STEWARD AT THE HEART

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Rethinking Stewardship
Luther Seminary
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IMAGINE...

BEING a steward.

What would it be like?
If I understood myself to be a steward, how would I look at my life and my world differently?
A BAPTISMAL CALLING

From the Latin

- **Vocatio**: summons
- **Vocare**: to call
- **Vox**: voice
VOCATION = STEWARD

• Collaborate/align with the owner
  • Clarify values
  • Define outcomes
• Assume responsibility
• Link up owner and those being served
• Work the plan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarify values</th>
<th>Define outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equality: All of/each in creation is a manifestation of God’s imagination.</td>
<td>All are fed.</td>
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<td>Generosity: Modelled after God’s largess.</td>
<td>We give generously.</td>
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<td>Trust: We are given to each other, the body of Christ</td>
<td>We work together.</td>
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<td>Forgiveness: We will fail; we can try again.</td>
<td>We value failure.</td>
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WHAT IS OUR CHARGE?

• Gospel or church?
• Preserve, grow, or...?
• Verbs or nouns?
RAISING UP STEWARDS

• Measure outcomes, not objects
  • Are people thinking of themselves more like stewards?
  • Are people acting more like stewards in more parts of their lives?
• How do you know?
SWOT—THINK LIKE A STEWARD

• Might we, as the church, have gotten a little too attached to what we think church is supposed to be?
  • Robust but fragile
• What might the gospel offer to the world we are inhabiting?
• What does it offer you?
What if?

The church was a search engine for seekers?

Search shapes our perception of reality.
What if...

The church was a place to learn resilience in the midst of mind-bending, life-altering change?

“There are no finish lines or silver bullets...We don’t have certainty, but we do have another day...Every day is Day One.”

_Resilience_, Zolli and Healy
WE ARE STEWARDS OF ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

• Encourage critical thinking to avoid:
  • overconfidence
  • strategic brittleness
  • groupthink
• Help expand the definition of “us”
• Choose influence and coordination over command and control
• Build trust over efficiency
HARDINESS

A system of thought based on the belief that:

• One can find meaningful purpose
• One can influence one’s surroundings and the outcome of events
• Positive and negative experiences will lead to learning and growth

Resilience, Zolli and Healy
SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE

• God created me to serve the neighbor for the sake of the world God intends. I belong here.

• God calls me to be of service as a part of the body of Christ. I make a difference, but do not have to do it alone.

• God is in the redemption business—from every death comes new life. I am a work in progress.
SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE

- You
- Your family
- Your congregation
- The church
THEN WHAT?

- Not harmony, but vitality
- Not efficiency, but generosity
- Not answers, but a path
- Not perfection, but invention
- Not security, but trust
Sisters and brothers,
both your work and your rest are in God.

Will you endeavor to pattern your life on the Lord Jesus Christ,
in gratitude to God and in service to others,
at morning and evening,
at work and at play,
all the days of your life?

If so, answer:
I will, and I ask God to help and guide me.
WITH GRATITUDE FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN SERVICE OF THE GOSPEL