

**NEW RESOURCES
AS OF 01-26-12**

It's Not Too Late: a Field Guide to HopeSitze, Bob

A "field guide" is a small, pocketable book that accompanies you on an adventure or journey. It's Not Too Late is a field guide to hope - sized so that you can carry it along with you on your daily journey of faith. The entries in this book will help you find hope, whether it's right in front of you or it remains elusive despite your searchings.

Starting With Spirit: Nurturing Your Call to Pastoral Leadership Epperly, Bruce G.

Starting with Spirit is a spiritual and professional resource for new pastors, their family members, and congregations, as well as ministers in every season of ministry who seek to grow in vitality and skill in the ongoing adventure of ministry.

Becoming the Pastor You Hope to Be: Four Practices For Improving MinistryBlodgett, Barbara J.

Becoming the Pastor You Hope to Be unapologetically urges clergy readers to develop practices that will help them become more excellent ministers. A long-time field educator, now serving as a denominational staff person responsible for ministerial formation, Barbara Blodgett believes excellence is a matter of doing simple things with care and consistency. Ministers who commit themselves to excellence will grow and flourish, and even become happier in ministry. Blodgett urges ministers to resist praise and instead to ask for feedback, to seek the company of mentors who are better than the reader is at what he or she does, to be vulnerable before their peers in order to learn from them, and to define themselves as a leader who does not merely take activist stances but risks entering into deep, transformative relationships. Improvement in ministry, Blodgett argues, comes about not through extraordinary leaps and bounds but rather through adopting simple habits and carrying through on small but thoughtfully made choices.

Open Source Church: Making Room for the Wisdom of All..... Whitsitt, Landon,

Open source software makes the basic program instructions available for anyone to see and edit. An "open source church," likewise, is one in which the basic functions of mission and ministry are open to anyone. Members feel free to pursue their callings from God that are consistent with what God has called the congregation to be and do. But what does "open source church" look like?

The Sounds of Our Offerings: Achieving Excellence in Church Music.....Kroeker, Charlotte

The Sounds of Our Offerings is good news about the music of the church. It recounts what has been learned from studying nine congregations where music promotes the full, active, conscious participation of the worshipers and where it has done so consistently and coherently for many years. Pastors and musicians reflect on their work together and offer rich insights about what works and what does not. Lay musicians and members of the congregation also share their experiences with music in worship.

A Door Set Open: Grounding Change in Mission and HopeSteinke, Peter L.

We resist change less when we associate it with mission and fortify it with hope. So argues longtime congregational consultant Peter Steinke in his fourth book, A Door Set Open, as he explores the relationship between the challenges of change and our own responses to new ideas and experiences.

Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation..... Merritt, Carol Howard.

Much has been written about the changing landscape the church finds itself in, and even more about the church's waning influence in our culture. From her vantage point as an under-40 pastor, Carol Howard Merritt, author of Tribal Church, moves away from the handwringing toward a discovery of what ministry in, with, and by a new generation might look like. What does the substance of hope look like right now? What does hope look like when it is framed in a new generation? Motivated by these questions, Merritt writes Reframing Hope with the understanding that we are not creating from nothing the vital ministry of the next

generation. Instead, we are working through what we have, sorting out the best parts, acknowledging and healing from the worst, and reframing it all.

Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What.... Steinke, Peter L.
This long-awaited volume by internationally respected consultant and Alban best-selling author Peter Steinke will both enlighten and embolden leaders. With anxiety intensifying and penetrating more and more areas of our lives, leaders cannot be as anxious as the people they serve. Because they have more influence than any other group over the path a congregation takes, leaders must have a command of their own anxiety and must not let other people's anxiety contaminate them. Steinke inspires courage in leaders to maintain the course, unearth secrets, resist sabotage, withstand fury, and overcome timidity or doubts. His insights, illustrations, and provocations will carry leaders through rough times, provide clarity during confusing times, and uplift them in joyous times.

Tending To the Holy: The Practice of the Presence of God in Ministry Epperly, Bruce Gordon
Tending to the Holy invites pastors to embody their deepest beliefs in the routine and surprising tasks of ministry. Inspired by Brother Lawrence's classic text in spirituality, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Tending to the Holy integrates the wisdom and practices of the Christian spiritual tradition with the commonplace practices of pastoral ministry. Bruce and Katherine Epperly utilize a variety of spiritual disciplines—especially Benedictine, Celtic, Ignatian, Rhineland, and process spiritualities—to provide a framework for helping clergy nurture the awareness of God, creative imagination, and personal well-being in every aspect of their ministerial lives.

The Pastoral Search Journey: A Guide to Finding Your Next Pastor..... Vonhof, John
It's not a common occurrence to seek out a new pastor, so pastoral search committees can sometimes feel as though they are inventing the process from scratch. In *The Pastoral Search Journey*, John Vonhof provides detailed guidance for search committees to ensure a good match between pastor and congregation. This is Vonhof's third book about the pastoral search—but the first to discuss interim pastors, transitions between pastors, and the use of the Internet and digital media.

Born Of Water, Born Of Spirit: Supporting the Ministry of the Baptized In Small Congregations Kujawa-Holbrook, Sheryl A.
What does the church look like if we take the ministry of the baptized—the priesthood of all believers—seriously? How are congregations transformed when the church supports and affirms the ministry of all the baptized, particularly in small congregations without the means to hire a seminary-trained pastor? And what ecclesial structures and educational models need to emerge in the next decades to assist these small congregations in the recovery of baptismal living—and their own vitality? Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook and Fredrica Harris Thompsett explore these questions as well as the variety of ways people in small congregations—many with no more than fifty members—are living out their baptism and the impact their actions are having on their congregations, judicatories, and communities, and the institutions that educate clergy. The authors argue that just because a community cannot pay a seminary-trained minister - a growing problem in remote regions - it does not mean that there is no ministry there. It does mean that we need to look at ministry and the church in a more expansive way.

Pursuing Pastoral Excellence: Pathways to Fruitful Leadership Hopkins, Paul E.
In *Pursuing Pastoral Excellence*, pastoral counselor and educator Paul Hopkins aims to help pastoral leaders make a lasting and positive difference in the lives of the people and communities they serve. The heart of this book is the stories of seven ordinary pastors whose leadership has become extraordinary. Their stories not only highlight important characteristics and practices that nurture fruitful pastoral leadership, but they invite readers to examine their own stories, to think about the value of longevity in ministry, and to enhance the enduring impact of their own pastoral leadership.

Greenhouses of Hope: Congregations Growing Young Leaders Who Will Change the World

..... Baker, Dori Grinenko - editor

Do you know a church where young people regularly shape the liturgy with words that speak their truth in ways that also inspire their elders? Do you hear about congregations that reach out in quirky new ways to their ailing neighborhoods, instead of locking doors and shipping out to a suburb? Do you find churches creating hospitable space that invites the live wriggling questions and doubts of young people in unhurried, unworried ways? Do you see congregations where young people's gifts are not stored in the basement or bracketed into "contemporary" worship services but are brought forth and celebrated? The authors who collaborated on this book launched a quest for such vibrant, life-giving, greening congregations and observed the diverse practices that grow there.

Welcome To Theological Field Education! Floding, Matthew - editor

Field education is an opportunity for students to develop ministry skills, practice ministerial reflection, discern their call, experience professional collegiality, and undergo personal transformation. Field education offers them a place to practice ministry and a space to reflect on it, to integrate theory and practice, and grow towards competency.

From A Mustard Seed: Enlivening Worship and Music in the Small Church Epperly, Bruce Gordon

Small congregations can have beautiful worship! In *From a Mustard Seed*, an experienced pastor-professor and an experienced church musician provide a model for faithful and excellent worship in congregations that average 75 or fewer people in weekly worship. While the limitations of small congregations are obvious to their members and leaders, the possibilities for creative music and worship are often greater than we can imagine.

Pray Without Ceasing: Revitalizing Pastoral Care Hunsinger, Deborah van Deusen

Taking seriously Paul's exhortation in 1 Thessalonians to "pray without ceasing," Deborah Van Deusen Hunsinger challenges pastors and congregations to put prayer at the center of their Christian practice and theological reflection. In this prayerful book, Hunsinger reclaims spiritual practices from token use and unites them in a dynamic network of interdependent caring traditions. She begins with the three foundational disciplines of spiritual reading, careful listening, and self-reflection. Hunsinger then explores prayer through petition, intercession, confession, lament, and thanksgiving. Finally she offers practical, workable suggestions for developing pastoral care groups and teaching care - giving skills at the congregational level.

The Spirit's Tether: Eight Lives in Ministry Warford, Malcolm L.

The Spirit's Tether: Eight Lives in Ministry tells the stories of eight men and women from their days as students at Union Theological Seminary in New York through their work today as pastors in local congregations over thirty years later.

The Missional Church and Denominations: Helping Congregations Develop a Missional Identity

..... Gelder, Craig Van - editor

The Missional Church and Denominations uses the missional church conversation as a lens for engaging an important dimension of churchlife in The United States - denominations and denominationalism.

Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership Hotchkiss, Dan.

In *Governance and Ministry*, Alban Institute senior consultant Dan Hotchkiss offers congregational leaders a roadmap and tools for changing the way boards and clergy work together to lead congregations. Hotchkiss demonstrates that the right governance model is the one that best enables a congregation to fulfill its mission - to achieve both the outward results and the inward quality of life to which it is called.

Inside The Large Congregation Beaumont, Susan

"For five years, Alban Institute senior consultant Susan Beaumont has been giving voice to the organizational and leadership demands of large congregations. Through her work, she has identified five

basic leadership systems that need to stay in alignment for the large church to function well for its size: clergy leadership roles, staff team design and function, governance and board function, acculturation and the role of laity, and forming and executing strategy. She has also learned that these five systems operate with some important but subtle distinctions in what Beaumont calls the professional church (400-800 in worship attendance), the strategic church (800-1,200), and the matrix church (1,200-2,000). Often, she has discovered, problems in a large congregation are related to the fact that one or more of the five systems is inappropriately structured for the size of the congregation. In other words, the church isn't acting its size. Beaumont is invested in helping large congregations 'rightsize' their leadership systems to better serve their ministry context. This book articulates why size matters and how it matters in the world of large congregations. It is written for anyone who wants to better understand the leadership and organizational dynamics of the large church--anyone seeking to understand the challenges of leading from inside the large congregation"--Provided by publisher.

Grace for the Journey: Practices and Possibilities for In-Between Times.....Thompson, Beverly
Every community of faith journeys through periods of transition. In *Grace for the Journey: Practices and Possibilities for In-Between Times*, authors Beverly Thompson and George Thompson invite congregations to open themselves to the grace-filled possibilities that accompany these in-between periods. Drawing on biblical examples and contemporary experience, the authors invite the community of faith to see transitional times as an opportunity to develop deeper spiritual awareness of God's call on its communal life—a call that open up fresh potential even as it calls us to consider what familiar things may need to change.

Leading Through the WaterGalbreath, Paul
In *Leading through the Water*, Paul Galbreath demonstrates one way of linking baptismal practice to daily life as congregations provide an alternative witness to the cultural voices around us. At the same time, it expands the vision of baptism from a single occasion to a distinctive way of life within a community of faith and a primary metaphor for Christian discipleship.

Bringing the Apocrypha Out of the Closet..... Bates, John W.
A study guide to the deuterocanonical books.