

CROSS

Connection



The Cross Connection is a monthly publication of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod published for its clergy, associates in ministry, lay leadership and ecumenical partners.

God's beloved People,

September 2016

In the Conference of Bishops we have a bit of wisdom that is repeated on a regular basis. I offer it as a sign of hope and thanksgiving as we begin this transitional year in a transitional time for the whole church: "The church elects the bishop it needs."

I've never heard anyone try to refine the statement beyond that line, so it remains gracefully ambiguous. However, following the recently completed Churchwide Assembly, I offer the quote as my summation around the leadership of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Three years ago at this time we were surprised, anxious, and curious about what the election of Bishop Eaton would mean. That Churchwide Assembly (2013 in Pittsburgh) began with full expectation that Bishop Mark Hanson would be reelected. Since then the leadership of Bishop Eaton, and Secretary Chris Boerger, has emerged in a patient and sweet way, addressing the urgent questions of the day, but building the confidence of the church. In her report this year the line that will stay with me is this: "This church is not dying. This church is changing, and that's what God does, making all things new." Pastor Jeff Kallevig summed it up this way: "I know, in a new way, that we are a part of a church that seeks to be public, inclusive, transparent, and driven in faith and practice by the Spirit of God."

Together I think those statements summarize this Churchwide Assembly in its work and its worship, and by the leadership of Bishop Eaton. I believe the church has elected the bishop it needed even though at the time we may have not known why. There is a lightness to her leadership that is refreshing and confident. She is playful in a safe way, meaning her humor doesn't carry barbs hidden within it. She is personal, naming names and bantering with Voting Members from the podium. Her preaching is faithful and her presiding at the table is transparent, meaning she doesn't thrust her own personality "in front of the table" which, of course, belongs to Jesus. She is fluent in Spanish, a gift we didn't know would be so important but now which reminds us all—pastors and members—that the gift of receiving another in their own tongue is generous and kind. She is smart and quick-witted, one bishop quoting his mother as having said, "Bishop Eaton can say in ten minutes more than most can say in a week!" To summarize I would say the gift is a nimbleness that has gravitas, but doesn't smother and discourage us in a day of so many intractable challenges.

To some of those challenges we responded:

- With confirmation that we want to be an inclusive church, racially diverse, listening and speaking Gospel with both humility and purposefulness in this polarized day.
- That we intend to be a church of reconciliation, even as we press our church in Palestine and our brothers and sisters in Israel to stop digging the hole that threatens to collapse on all.
- That, while the reformation of the church goes on, we seek the full, visible unity of the great Church, a unity that is the Spirit's gift and the Spirit's call. In that important respect we received the document, "Declaration on the Way," a summary of our conversations with the Roman Catholic church, including those issues we still hope to address. This is the perfect study document to undergird our commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation beginning this October 31, 2016 and I commend it to you and your congregation.

There will be many different ways to find the summary of actions at this Churchwide Assembly, including Bishop Eaton's report. I hope you will pay attention. I believe the church has, once again, elected the bishop it needed. Thanks be to God!



Bp Martin Wells



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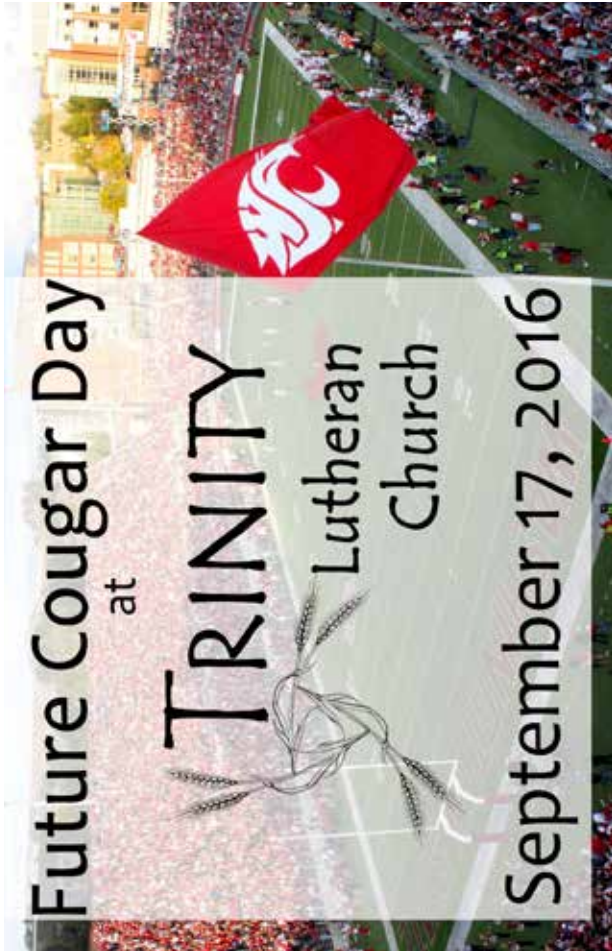
COME AND ENJOY THE FELLOWSHIP, FOOD AND GREAT MUSIC

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MOUNTAIN DEW BOYS, LIVE BAND
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FRIDAY AUGUST 26, 2016
6:00 PM TO 9:00 PM
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HOTDOGS AND SNOWCONES FOR PURCHASE
BRING CHAIRS AND BLANKETS
NO ALCOHOL

ALSO - Come and meet the Bike and Build bicyclists. This Friday is a stop at St. Paul Lutheran while riding bicycles from coast to coast to raise funds for non-profit organizations.



Trinity (Pullman) would like to invite members of your youth group and advisors to Future Cougar Day, September 17th, 2016.

Future Cougar Day is your chance to come to Pullman and see what it's like to be a Cougar for a day. Even those not planning to attend WSU could get a good perspective and information on Academia and College Life.

- Experience the game-day energy of campus and attend a Cougar football game at Martin Stadium. WSU v Idaho!
- Attend an academic fair where you can browse the University's academic offerings and enjoy fascinating hands-on workshops.
- Cap it all off with a guided tour of campus.
- **Overnight at Trinity Lutheran, either before or after, or both! Simple meals and group activities provided (no additional cost to you!).**

How to sign up:

1. Call or e-mail Trinity, Pullman to register for housing and overnight events. (509)332-1985 or pastorwes@trinitypullman.org. We will send out more information and a registration sheet for the church portion of the weekend.

2. **You will also need to register with the University for Future Cougar day itself** admission.wsu.edu/visits/fall/future-cougar-day/why-attend/ **REGISTRATION OPENS mid-JUNE!**
 Note that there is a cost for the WSU event to cover the football game, yourself and up to 4 guests may attend the game at a discounted price of \$10.

Presiding bishop

A proclivity for paradox

By Elizabeth A. Eaton



A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject of all, subject to all (Martin Luther in Freedom of a Christian).

Wow, Lutherans love paradox! Law and gospel. Saint and sinner. Free and bound. David Swartling,

former ELCA secretary, often noted that we are a “both and church” in an “either or world.”

This proclivity for paradox, or at least the recognition that this is part of the Lutheran tradition, was often cited as a strength during the churchwide conversation phase of Called Forward Together in Christ (elca.org/future).

For four months synod assemblies, synod councils, the Conference of Bishops, the ELCA Church Council, ELCA ethnic associations, churchwide staff, the Faith Formation Network, individuals, agencies and institutions have been praying and considering together what might be God’s priorities for the ELCA. It has been an engaged and energetic process.

Definite themes emerged all across this church. The next phase of the process will present these themes for consideration for all of us in the ELCA—once again in synods, congregations, agencies, colleges and universities, seminaries and at the Churchwide Assembly.

Spoiler alert: I’m going to lift up two of the themes now. First, in describing what it means to be an ELCA Lutheran or in answering the question “What is God calling the ELCA to become?” we overwhelmingly answered “a diverse, inclusive, multicultural church.” In the settings where I led the conversation, I gently admonished pastors to let the laypeople speak so all of the baptized could be heard. Diversity was understood to be ethnic, economic and generational. We said congregations should reflect the communities in which they are planted. Marvelous!


The second theme I will raise now is that the ELCA is constituted so there is very little enforceable accountability. ELCA members can decide to participate in the life of their

congregation or not. Congregations can decide to participate in the life of the synod or greater church or not. Pastors can decide to be engaged beyond their congregations or not. Even synods and bishops are often caught between their specific contexts and participation in churchwide decisions.

We aren’t bad people. The overwhelming majority of us don’t intend to be oppositional. There are forces at play that exacerbate this lack of accountability. The first is cultural—American Christianity is congregational and the autonomy of the individual is darn near sacrosanct. This started long before the breakdown of trust of institutions in the 1960s and ’70s. Church membership is understood as a voluntary association. One can opt in and out as one chooses. In the American context faith is a private affair.

The second is that it took great sensitivity to care for the histories, politics and ecclesiologies of our predecessor church bodies (the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America) as the ELCA was being born. It was an enormously daring leap of faith to become the ELCA. I believe we are still working on trusting each other.

Our conversations in the Called Forward Together in Christ process show that we believe God is calling us to be a diverse and inclusive church. We need to be clear about our motivation. If it is a desire, no matter how well-intentioned or noble, to diversify the church, I don’t believe God will bless our efforts. But, if it’s our earnest desire to share the intimate and liberating love of Jesus, then we will have to hold each other accountable as we take the hard but holy steps to open up a 94 percent white church.

Which brings me to the Luther quote at the beginning of this column. Faith is personal—God loves each one of us—but it is never private, nor is it lived apart from other Christians. In Christ we have been set free and in that perfect freedom we are subject and accountable to one another. 

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address: bishop@elca.org.

This column originally appeared in *Living Lutheran’s* August issue. Reprinted with permission.

Celebrating Abundance to Serve in Mission

Stewardship Workshop

Thursday November 3rd 5-8pm (dinner at 5pm)
Grace Lutheran Church
1408 Washington St. - Wenatchee, WA 98801

In conjunction with our Synod Mission Campaign *"My Synod: Moving in Mission Together"*, stewardship workshops for congregational leaders are being offered. Focused on strengthening local congregations in leading annual stewardship efforts, the workshops will include information and insight into the Synod's Mission Campaign, and offer strategies for incorporating it into ongoing stewardship.

Our guest presenter for these workshops is Marc Rieke, our Mission Campaign consultant. Marc serves as Senior Consultant for The Enrichment Group, a team serving Christian churches in capital and annual fund appeals, stewardship education initiatives, feasibility and visioning studies, and strategic planning efforts. In his 15 years with Enrichment, Marc has led more than 75 successful capital campaigns in churches and church-related organizations.

Workshop participants will have the opportunity to:

- Explore the heart of generosity
- Gain new language and approaches to lead stewardship in healthy and uplifting ways
- Learn how to shift thinking and acting from a mentality of scarcity to one of abundance
- Consider ways to forward mission and ministry vs. emphasizing "budgets"
- Discern how we can best help one another joyfully live into the relationship that God keeps with us
- Better understand how we can deepen faith and serve mission through acts of witness, service and giving

Workshop participants will gain:

- A deepened understanding of the scriptural basis for stewardship
- An expanded knowledge of best practices regarding implementing stewardship appeals
- Language and specific techniques to use in effective stewardship appeals
- A success plan to implement an annual stewardship appeal together with the Synod's Mission Campaign appeal in your home congregation

Please RSVP to Halga.Jansons@elca.org by October 1st
For any questions phone 509-380-7122 or Pastor James Aalgaard 509-863-2189

Call Process Status

A Process beginning/congregational study	I Interim	AP Associate/Assistant Pastor
B Names received or on-site visits in process	P Pastor	VP Visitation Pastor
C Call in process/issued	CP Co-Pastor	AIM Associate in Ministry
NV New Vacancy	LP Lead Pastor	L Lay Position
TC Term call	SP Supply Pastor	TM Transition Minister (available for the open-ended call)
VP Visitation Pastor		

POS	LOCATION/CONGREGATION	STATUS	PASTORAL CARE
P	Boise, ID – King of Glory	A	John Hergert I
P	Cheney, WA – Emmanuel Lutheran	A	Shelley Wee I
P	Chewelah, WA – St. Paul Lutheran	NV	Betty Krafft SP
P	Firth, ID – Bethel Lutheran	A	Paul Malek TEEM
P	Genesee, ID – Genesee/St. John		
P	Lind, WA – Good Hope Lutheran	NV	Supply Pastors
P	Mattawa, WA – Grace Lutheran	NV	Ginny Kreckling I
P	Otis Orchards, WA – Peace Lutheran	NV	Supply Pastors
P	Pasco, WA – First Lutheran	A	Phylis Stromme I
P	Spokane, WA – Bethlehem Lutheran	NV	Steve Wee SP
P	Spokane, WA – Messiah Lutheran	NV	Cathy Harrison SP
P	Spokane, WA – Prince of Peace	NV	
AP	Spokane, WA – St. Luke Lutheran	NV	Jim Johnson LP
P	Spokane, WA – St. Mark's Lutheran	NV	Eric Dull Kate LePard CP
P	Wilbur, WA – Wilbur Lutheran	C	

Resignations

Rev. David Deckard has resigned his call at Genesee Lutheran and St. John Lutheran – Genesee, ID.

Rev. Kent Narum Fullness of God/Holden Village has accepted a call to serve as a mission developer in Seattle, WA

Rev. Dan Rieke has resigned from the roster of ELCA pastors.

Calls Accepted

Rev. Adam Barnhart Anchorage, AK has accepted the call to Fullness of God/Holden Village in Chelan. He plans to begin in September.

Rev. David Deckard has accepted the call to serve Shepherd of the Valley in Boise, ID. He will begin September 11.

Rev. Carolyn Hellerich has accepted the call to serve Central in Yakima, WA. She plans to begin August 21, 2016

Rev. Kirsten Sauey Hofmann has accepted the call to serve Lord of Life – Kennewick, WA.

Rev. Dawna Svaren has accepted the call to serve in Ocean Park, WA

Staff Position Accepted

Rev. Phylis Stromme has accepted the .25 FTE role as Net-Worker for Central, WA

If you'll just look for Him, you can see God in all things.

Pray with us

We ask that you keep the ministry of the church, our synod, and the whole world in your prayers, as well as the people listed below . . .



The family and friends of Rev. Bill Williams who died on July 19th, 2016. Pastor Williams served King of Glory - Boise, Grace - Horseshoe Bend and Grace - Mt. Home. A service of remembrance will be held at King of Glory - Boise, ID on Sept 3rd at 2:30pm.

Communities and congregations in our synod as they work in the call process to select new rostered leaders.

Prayer Requests . . . to be included or removed from the Synod Prayer Request list, please send your request to the synod office@ewaidsynod.org, or call 509-838-9871.

About Bishop's Convocation

Bishop's Convocation, October 24-27, 2016, Walla Walla, WA

More complete information will be mailed on August 1, but Convocation this year will be a three-night event instead of the usual two-night plan. That means the cost will run about \$175.00 more than usual. We have done this extended event every three or four years when we had a larger program and purpose that needed attention. This year the program will serve the synod's process of electing a bishop in May, 2017, by offering program from three solid speakers on "Bishop According to the Constitution," "Bishop in the Lutheran Confessions," and "The office of bishop in American Lutheran history." Videos of these presentations will be available to all EWAID congregations beginning in January of 2017.

Thanks, as always, for making sure your rostered leaders can attend this mandated event. Registration will open in August when you receive your brochure.

Mission Interpreter Training

with Sharon Browder

October 1, 2016 10:00 until noon

Call 509-293-9534 to Reserve a Spot



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& FOOD
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Photos by: Guy Hand

Uprooting Hunger. Cultivating Communities. Sowing Change.

SAVE THE DATE:
Friday, October 28, 2016
8am—4pm
The Riverside Hotel
2900 W. Chinden Blvd. Boise ID

*For more info email: info@idahohunger.org or visit www.idahohunger.org/2016-information-1/



Oktoberfest 2016

Benefitting Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Idaho

October 22, 2016 4-6 pm

1912 Center Great Room

412 East Third Street, Moscow, ID

Bratwurst, sauerkraut, other sides and desserts

German beer and wine for purchase

Live music, dancing and other fun!

Adults - \$15, Child (12 & under) - \$7, Child (0-3) - free

Celebrating Abundance to Serve in Mission Stewardship Workshop

Saturday October 8TH 2016 10am-1pm
Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church
707 Fort St - Boise, ID 83702

In conjunction with our Synod Mission Campaign *"My Synod: Moving in Mission Together"*, stewardship workshops for congregational leaders are being offered. Focused on strengthening local congregations in leading annual stewardship efforts, the workshops will include information and insight into the Synod's Mission Campaign, and offer strategies for incorporating it into ongoing stewardship.

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RSVP before Sept. 15th to Kristin Koskella
Net-Worker Treasure Valley / Upper Snake clusters
Call 208 886 2801 Office 208 344 3011 Email mc.ilcboise@gmail.com

Lunch will be provided

Healthy Boundaries 101 – Fundamentals

Your congregations, judicatories, and denominations are always concerned about how to provide safety for all those we encounter. You know that nothing can be more damaging to vulnerable people than their personal boundaries violated by someone they believe they can trust. As a religious professional you are key in making your congregation a safe place. Most judicatories require a “boundary training” every 3-5 years. Check with your own judicatory officers and staff to learn what is required for you.

“Healthy Boundaries 101 – Fundamentals” will be presented Thursday, August 18, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at Central Lutheran Church, 512 South Bernard, Spokane, WA. This is the updated curriculum written by Faith Trust Institute in Seattle. Janine Goodrich, parish pastor from Newport, WA and Mark Nelson, Region 1, ELCA, will lead the day’s workshop. Both have significant training and experience in this area and with this curriculum.

Cost for the day is \$20.00 per participant. This includes the basic handouts and other program costs. Additional Faith Trust materials and other resources will be available for purchase at additional cost. Lunch will be on your own. There are many places for a quick meal near Central Lutheran. You are also welcome to pack your own lunch.

Pre-registration is required. To register send your check for \$20.00 made out to “Region 1 Boundaries” to Eastern Washington – Idaho Synod, ELCA, 314 South Spruce Street, Suite A, Spokane, WA 99201-5823. Include the name of the participant in the memo line. Pre-registrations are due by August 15. If you have any questions at all, contact Cathy Steiner at the Synod Office, office@ewaidsynod.org or 509-990-0478.

Synod Assembly 2017 Planning Meeting

All are Welcome . . .

. . . and encouraged to attend. Bishop Martin Wells and Kathy Gemar, 2017 Assembly Chair, cordially invite you to attend an informational meeting about becoming a part of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod 2016 Assembly planning team. Join us Monday, September 26, 2016 at 7 pm at Advent Lutheran Church, 13009 E Broadway Ave, Spokane, WA 99216. Contact Julia Bennett, Assembly Manager at assembly@ewaidsynod.org or 208-867-1217 if you have questions or would like to volunteer but are unable to attend the meeting. All hands and your gifts are welcome!

Friday and Saturday November 18-19

The “Estate Planning for the Heart” curriculum we’ve been hearing so much about at our last two Synod Assemblies will be making its public debut at Central Lutheran Church in Spokane for the EWALK (Eastern Washington) Network area. With module topics that include “Good, Better, Best: Funeral Decisions Made Simpler”, “A Good Document Is A Done Document”, and “Playing Cards And Talking Straight”, the series of modules helps us address the issues related to end-of-life circumstances. It teaches us how to best prepare and then handle the various ways in which we might end up facing these difficult situations and the decisions they demand. Schedule will be a Friday noon through Saturday dinner. Registration will be available through Central’s website. Watch the EWALK FB page, Central Lutheran’s website (www.clsokane.org), and Synod email communication for more details as they become available.

**EASTERN
WASHINGTON
IDAHO SYNOD**

of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

314 S. Spruce St., Suite A
Spokane, WA 99201-5823
509-838-9871



**September 2016
Newsletter**

Let Down the Nets
Lifting Our Vision
Jesus First, Last, Always
God's Grace, Our Gratitude
The Spirit Powers Us
No Fear! Transformation
Connections Multiply Miracles
Go, Tell & Serve



Please reproduce any and all articles for publication in congregational newsletters or bulletins.
The **Cross Connection** is also available on the synod website at
<http://www.ewaidsynod.org/synodpublications.html>.
Deadline for articles is the 5th of each month.

Synod Calendar

August 2016

20 Net-Worker Training - Spokane

September 2016

16-17 Synod Council Meeting - Spokane, WA

26 2017 Synod Assembly (First) Planning Meeting
Advent Lutheran - Spokane Valley, WA

29 Conference of Bishops

October 2016

6 Boundaries Training - Millwood Presbyterian

10-11 Rural Ministry Retreat - Immaculate Heart Re-
treat Center - Spokane, WA

14-17 First Call Theological Education

21-22 Global Mission Consultation

27-27 Bishop's Convocation - Walla Walla, WA

28-29 Candidacy Committee Meeting - Spokane, WA

November 2016

6 Lutheran Community Services Northwest
Annual Banquet Luncheon - Mukogawa



Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our Hands

Staff

Bishop The Rev. Martin Wells
Director for Evangelical Missions .. The Rev. Helga Jansons
Program Administrator Cathy Steiner
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Net-Worker The Rev. David Kappus
Net-Worker Kristin Koskella
Net-Worker

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

EDITOR: CYNTHIA WOOLEVER—WWW.THEPARISHPAPER.COM

September 2016—Volume 24, Number 9

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WHAT KEEPS CONGREGATIONS FROM IMPLEMENTING NEW IDEAS?

All individuals and organizations struggle with change. Implementing new ideas always means accepting that change comes as part of the package. Congregations hear about dozens of new ideas and gain new knowledge from denominational leaders, books, and workshops. Yet that news too rarely becomes part of a practical, local-church strategy. Why? There is often a big gap between what we know and what we do.¹

Beware of the Gap

Which of these create the gap between knowing and doing in your church?

Fear of change. When congregations shrink in size or begin to lose vitality, their leaders fear that any change they might introduce will only make matters worse. Often, members and pastors view the past with an undeserved glow and resist the very changes that could bring new life and strength to the church. To “confront our past and see it for what it is” is a necessary first step for understanding our fears.²

Past success. Ironically, churches that have experienced success—such as a large membership, recognition as a community anchor, or significant ministries—believe that because their efforts worked in the past, their way of doing things will continue to bear fruit. A reinventing-yesterday strategy drowns more congregations than it saves.

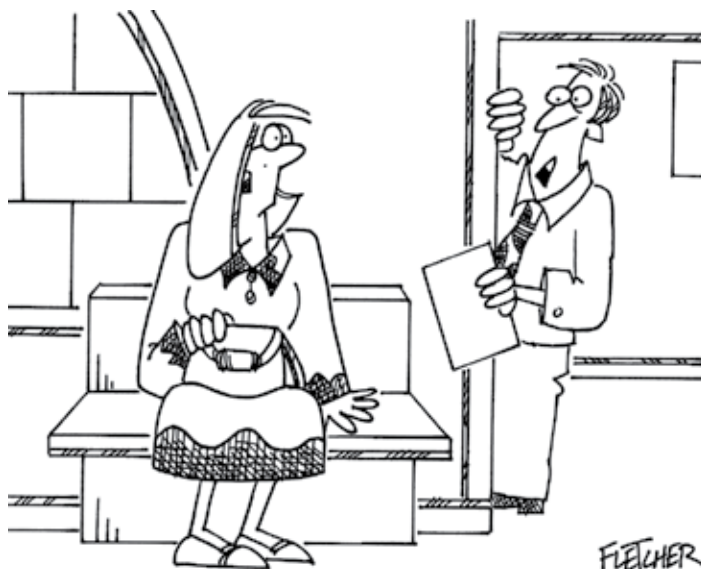
Tradition. Someone called the phrase “We never did it that way before” the last seven words of the church. Anyone who has ever tried to introduce an action plan that goes against church tradition knows the sanctions deal a blow to even the most enthusiastic and committed leader.

Congregational identity. The statement: “That is just who we are” sums up a church’s sense of self. The church’s sense of self includes many things that express a unique identity—such as what people wear to church, what music is appreciated, and the actual arrangement of furniture in the worship space. Any new idea that

seems to undercut the congregation’s core identity rarely gets off the ground.

Denominational identity. In addition to their congregational identity, congregations incorporate the parent denomination’s theology and themes to form a sense of self. In declining-membership denominations, leaders see few successful models to emulate. Because leaders take pride in their denominational theology and ministry methods, they are willing to learn new ideas only from churches similar to their own—even when there is evidence of ineffectiveness. That same pride keeps leaders from seeking out new approaches from churches outside their tribe.

Judgmental attitudes. One member said she would never attend *that* church because “they put rubber ducks in the baptistery for children’s worship.” Judging an action without sympathy for the motive prevents us from thinking in creative ways. For example, criticizing megachurches, churches more theologically conservative or liberal than our own, or nontraditional forms



“YOUR NEW IDEA IS SO URGENT, WE VOTED TO DISCUSS IT AT OUR NEXT 7 COMMITTEE MEETINGS.”

of church reveal an unconscious prejudice toward congregations that do things differently. Cynicism and pessimism inhibit openness to new ideas and action.

Confusing discussion with real action. Many people feel more comfortable talking about new ideas than trying out new strategies, which arise from those ideas. Just discussing an issue does not count as addressing the issue. Lengthy hearings without concrete plans, task assignments, and serious deadlines for implementation do not count as meaningful change.³

The gift of rationalization. For those leaders prone to procrastination or inaction, rationalizing lack of action comes naturally. Many congregations possess this gift and exercise its full potential. “We can’t do that because . . .” is the church motto.

Addressing attitudes before behavior. Congregational leaders put the cart before the horse when they buy into the myth that changing attitudes precedes changing behavior. Research indicates that people often change their attitudes *after* they try out something new, rather than *before* they do something new.

Underestimating the task of transferring ideas. Every church in every community reflects unique opportunities as well as barriers to change. What works in one place typically needs major modifications and adjustments to work well somewhere else.

Perfectionism. We all wish for every plan to work out smoothly, if not perfectly. Working out the glitches and snags along the way can be frustrating, discouraging, and time-consuming. Successful leaders and their congregations accept that only through implementation of an idea do we see what needs to be smoothed out.

Failure to evaluate. Decisions and actions eventually require evaluation. What went well? What needs improvement? If we tried this tactic again, what would we do differently? Reluctance to ask these hard questions keeps some churches from continuing to implement new ideas.

Moving from Knowing to Doing

Once leaders and members commit to crossing the divide between what they know and what they can accomplish together, several principles prove valuable.

Tell stories. Every church creates a narrative about their creation, the best times, challenging episodes, and their changing community context. These stories reveal something about their core values as reflected in the actions of church heroes, sacrifices, failures, and persistence. Telling stories about the past helps people

see how the next chapter for the church represents continuity with the larger story that they have been a part of all along.

Identify a need, challenge, or passion. Effective idea implementation stems from what people are already talking about and focused on. Assign responsibility for the tasks involved with the new idea and set realistic deadlines for getting things done.

Practical experience and skills count. Effective new idea implementation involves people with track records in getting things done. Leaders and members with practical experience in other settings can offer insights. Field trips to other effective congregations or organizations generate fresh perspectives. What people observe for themselves creates additional motivation and inspiration for local efforts.

Look beneath the “what” to understand the “why.” Leading congregational change is not like following a “some assembly required” set of instructions. Knowing or learning the technical skills is seldom enough. What are the underlying philosophy and core values behind effective efforts?

Stop looking for the perfect plan. If what your congregation wants to try were easy, many churches would already be doing it. “Do it and fix it” is a better plan than waiting for the perfect plan.⁴

What Is the Best Idea?

Alan Roxburgh says churches daring to write their next chapter should ask the best question: “What are the challenges we currently face for which we presently have no answer but must address if we’re to live into God’s future for us?”⁵

Unless you ask the best question, the best answer has not been discovered yet for your church. Have the courage to take this advice: “Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”⁶

1. Ideas drawn from Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert Sutton, *The Knowing-Doing Gap* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2000).

2. John Hope Franklin in Drew Gilpin Faust, “John Hope Franklin: Race & the Meaning of America,” *The New York Review of Books*, December 17, 2015, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2015/12/17/john-hope-franklin-race-meaning-america/>.

3. Pfeffer and Sutton, 29.

4. Statements made by Herb Miller in many conversations.

5. Alan Roxburgh, <http://themissionalnetwork.com/>.

6. Attributed to Muriel Strode.