapter that the Church gives time a rhythm through its

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35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., 10.

37 Ibid., 18.

38 Ibid., 17.
use of liturgical chants. Le Goff comments that, for Voragine, “Song is thus an essential instrument for the sacralization of time.” Furthermore, the lives of the saints mark the times at which God has intervened on behalf of humans through the saints. Each chapter of The Golden Legend functions to sacralize time, culminating in the incarnation. Le Goff writes, “The sacralization of human time is brought on by a decisive moment, the birth of Jesus Christ.” In effect, The Golden Legend displays what might be called an incarnational imagination for time. All time is read through this decisive event. On the one hand, The Golden Legend stories the medieval bodily experiences of time. On the other hand, the widespread popularity of The Golden Legend reinforced the habits and routines that comprised those experiences.

In the Middle Ages, the time of labor was task oriented. People thought about time with respect to how long a task took, not with respect to a specific number of hours or minutes. Clock units had yet to shape how people thought and spoke about time. Le Goff explains, “On the whole, labor time was still the time of an economy dominated by agrarian rhythms, free of haste, careless of exactitude, unconcerned by productivity—and a society created in the image of the economy, sober and modest, without enormous

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39 Le Goff, In Search of Sacred Time, 17.

40 Ibid., 17.

41 Ibid., 39.

42 Ibid., 39.

43 Ibid., 52.

appetites, undemanding, and incapable of quantitative efforts." The bodily routines of the Middle Ages shaped how people thought about time.

Time Tensions and the Disembedding of Imagination for Time

The emergence of the mechanical clock combined with changing social pressures in the urban merchant guilds led to a growing conflict between the time of the merchants and the time of the church. In the early Middle Ages, merchants calculated time based on the church hours. Medievalist Stephen Epstein explains that contracts were often recorded with specific reference to the church hour at which they were agreed upon. Merchant time was the time of the church. However, pressure by merchants to mark labor hours led to an expansion of the use of mechanical clocks, which had first appeared across Europe just after 1300.

The change in the social function of mechanical clocks marks the beginning of the transition from Church time to what might be called labor time. The first mechanical clocks were bell-ringing devices in monasteries. They recorded church time. By the middle of the fourteenth century, bell towers were erected in town centers across Europe opposite church bell towers for the purpose of demarcating labor time.

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45 Le Goff, *In Search of Sacred Time*, 44.


47 Ibid., 208.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid., 207.

50 Ibid., 36.
example, in 1355, the royal governor of Artois authorized a bell tower in Aire-sur-la-Lys for the purpose of chiming the work hours for textile laborers.\textsuperscript{51} Explaining the social impact of the bells, Le Goff writes, “The communal clock was an instrument of economic, social, and political domination wielded by the merchants who ran the commune.”\textsuperscript{52} Imagination for time was disembedding from the social imaginary of Christendom. From the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, clock towers spread across the towns and cities of Europe.\textsuperscript{53} The physical pronouncement of time was moving from the sanctuary to the town square. The bodily experience of time was changing. These changes would accelerate during the Industrial Revolution.

Industrial Capitalism and the Regulation of Imagination for Time

Industrial capitalism would prove to be the force that dramatically altered the popular perception of time. A decisive moment in the shift was the move from merchant guilds to employing laborers. E.P. Thompson observes, “As soon as actual hands are employed, the shift from task-orientation to timed labour is marked.”\textsuperscript{54} As the practice of employing laborers spread, the need for clocks spread. By the seventeenth century, horns were being used in addition to bells to call laborers to work in the morning.\textsuperscript{55} Again, the

\textsuperscript{51} Epstein, \textit{An Economic and Social History of Later Medieval Europe, 1000-1500}, 35.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{53} Thompson, “Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism,” 63.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 61.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 63.
bodily experience of time for ordinary people was shifting. Time was recognized not by the tolling of a bell calling monks and the faithful to prayer but by a labor horn demarcating the workday.

Furthermore, as the scale of production increased, the need for keeping more accurate time also increased. In a small workshop, there was little or no need for labor to be synchronized. Labor in the small workshop was task oriented. Larger scale manufacturing demanded greater attention to time. By the end of the seventeenth century, industrial manufacturing was resulting in elaborate regulation of workers’ time. For example, in 1700, the Crowley Iron Works had a manual with 100,000 words dedicated to the regulation of worker time use. The timing of the day was highly regimented. Work began at 5am. All meals were specified. Work ended at 8pm, and the code gives procedures for the safekeeping of the clock and penalties for tampering with the clock. By the end of the eighteenth century, watchmakers trying to defend themselves against taxes would argue, “The cotton and woolen manufactories are entirely indebted for the state of perfection to which the machinery used therein is now brought to the clock and watch makers.” Accurate time keeping had become a taken for granted value. New routines of work had led to new imagination for time.

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57 Ibid., 82.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid, 65.
An important result of the new regulation of time was the perception that time is valuable. Bodily regimes were forming the basis for the time as money metaphor. Thompson writes, “Those who are employed experience a distinction between their employer’s time and their ‘own’ time. And the employer must use the time of his labour, and see it is not wasted: not the task but the value of the time when reduced to money is dominant. Time is now currency: it is not passed but spent.”\textsuperscript{61} Time was being performed as a form of currency. Not surprisingly then, the first known written use of the phrase “time is money” dates to Benjamin Franklin’s \textit{Advice to a Young Tradesman} in 1748.\textsuperscript{62} Born in the daily habits of the Industrial Revolution, a new metaphor for time was gaining traction, moving from speech to writing. This new metaphor would in turn inscribe itself upon later routines, as actions became based on the conceptualization of time as money.

\textbf{The Making of the Modern Understanding of Time}

Two further developments were crucial in completing the journey from the medieval conception of time as God’s time to the modern question, “How should I spend my time?” First, the understanding of time became privatized. Second, the understanding of time has become increasingly organized. Time keeping had moved from the sanctuary, to the public square, to the wrist. In turn, new habits developed over decades and centuries into a new habitus.

\textsuperscript{61} Thompson, “Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism,” 61, emphasis original.

The first critical development was the privatization of time. Industrial capitalism produced a new experience of time as private time. As the labor became increasingly disciplined, laborers began to push back and demand their “own” time. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, laborers began to fight for shorter hours.63 E.P Thompson explains, “Mature industrial societies of all varieties are marked by time-thrift and by a clear demarcation between ‘work’ and ‘life’.”64 The end of the work day left workers wondering how to, in Thompson’s words, “consume these additional units of time leisure.”65 Changes in daily routines were leading to questions about time and an emerging sense that some of time was time of one’s own possession.

The invention and diffusion of the wristwatch both deepened and spread the notion of time as one’s own. In his monumental study of the role of clocks in making the modern world, David Landes writes, “Where people had once depended on the bell of the church, or the turret clock in the town square, now they had the time at home or on their person and could order their life and work in a manner once reserved to regulated communities. In this way, privatization (personalization) of time was a major stimulus to individualism.”66 The invention of the watch allowed people to track time at all times and places.67 As people were becoming aware of their own time, the watch allowed them


64 Ibid., 93.

65 Ibid., 95.


67 Ibid., 96.
monitor their time. The importance of this change can be seen in its name, the watch was something to pay attention to. The bodily experience of the demarcation of time was generating a conceptual understanding of time as private. Time had become a personal possession. New technology also led to a second key development: the organization of time.

The diffusion of time keeping technology facilitated coordination and calibration of the habits and routines of ordinary people. Landes writes, “The multiplication of clocks and watches also made possible a new organization of all those activities that depended on meeting and parting, on coming and doing together.” People were able to organize their lives, both indoors and outdoors, in concert with others. As a result, schedules and scheduling became a primary feature of what Landes calls “the new temporal economy.” Bodily interactions with conceptual units of time were becoming more organized, more disciplined, and more fragmented.

The progressive organization of time has created an environment of competing uses of time and a heightened sense of the value of time. Charles Taylor explains, “The disciplines of our modern civilized order have led us to measure and organize time as never before in human history. Time has become a precious resource, not to be ‘wasted.’” Taylor proceeds to observe that these changes have “enveloped us, until it

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69 Ibid., 97.

70 Ibid., 96.

71 Ibid., 95.

comes to seem like nature.”73 The new structuring and regimenting of time has become taken for granted.

Furthermore, organization and demarcation of time has led to fragmentation. Our experience of time is fragmented among the commitments and opportunities. David Harvey argues that Western capitalism has caused intense fragmentation of political, private and social time and space.74 Changes in economic production have fragmented our bodily routines. As a result, our bodies themselves are re-manufactured.75 These socially produced bodies are now so used to imagining time as a limited resource that the imagination has become engrained in the habitus. It has ceased to be visible.

To take the argument a step further, the organization of time and with it the valuing of time has led to a new sense of identity. Because time is valuable, busyness has become an important symbol of importance. Bourdieu explains, “To be expected, solicited, overwhelmed with obligations is not only to be snatched away from solitude or insignificance, but also to experience, in the most continuous and concrete way, the feeling . . . of being important.”76 Bourdieu’s analysis explains the anxiety underneath conversations around scheduling and busyness at Coast Vineyard. To be busy is an important marker of social status. In fact, I am deeply implicated in this imagination. My experience in Mission Lab demonstrated the high degree to which I associate my

73 Taylor, The Secular Age, 59.

74 David Harvey, The Condition of Postmodernity (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990), 306.

75 David Harvey, Spaces of Hope (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 100.

76 Bourdieu, Pascalian Meditations, 240.
busyness as well as people’s willingness to spend their time on my project with my own sense of importance. Making time for practicing hospitality must be framed as a challenging decision amid competing commitments because of preconscious assumptions about time commitments and a person’s value in society.

This analysis has charted the long arc from the preconscious assumption that all time was God’s time to the question, “How should I spend my time?” which has become so prevalent and which verbalized a bodily hesitation to the practice of hospitality at Coast Vineyard. Through bodily interactions, time as money has become a pervasive metaphor serving as a conceptual framework for decision making and hence bodily navigation of everyday life. It has become structured into the habitus of members of Coast Vineyard.

The results of Mission Lab suggest that this conceptualization of time deters and diminishes the practice of hospitality at every step. As a result, church members are hesitant to try the practice of hospitality, less likely to actually spend time with neighbors once they have committed to, and less likely to sustain the practice for a significant duration. Transformation of this habitus will be necessary if Coast Vineyard is going to enjoy sharing life with their neighbors.

Transformation will require attention to routines. The closing section of this chapter will suggest implications for leadership based on this specific cultural funding of our imagination for time. This will serve as groundwork for the closing recommendations of Chapter 8.
Implications for Leadership

As with our imagination for hospitality, imagination for time is aesthetic. Our understanding and experience of time is shaped by metaphors drawing on bodily sources. Our thoughts and decisions on a cognitive register are situated within emotions on an affective register. Consequently, transformation of how we imagine time requires rehabituation. Two implications for leaders are important for the recommendations that follow. First, transformation will require interpretive leadership which helps people reflect on their own habitus. Second, new habits of bodily engagement with time will be necessary. Leaders will need to cultivate habits thick enough to disrupt our body clocks.

Interpretive Leadership

The work of Mission Lab suggests that much of our thinking and decision making about time is preconscious. Even as I became aware that the perceived scarcity of time was a serious barrier to hospitality in the neighborhood, I was stuck within the time-as-money metaphorization of time. Moreover, the discourse throughout Mission Lab indicated that this default was active in the whole team.

In order to dismantle and transform defaults, they must first be recognized. Roxburgh writes, “Learning to see defaults and understand how they work helps us begin to frame alternative imaginations. This isn’t an easy task.”77 Because defaults are preconscious dispositions, becoming aware of them is challenging. Furthermore, the bodily rootedness of time-as-money indicates that becoming aware of the default is not

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77 Roxburgh, Structured for Mission, 107.
merely a matter of naming the default. Awareness means identifying the emotional and bodily grip of the metaphor. Attending to the role of metaphors as defaults, Roxburgh observes that “precritical metaphors determine not just actions but emotional responses to change.” Recognizing the default must happen on a bodily register. We must become aware of our bodily and emotional situatedness in a particular imagination for time.

The process for recognizing defaults involves problematizing the defaults. Writing on interpretive leadership, Mark Branson proposes Jurgen Harbermas’ three lifeworlds framework as a method for problematizing what he calls “background realities,” the taken for granted assumptions in a community. Habermas specifies the objective lifeworld (external events, objects), the subjective lifeworld (subjective, affective speech), and the social lifeworld (ways that a group interacts and lives together). Branson argues that interpretive leadership requires communicative competency in all three lifeworlds in order to surface and name the background realities. With respect to the time-as-money default, this will mean cultivating conversations that name the metaphor, that surface the emotional issues connected with the metaphor, and that are able to talk about how it functions in the social group, beginning to discover the ways that it has formed and continues to form social structures.

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80 Ibid., 30-31.
Finally, cultivating awareness of time defaults in a church community will require a community of interpreters. Mark Branson defines interpretive leadership as “the work of shaping a community of interpreters . . . giving attention to texts and context as meanings are discovered and made.” Interpretive leadership entails developing a community of interpreters, not just supplying right answers or new frameworks. This is not about a leader guiding a group into interpretation. This is a leader functioning to nurture the interpretive capacities in a community. The group will have to do the difficult work of together surfacing defaults in order that God’s imagination and God’s future might break in. The first implication of the bodily basis of our imagination for time is that interpretive leadership is needed in the church. The second implication is that we need new time habits.

New Habits for Time

The experiments, conversations, and theoretical reflection thus far all indicate that transforming imagination for time is a matter of rehabituation. Father Francis thinks about time differently because his habits for navigating time are not the habits of the suburbs. He lives by the bell. His body engages time differently.

This calls for bodily pedagogy. Bourdieu explains, “We learn bodily. The social order inscribes itself in bodies through this permanent confrontation . . . which is always marked by affective transactions with the environment.” To unpack Bourdieu with

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81 Branson, “Interpretive Leadership During Social Dislocation,” 29.
82 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, 141.
respect to our imagination for time, this means stepping into habits that confront our current habitus. When Bourdieu speaks of “affective transactions,” he alerts us that new habits will generate emotional response and deeply rooted bodily resistance. There will be friction. At the same time, the habits of a different social order have within them capacity to generate change in our habitus.

Chapter 8 will propose the daily offices as one habit that might be adopted to disrupt our body clocks. Crucial to this analysis is that the aim is not dipping our toe in the pool. Rehabituation requires consistency and patience. The church will need to puncture what Charles Taylor calls the instrumental view of time that sees time as a “resource to be managed, and hence, measured, cut up, regulated.”⁸³ Perhaps Father Francis’ wisdom points the way forward. In order to reflect on the default perception that time is a limited resource, we may need to experience time as a gift.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has argued for an aesthetic framing of our imagination for time in order to prepare for recommendations with the capacity to transform the habitus of Coast Vineyard. It began by detailing how I came to realize that time was an issue for Mission Lab participants. The conceptualization of time as a limited resource that must be invested cautiously significantly inhibits the practice of hospitality among church members.

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⁸³ Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 714.
It then argued that imagination for time develops out of bodily interactions with the environment and that this happens primarily through metaphorization of physical experiences. With that analysis as a frame, it traced the development of imagination for time from the medieval European habitus in which time was seen as and performed as God’s time to the modern habitus in which time-as-money is a controlling metaphor. The ensuing implications that interpretive leadership and new habits for time are required set the stage for Chapter 8, which will present the concluding recommendations of this paper.
The reigning plausibility structure can only be effectively challenged by people who are fully integrated inhabitants of another.

—Lesslie Newbigin

Chapters 6 and 7 argued that missional engagement with neighbors at Coast Vineyard would require a process of rehabituation. Chapter 6 argued for new habits of hospitality because it is within those habits that new imagination emerges. Chapter 7 argued for new habits of engagement with time in order to disrupt the dominant regime of the time-as-money metaphor that is blocking imagination for hospitality. This chapter will make practical recommendations, first for the church and then for myself. The aim of re habitation is crucial to the recommendations. The work to date suggests that if experiments or initiatives are approached as a technique or for personal or church growth, they will not have the capacity to generate new imagination for neighbors and neighborhood. With respect to the practical theology cycle, this chapter represents the beginning of step five in a second cycle, recommending new experiments based on the reflection of Chapters 6 and 7.
**Recommendation for Coast Vineyard**

In order to address a taken-for-granted sense of time as a limited resource and profoundly ecclesiocentric assumptions about hospitality, this section will recommend that a cohort gather for nine months to experiment with monastic retreats, daily offices, and what this paper will name Luke 10 hospitality with neighbors. These practices are meant to work in concert to disrupt the habitus of the participants, allowing reflection on preconscious dispositions and making space for the types of new imagination conducive to sustaining shared life with neighbors. This section will begin by suggesting how the cohort might be formed, and then it will explain each of the practices and describe the rationale and hopes for each of them.

**Forming the Cohort**

The reflection in Chapters 6 and 7 indicate that formation of the group should attend carefully to both the aim of the group as well as the commitments of the group. The recruiting process for Mission Lab was challenging and slow. The implementation of the experiment revealed that even the people who did join were either unclear on the practices they were signing up for or had not thought through the scheduling implications of the group. Therefore, it is recommended that both the aim and the commitments be communicated thoroughly.

The formation process should clearly explain the aim to problematize and disrupt the taken-for-granted assumptions about time and hospitality. There is a bigger picture hope that by shaking up the habitus, hospitality between church members and neighbors might flourish. However, this larger hope can quickly default into an instrumental desire
to get people to church. Potential participants should have time to think through their readiness to reflect on assumptions so deep that they may not be aware of them.

Work to date has shown that Coast Vineyard members tend to evaluate potential commitments in terms of value added to their lives. The time-as-money metaphor this recommendation hopes to disrupt will exercise influence in the recruiting process. As a result, recruiting communication should emphasize the intention to catalyze substantial reflection. The practices are not meant to add value but rather to help the group take a step back in order to see taken for granted assumptions. Naming the constraining way in which we experience and talk about time underscores the importance of problematizing our habitus.

In addition to communicating the aim thoroughly, the practices themselves should be communicated with care. The three practices are meant to function together, and all of them are time intensive in different ways. Moreover, the logic within the practices is that they will shape a community of practice as they are performed intentionally together. This is not a spiritual discipline buffet. Participants should think through their readiness to make the scheduling changes and sacrifices necessary for full engagement throughout the nine months.

Abbey Retreats

The first practice recommended is retreats to St. Andrews Abbey. It is recommended that the group begin with a retreat and that they retreat monthly if possible,
or else no less than quarterly. This practice is an exercise in group formation. The whole group would go to the abbey and eat, sleep, pray, and reflect together throughout the retreat. Saint Andrew’s Abbey has the advantage of being a three-hour drive from San Diego, far enough to require detaching from daily routines there but close enough to reach in a weekend. Retreats could be guided or unguided. Father Francis is interested and available to host teams from Coast Vineyard. He could lead guided retreats on themes ranging from hospitality, to the monastic prayer life, to the Benedictine vows.

The aim of the abbey retreats would be to immerse the group in an alternative habitus. Life in the abbey has a very different feel. The rhythms of the abbey are totally different than the rhythms of the suburbs. Being a guest at the abbey and experiencing a parallel time culture will facilitate disruption of our expectations for time and hospitality.  

Life in the abbey will also create an opportunity for reflection on the habitus of Coast Vineyard. Chapters 6 and 7 called attention to the need for new imagination both for hospitality and for time. The monks of Saint Andrews have an alternative imagination for both. By experiencing the daily hospitality of the monks, the group will have the opportunity to name our own habits of hospitality. Likewise, in living life by the bell, even if only for a few weekends, the group will have critical distance to name and reflect on their habits of engaging time.

2 The aim of abbey retreats could be supported by having Father Francis visit the group in San Diego to share about the monastic life. In addition to, as it were, taking the habitus of Coast Vineyard to the abbey, there is the possibility of bringing the habitus of the abbey to Coast Vineyard. Father Francis is willing to visit, and this would expand the conversations and give further opportunity for reflection.
Because the aim of the group is nothing less than habituation, the retreats will need to be regular. A trip or two to the abbey would likely function as an excursion rather than a practice. An important part of the experiment design will be figuring out how this would work. The results of this project suggest that beginning with a retreat could be vital to reflection. In my own experience, reflecting on habitus without experiencing an alternative is almost impossible. Taking one weekend a month would give substantial time for the immersive work required to catalyze a resocialization process. If this is not possible, bi-monthly or quarterly may work as well. The practice of immersion in a parallel culture through retreats forms the foundation for the other two practices, daily offices and Luke 10 hospitality.

Daily Offices

The second practice recommended is keeping offices of prayer daily. The daily offices are the prayer times that form the rhythm of life for monastic communities.\(^3\) Monastic communities order their lives around the offices, announced by the ringing of the bell calling the community to prayer.\(^4\) This daily rhythm is designed to shape the community in a way of life by reminding the community members that their lives belong to God.\(^5\) This practice will bring the monastic rhythm of time into the suburban context of Coast Vineyard.

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\(^3\) Roxburgh and Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, 151.


\(^5\) Roxburgh and Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, 152.
Figuring out how the offices will look over the course of the cohort will be an important feature of its design. During my retreats at St. Andrews Abbey, I experienced that Benedictine community gathering five times a day for the offices. Five offices would represent a major re-ordering of time in the context of the lives of Coast Vineyard members. Three offices per day, one early, one late, and one midday, would be enough to steadily remind participants that time is a gift from God. Precisely because workdays are so full and so varying, the reflections to date indicate that at least one office in the middle of the day will be important to the overall design.

The reason for practicing the offices is twofold. First, the practice aims to rehabilitate participants’ experience of time. Alan Roxburgh writes, “As we regularly practice the daily offices, we are being reshaped in the imagination that our lives are gifts from and belong to God.” The operative word for the purpose of this project is “reshaped.” For people with a taken for granted assumption that time is their own and is a valuable but limited resource, the daily offices are a gateway to another way of being.

Second, praying the offices is meant to promote reflection on the participants’ habitus. Disruption of participants uninterrogated practice of time will no doubt lead to friction. As the largely preconscious calculus around evaluating time expenditures relative to anticipated value is interrupted, participants will have to face frustrations. These disruptions will be opportunities for the group to identify and reflect on their taken for granted assumptions about time, and indeed, about life. The recommendation for these three practices envisions abbey retreats and praying the offices nurturing baseline

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rehabilitation that should make increasing space for the third practice, Luke 10 hospitality.

Luke 10 Hospitality

In Luke 10:5-9, Jesus commends to his disciples a group of habits that together this section names as Luke 10 hospitality. These include entering homes, eating what is set before you, announcing the availability of the kingdom of God and healing the sick. Writing on how churches might join God in their neighborhoods, Alan Roxburgh asks a provocative question, “What if God is saying to us that the imperialism, authority, and control that have been behind our use of Matthew 28 are over and that the way in which we will rediscover the gospel is by becoming a Luke 10 people?” This recommendation aims to explore Roxburgh’s question at a deeper level. To that end, it is suggested that the group commit to these particular habits of hospitality.

In the work leading up to Mission Lab, it became clear that experiments in hospitality were defaulting to an ecclesiocentric impulse to get neighbors to church. At the same time, members of church expressed anxiety about the difficulties of receiving hospitality. Mission Lab was designed to accommodate for that anxiety by inviting participants into reciprocal hospitality, so that inviting people into homes could be a bridge to entering other homes. This Luke 10 hospitality recommendation seeks to raise the commitment level rather than to lower it.

7 Roxburgh, Missional, 139, emphasis original.
8 Alan Roxburgh commends precisely these practices of Luke 10 to churches. Roxburgh, Missional, 133-148.
The recommendation for Luke 10 hospitality squarely aims to disrupt the habitus of participants. The habit of entering homes, remaining there, and eating what is set before us is unfamiliar. From the outset, the emotional disturbances attending disruption should be anticipated and welcomed. Participants should go in expecting challenges, and the frustrations and anxieties that surface should be framed as opportunities do ask deeper questions.

The recommendation for Luke 10 hospitality carries two primary hopes. First, it is hoped that disruption of participants’ habitus will generate reflection on their bodily performance of hospitality. The frustrations themselves may prove valuable in attending to how their bodies are used to behaving. Because the group will also be experiencing repeated immersions in the habitus of the abbey, there will be an alternative frame of reference to promote space for critical reflection. The reflective process after Mission Lab indicated that experiencing an alternative habitus is invaluable for seeing the background and preconscious assumptions that comprise our own.

Second, it is hoped that nine months of intentional guesting with neighbors will genuinely begin to reconfigure relationships between Coast Vineyard members and neighbors. Keeping in mind Jesus’ admonition to remain in one house rather than running from house to house, this experiment is designed to cultivate sharing of life that goes beyond the instrumental and fleeting encounters that often characterized the experiments leading up to Mission Lab and Mission Lab itself.

Following nine months of practicing abbey retreats, the daily offices, and Luke 10 hospitality, it is recommended that the cohort conclude with a discernment process. Developing a small plot of parallel culture could serve as a place for designing further
experiments. It might also be a time to initiate an Appreciative Inquiry process with the congregation.

**Personal Recommendations**

This paper concludes with two brief personal recommendations. In order to respond to my own captivity to a late modernist habitus, this section will recommend an extended abbey retreat and attending to the role of being a guest. In the course of my reflections, it became clear that no one in the church was more colonized by the imagination of modernity than I was. Even as I was disturbed by church members defaulting to getting neighbors to church, I was profoundly anxious about church growth. Even as I bemoaned church members hesitance to invest time in receiving hospitality, I was viscerally frustrated about wasting my own time. More than most, I had come to connect busyness, a measure of the demand for my time, with my own sense of importance. Worse yet, the frustrations and anxieties of leadership within this habitus were hammering on insecurities and eating away at my soul. As a result, the first personal recommendation is for an extended retreat.

**Extended Retreat**

An extended retreat would begin to address my own captivity to the very habitus I was hoping to lead others beyond. This could be a month stay at St. Andrews. Alternatively, a series of week-long retreats could serve the same function. A critical aspect of this recommendation is withdrawing from the rhythm and habits which my
body has become used to in San Diego and immersing myself in the rhythm and habits of the abbey.

The rationale for this recommendation is that I am in need of deep resocialization. My body needs to learn to anticipate and perceive the world in new ways, and my imagination for God, myself, and others is in need of reformation. Whereas shorter experimental actions have resulted in increased awareness and understanding of my habitus, they have fallen short of reforming and resocializing that habitus. Deeper immersion will be needed for my bodily dispositions to change.

The hope in this recommendation is that an extended retreat would begin to retune my body and hence my imagination. Recalibration of my bodily comportment would make space for the Holy Spirit to sanctify my perception. In short, I hope to move from the intellectual belief that time and life are gifts of God toward the lived experience that they are gifts from God.

Embracing the Role of Guest

The second personal recommendation is to embrace the role of the guest. After sixteen years as a lead pastor and fourteen years leading other pastors, I have become habituated to the role of the host in a system that strongly prefers that I take that role. To return to Roxburgh’s question, it may be that I need to rediscover the gospel by laying down what I have taken for granted. Therefore, this recommendation suggests that I

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Sanctification of perception is a major theme for James K. A. Smith in *Imagining the Kingdom*. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 101-191.
attend to role of the guest wherever that opportunity arises, not only in my own
neighborhood but extending to all of my relationships.

The basis for this recommendation is that my own sense of identity has become
wrapped up in and colonized by the leadership culture of the Vineyard, which is in turn
embedded within the norms and values of late modern North America. In short, the
illusion of control needs to be broken and my sense of my own value and the value of
others needs to be reformed. Inhabiting the role of the guest means laying down attempts
to control and attending to the posture of reception. In a concrete sense, attending to the
role of the guest means looking for and leaning into situations in which I am not in
control with family, with friends, with neighbors, and in my work environment. It means
inhabiting the role of the guest as opportunities arise. Perhaps more importantly,
embracing the role of guest means looking for the initiatives of the Holy Spirit in places
where I have no stake in terms of reputation or influence.

The hope is that through embracing the role of guest I will learn to discover what
God is doing in my own neighborhood and through others all around me. My default has
been to try to lead others, always looking for influence. By laying down the role of host,
broadly construed, I hope to disrupt the damaging assumptions that have become habits.
If Roxburgh is correct, perhaps this will be a gateway to nothing less than rediscovering
the good news about Jesus Christ.
The sheet was presented to the Coast Vineyard home group leaders on March 24th, 2013 as an agenda for an adaptive challenge workshop aimed at helping the group frame an adaptive challenge in order to facilitate relationships between with neighbors and neighborhoods.

Introduction to Technical & Adaptive Change

Problems that we can solve through the knowledge of experts are technical challenges. Problems that the experts cannot solve are called adaptive challenges. Solutions to technical problems lie in the head and solving them requires intellect and logic. Solutions to adaptive problems lie in the stomach and the heart and rely on changing people’s beliefs, habits, ways of working or ways of life.

— Ronald Heifetz and Mary Linsky

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1. Take 10 Minutes and brainstorm: what is the most important adaptive challenge for our home groups as the church moves into Clairemont?

2. Share your answer and be ready to explain why you think this challenge is adaptive in nature.

3. Large group debrief: What did you hear others saying in the small group? Were there shared themes in the sharing? Did the group’s energy focus on a particular story or theme?

4. In light of tonight’s sharing and keeping in mind that we are a community of communities, what can we say about the adaptive challenge of the church as a whole?
APPENDIX B
HOSPITALITY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These interviews were conducted by a team of interviewers in May and June of 2014. A second round was conducted in January and February of 2015.

1. What does hospitality mean to you?

2. Describe a time you experienced great hospitality. What made the experience memorable?

3. Why was it great hospitality?

4. What makes a person a great host or hostess?

5. Do you think some homes are more welcoming than others? If so, what makes a home welcoming?

6. When you visit a home for the first time, what are your most common felt needs?

7. Have you experienced ways in which hospitality norms vary from culture to culture? If so, give an example.
A Simple Goal: To discover together what the Spirit of God is up to in our neighborhoods.

A Second, Slightly More Complicated Goal that You Don’t Have to Worry About if You Don’t Want To: To map the imagination for hospitality in our group.

2 Key Bible Passages
   1. Jeremiah 29:1-7

3 Core Practices for Mission Lab
   1. Reciprocal Hospitality
   2. Dwelling in Scripture
   3. Team Discernment

A Brief Intro to How We Imagine Hospitality: The roles of home, host, and guest (or, the stranger).

Some Key Passages on Hospitality in Luke that the Group will Dwell In
   -Who is really the host? Luke 7:36-50
   -The Exchange of Hospitality between Jesus and Zaccheus, Luke 19:1-10
   -Jesus, the Host of the Supper Luke 22
   -Who is the host revisited, Luke 24:36-49

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1 The discussion in the first meeting of Mission Lab ended up focusing on the Luke 10 passage.


The location for the proclamation of the good news is the home of a tax collector. This seemingly mundane detail takes on new significance in light of the initial research for this project. The location of our bodies matters. The norms and expectations of Levi’s home were a long distance from the norms and expectations of, for instance, Peter’s mother’s home. The difference is visceral. Picking up Bourdieu’s frames, the disciples’ habitus was ill fitted for the field of hospitality represented in this narrative. Structured and structuring, the habitus of the stranger is felt in the bones and expressed in posture and tone of voice. Jesus may be articulating the welcome of God’s kingdom to Levi and his friends, but he does so embodying the role of the guest, not as the host.
Turning from home to host, Levi’s occupation as a tax collector meant he would have been despised as dishonest and corrupt. Joel Green compares tax collector’s status in the Graeco-Roman world to that of informants and pimps today. Levi would have been an undesirable host. Defying expectations following his encounter with Jesus, Levi throws a great banquet (Luke 5:29).

Having examined home and host, this paper turns to the guest, who is once again Jesus. Two aspects of Jesus’ behavior deserve attention for the framing of this project. First, Jesus receives an invitation to Levi’s house. In other words, the quality of Jesus’ interactions with people leads to invitations by those outside the accepted religious establishment. In this case, Levi is so moved by Jesus’ invitation that he throws a great feast on Jesus’ behalf.

Second, as a guest, Jesus initiates his disciples into the practice of receiving hospitality. From the Pharisees’ question to the disciples, it is clear that they are with Jesus at the party. Before Jesus sends them out to be guests, he models the habits of the guest for them. He shares table fellowship with people of low status and high status alike, and he explains the whole sequence in terms of his mission, “I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32).

A Deceptively Simple Proposal for Resocializing the Roman Empire (Luke 14:1-24)

In Luke 14, Jesus offers counter proposals for the table practices of Greco Roman society. His seemingly mundane suggestions destabilize the structuring structures that

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gave shape to the table fellowship of the time and constitute the very fabric of social life. Given its radical critique, it is perhaps ironic that this passage has often been used as a picture of God’s hospitality and an invitation to the church to exercise this same wide welcome to the marginalized and the outcasts.³

In the context of a Sabbath dinner party, Luke portrays Jesus challenging and subverting the conventions of the day. Observing guests scrambling for the best seats, he tells them to take the least valued places (Luke 14:7-11). Next he tells the host not to invite family, friends, or the wealthy. Rather, he advises his host to invite the poor, lame, blind, and crippled (Luke 14:12-14). Finally, he tells the story of a host preparing a great banquet whose invitations are rejected. That host sends servants out to invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and finally anyone they can find (Luke 14:16-24). Before looking at the imagination for home, host, and stranger at work in the passage, a word about the social context is in order.

In the Greco-Roman world, meals served pivotal social functions. They were used to both advertise and reinforce social hierarchy.⁴ Joel Green describes Jesus’ project in this chapter as “resocialization into the community of God’s people for those whose allegiances and moral underpinnings have been transformed.”⁵ Furthermore, the meal in consideration was at a Pharisee’s home. Green explains that among the Pharisees, “Meals functioned to establish ‘in-group’ boundaries and embody socio-religious values

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³ Christine D. Pohl and Pamela J. Buck, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 73
⁵ Ibid., 540.
pertaining to ceremonial purity."\textsuperscript{6} Green goes on to explain that meals reinforced the taken for granted social stratification that was so important for the structuring of daily life.\textsuperscript{7} Explaining the vital cultural importance of banquets, Green continues, “Central to the political stability of the Empire was the ethics of reciprocity, a gift-and-obligation system that tied every person, from the emperor in Rome to the child in the most distant province, into an intricate web of social relations.”\textsuperscript{8} Into this tightly woven fabric Jesus proposes an alternative and subversive imagination for host and guest.

Jesus’ proposal to the host to invite the poor and the broken instead of good friends and the wealthy cannot simply be read as wise advice. Jesus’ is calling into question both the habitus of the host and the field of the society. The Pharisee would be inclined to invite wealthy friends with similar purity norms for powerful socio-religious reasons as well as to repay previous invitations and to encourage future invitations. In other words, the dispositions and inclinations of the Pharisee had been structured by the norms of Greco-Roman table fellowship as lived out among the Pharisees. Jesus’ interruption could hardly be more radical. Joel Green explains, “[Jesus] is toppling the familiar world of the ancient Mediterranean, overturning its socially constructed reality and replacing it with what must have been regarded as a scandalous alternative.”\textsuperscript{9} His counterproposal, if lived out, would explode both the tendency toward social boundaries


\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., 550.

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
and the value of reciprocity. Indeed, it would deconstruct the insider-outsider categories that had come to be controlling.¹⁰

Jesus counsel to the guests is more subtle but no less subversive. He tells them not to take the best seats but rather to seek out the least important places at the table. On the surface, he appears to be appealing to the internal logic of the honor-shame culture and giving advice that might help a guest avoid public humiliation.¹¹ It is his interpretation in verse 11 that points to the resocialization he has in mind. Jesus says, “All who lift themselves up will be brought low, and those who make themselves low will be lifted up” (Luke 14:11). The panoptic view and future tense give the otherwise simple advice an eschatological dimension. The reader senses that Jesus is pointing to what is valued in the kingdom of God and a whole different metric for honor.¹² Luke has, after all, introduced Jesus short speech not as counsel but as a parable (Luke 14:7).


Luke points throughout in the direction of Jerusalem. The reader anticipates that the climatic events will be there. In Luke 22, he alerts his readers that the hour has come (Luke 22:14). Not surprisingly, the scene is once again table fellowship. Jesus tells his disciples that he has eagerly desired to eat this special Passover with them (Luke 22:15). Taking bread and giving thanks, he breaks it and tells them, “This is my body, which is


¹¹ Ibid., 551.

¹² Ibid., 552.
given for you” (Luke 22:19). Here is the culmination of Jesus’ hospitality. Looking at the home, host, and guest, a shift is immediately apparent.

In a passage marked by great detail, Luke tells us little about the home. The disciples will find the home when a man carrying a water jar meets them and leads them there. It will have an upper room furnished for the Passover meal. The location is marked by the fact that it has been prepared in advance for Jesus, and Luke’s most telling detail is that the disciples “found everything as he had told them” (Luke 22:13). The description of the home thus functions to confirm Jesus’ prophetic status.\(^{13}\) The actual owner is never named and never enters the scene. This combined with the absence of the owner clear the way for Jesus to take his place as host.

For the first and only time in Luke, Jesus functions explicitly as the host. He directs the gathering, takes his place at the head of the table, and blesses the bread and the cup. During the second temple period, the Passover meal was directed by the head of the family who would, among other things, pronounce blessing over the first cup of wine, tell the story of the exodus, take the bread, bless it and break it, and then bless the second and third cups of wine.\(^{14}\) The details of Luke’s portrayal of the scene alert the reader that Jesus, as host, is taking the role of the head of the family. Joel Green comments that a critical feature of the Passover meal is that it is not self-interpreting.\(^{15}\) It is the role of the host, the head of the family, to interpret the meal.


\(^{14}\) Ibid., 758.

\(^{15}\) Ibid.
Jesus interprets this Passover as nothing less than a covenant-making event.\textsuperscript{16} By framing the meal interpretation with a double reference to fulfillment of the Passover in the coming reign of God, Luke marks the extraordinary significance of the scene.\textsuperscript{17} The great promises of Israel’s God are coming to pass. Rather than focusing on the historical deliverance enacted by God in the exodus from Egypt, Jesus points to his own impending death as the advent of God’s reign.\textsuperscript{18} He is the host who will lay down his life for the apostles and indeed for the world. He is the host who through his sacrifice makes a new covenant.

The contrast between Jesus the host and the disciples his guests in Luke’s narrative could not be starker. Luke’s focus falls on the betrayal of the host by the guests. After his interpretation of the Passover meal, Jesus discloses to the party that the one who has betrayed him to his death is among them (Luke 22:21-23). Unlike Matthew and Mark, Luke places the disciples’ argument about who will be the greatest immediately following his introduction of the betrayer (Luke 22:24-30). While one of the twelve has betrayed him to his death, Luke ironically suggests that the entire group have betrayed his kingdom message.\textsuperscript{19}

As guests who betray their host, the disciples discover that Jesus is a host prepared even for betrayal. Jesus proposes a double reversal. He first tells them that the leaders among them must become servants (Luke 22:24-27), and then he tells them that


\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 757.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 761.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 766.
he will confer on them a kingdom (Luke 22:28-30). In doing so, he diffuses their argument and reorients their focus. Moreover, he cuts off self-condemnation by locating hope precisely in their own faithfulness, reminding them that, “you have continued with me in my trials” (Luke 22:28). With Jesus, even the betraying guest has hope.
This appendix contains reflections on hospitality in the writing of Christine Pohl and Henri Nouwen. In the course of reflecting on the initial experiments in receiving hospitality at Coast Vineyard, I surveyed a number of Christian authors. Pohl and Nouwen are interesting in that they are both known to members of Coast Vineyard and they both evidence an imagination which pictures Christians as the hosts. The following analysis will explore each author with respect to imagination for home, host, and guest.

**Christine Pohl: Hospitality as Making Room for the Stranger**

Christine Pohl is a professor, author, and practitioner widely known for her work on hospitality. For Pohl, Christian hospitality is marked by an emphasis on making room for the stranger. She writes, “Hospitality, because it was such a fundamental human practice, always included family, friends, and influential contacts. The distinctive Christian contribution was the emphasis on including the poor and neediest, the ones who could not return the favor.” Pohl laments the ways that hospitality has come to be associated with polite gatherings among friends, and she argues that hospitality has lost its moral dimension. Summarizing the practice of hospitality, she writes, “In hospitality, the stranger is welcomed into a safe, personal, and comfortable place, a place of respect

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21 Ibid., 4.
and acceptance and friendship.”\textsuperscript{22} Pohl’s imagination for home, host and guest is deeply influenced by her basic framing of the practice of hospitality as welcoming the stranger.

Christine Pohl pays attention to how the location of the practice of hospitality has evolved over time. Her imagination for home is marked by a breadth of possibilities informed by historical development. She writes, “Changes in the household, church, economy, and political life had a major impact on the practice of hospitality.”\textsuperscript{23} For Pohl, the home in the imagination for hospitality is the home of the one who welcomes the stranger. Her broad body of writing focuses on the home of the host. This detail is significant in its divergence from the imagination for hospitality in Luke. She traces an arc from household hospitality in the Old Testament, to early Christian hospitality offered within an overlap of household and church, to monastic hospitality offered in monasteries, to the development of institutional hospitality in monasteries, hospitals, and hostels in the medieval era.\textsuperscript{24}

Furthermore, Pohl identifies a fundamental shift in Christian imagination for home during the Reformation. She writes that the reformers “redefined the practice of hospitality.”\textsuperscript{25} Reacting against the extravagance of medieval expressions of hospitality, they emphasized frugality and orderliness. Significantly, both Luther and Calvin identified hospitality with the civic and domestic spheres.\textsuperscript{26} Pohl argues that the

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\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Pohl, \textit{Making Room}, 13.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 39.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 40-47.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 51.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 52.
\end{itemize}
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consequences of this shift were that the public dimensions of hospitality such as hospitals and responsibility for travelers became detached from their Christian roots as those spheres became increasingly secularized.\textsuperscript{27} She explains, “Activities that were originally located in the household – work, religious observance, protection, education, care for the sick, provision for the aging, and the care for strangers – are now located in their own spheres and separate institutions.”\textsuperscript{28} In the context of the institutionalization of hospitality, Pohl argues that Christians must reclaim the household as a key site for ministry.\textsuperscript{29} Having seen the role of the home in Pohl’s hospitality imaginary, we turn to the way she pictures the host.

For Pohl, the good host is marked first and foremost by the capacity to recognize the other. Recognition is the most important function of the host. The good host is the one who recognizes the value in the guest even when society does not. She writes, “Recognition involves respecting the dignity and equal worth of every person and valuing their contributions.”\textsuperscript{30} Pohl draws on John Calvin’s argument that a generous response to strangers should be grounded by the conviction that all human beings are made in the image of God.\textsuperscript{31} At a deeper level, she identifies Matthew 25 as a crucial passage for

\textsuperscript{27} Pohl, \textit{Making Room}, 53.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 56.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 57.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 61.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 64.
Christian thinking on hospitality. Playing the role of the host means recognizing Jesus in the stranger.\textsuperscript{32}

As a result of her focus on recognition, Pohl describes in terms of the two tasks of respect and care. On the one hand, the good host meets the needs of the stranger. Hospitality serves the guest. On the other hand, hospitality humbly respects the dignity of the visitor and eschews an attitude of superiority.\textsuperscript{33} She writes that respect is sustained by “recognizing the gifts that guests bring to the relationship and by recognizing the neediness of the hosts.”\textsuperscript{34} If Pohl’s imagination for host is framed by attention to recognition, her concern for the role of the guest is to expand the category of stranger.

For Pohl, a central failing of current practices of hospitality is that Christians have lost the old practices of welcoming strangers the way that they welcome friends and family. She defines strangers as people “without a place”\textsuperscript{35} and explains that “to be without a place means to be detached from basic, life-supporting institutions – family, work, polity, religious community, and to be without networks of relations that sustain and support human beings.”\textsuperscript{36} Drawing again on John Calvin, she argues that being a stranger has less to do with being foreign or other and more to do with vulnerability.\textsuperscript{37} In Pohl’s imagination for hospitality, the stranger is the displaced one whose value has been

\textsuperscript{32} Pohl, \textit{Making Room}, 67.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 70.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 72.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 86.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
overlooked or forgotten. The burden of Pohl’s work is to correct what she perceives as a narrowing of who is imagined as the guest.

Having seen Pohl’s imagination for home, host, and stranger, two aspects of her framework stand out for the purposes of this project. First, Pohl’s hospitality imaginary is fundamentally ecclesiocentric. Her concern is how Christians in general and the Church in particular can be better hosts, and her argument is that welcome must once again be extended to vulnerable and displaced persons. She thinks about hospitality and hosting with the presupposition that Christians are the hosts. Her argument is no doubt both important and urgent, but it is from a completely different imagination than Luke’s.

Members of Coast Vineyard actively recognize homeless and vulnerable people as people whom the church is called to welcome. Nevertheless, we remain stuck in our capacity to receive hospitality from neighbors.

Second, Pohl’s emphasis on recognition could be a generative point of dialogue. Recognition is also a theme in Luke, but it plays out in different ways. Jesus sends his followers with instructions on how to recognize their prospective host. Moreover, many of the table fellowship narratives point up the importance of recognizing hidden motivations. In order to step into relationships of reciprocal hospitality, members of Coast Vineyard will no doubt need to grow in their capacity to recognize. However, the vector of growth may not be simply in the trajectory that Pohl suggests.

Henri Nouwen: Hospitality as Providing Space for the Freedom of the Guest

Known and loved across denominations, two decades after his death Henri Nouwen’s influence continues to grow. His most important work on hospitality is
Reaching Out. Nouwen describes three movements of the spiritual life: reaching out to our inner selves, reaching out to others, and reaching out to God. Nouwen observes that, in Dutch, the word for hospitality means “freedom of the guest.” Nouwen’s imagination for home, host and stranger are all framed by the motif of freedom of and for the guest.

In Nouwen’s writing on hospitality, the home is not so much a physical place of reception as it an interior space within the host. He writes, “Hospitality should not be limited to its literal sense of receiving a stranger in our house . . . but as a fundamental attitude toward our fellow human being.” Nouwen is concerned with the cultivation of inner space that is receptive to the other. As a result, he describes the first movement of hospitality as the movement from loneliness to solitude. Nouwen describes the journey from loneliness to solitude as reaching out to one’s innermost being, and he suggests that this movement “spontaneously” leads to the movement from hostility to hospitality. If the home for Nouwen is an inner space, the role of the host is to create that space.

Nouwen names the primary role of the host as offering freedom to the guest. He writes, “Hospitality, therefore, means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy.” Furthermore, making room for the stranger entails clearing out one’s inner space. Nouwen explains, “The

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38 Nouwen, Reaching Out, 71.
39 Ibid., 67.
40 Ibid., 49.
41 Ibid., 62.
42 Ibid., 71.
paradox of hospitality is that it wants to create emptiness, not a fearful emptiness, but a friendly emptiness where strangers can enter and discover themselves as created free.”\footnote{Nouwen, 
Reaching Out, 72.}

Consequently, Nouwen argues that gracious hosts are characterized by two key traits: poverty of the mind and poverty of the heart.\footnote{Ibid., 103.} The host who is either filled with ideas and concepts or else worries and jealousies will not be able to make room for the stranger.\footnote{Ibid., 106.} Therefore, in Nouwen’s imagination, preoccupation is the real obstacle to practicing hospitality.\footnote{Ibid., 74.} The good host is the one who rids themselves of distractions and preoccupations. He writes, “It is the paradox of hospitality that poverty makes a good host . . . A good host not only has to be poor in mind but also poor in heart. When our heart is filled with prejudices, worries, jealousies, there is little room for a stranger.”\footnote{Ibid., 106.} For Nouwen, hosting requires attention to renunciation and to clearing. Preparation to be a host is an existential exercise, an inner re-ordering. Having considered his imagination for home and host, Nouwen’s hospitality imaginary will be filled out by attention to his view of the guest.

Nouwen uses three pairs of relationships to exemplify forms that hospitality can take. He names parents and children, teachers and students, and healers and patients as relationships of hospitality. In each case, the guest is a person with something to reveal to the host. He writes, “A good host is the one who believes that his guest is carrying a
promise he wants to reveal to anyone who shows genuine interest.”⁴⁸ In Nouwen’s view, children, students, and patients all need space to reveal that they have something to offer.⁴⁹ The guest is the one with a gift to reveal.

Like Pohl, Nouwen’s imagination for hospitality is ecclesiocentric at its core. Focused on the role of the host, Nouwen’s concern is to show how trusting God helps one open up interior space to make room for others. For the purposes of this project, it is worth noting that conversations around reciprocal hospitality at Coast Vineyard keep reverting to individual interior language. There is something to Nouwen’s diagnosis that preoccupation is a barrier to hospitality and that the guest is a gift. Nevertheless, Nouwen’s proposal is a far cry from Jesus’ sending instructions in Luke (Luke 10:1-12). Where Nouwen suggests a sort of psychological and spiritual clearing, Jesus gives a specific picture of embodied hospitality. Find a host. Stay there. Eat what is set before you. Announce that the reign of God is within reach.

⁴⁸ Nouwen, Reaching Out, 87.

⁴⁹ Ibid.
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