



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

You're receiving this email because you or your congregation indicated you are a stewardship leader in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). If you'd prefer to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please [let us know](#).

Last fall our Mission Interpretation network was one of the many networks that participated in the ELCA Networks for Mission events in region III and region VI. Both events were well attended and lively discussions around Mission Interpretation were everywhere! We made great connections and grew our network in each of these regions. Because these events were so successful, plans for fall of 2015 are underway in regions VIII and IX. Be sure to save the date for two of our upcoming events! Simply check the calendar page at the bottom of this email for more details.

We constantly talk about ways to grow our ministry and ways to raise up more leaders in congregations who are declaring God's work! The ELCA's Mission Interpretation ministry is a great opportunity for people looking to take on a leadership role in their congregation. In this edition, you'll find several articles and resources focused on leadership.

As you continue to grow a Mission Interpreter network in your synod, I invite you to contact me with your questions, suggestions or requests for resources. Your work in your synod and congregation is important and it is greatly appreciated.

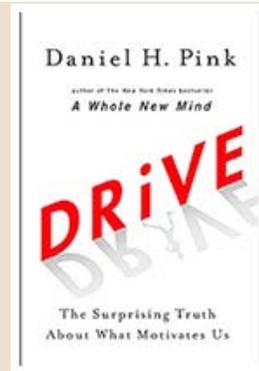
Peace,

Denise Ballou
Mission Interpreter Ministry Coordinator

Why stewardship?

Lessons on what motivates us

When you think about opportunities to grow stewardship, is it worthwhile to consider the topic of motivation? If so, Daniel Pink's ideas about what motivates people might be of interest. In his book "[Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us.](#)" Pink suggests that older frameworks that emphasize external factors like carrots and sticks are not nearly as effective as "intrinsic" motivators. According to Pink, at the heart of being internally motivated are three factors: a sense of purpose, a feeling of autonomy and something he calls mastery, which means a pathway for learning and improvement.



In this [video](#), Pink talks about some of these ideas and lifts up the suggestion that why we do things — as opposed to what we do or how we do it — helps people to connect practice with purpose. If stewardship is about living the vision, our purpose is about behaving as apostolic leaders, being contributors and making a difference. “People are yearning for a sense of why.”

ELCA Pastor Paul Erickson writes in this [article](#) in The Lutheran that congregations need purpose, too. At the heart of congregational renewal is a sense that not only does God have a plan, but each congregation has “a clear and vibrant understanding that God has a specific calling for them.” Congregations who were able to ask, “Why is God calling us to be here in this time and place?” found that their focus shifted from worrying about their survival as an institution to seeking an active engagement in God’s mission in the world.

Why leadership?

What is it and why does it matter?

Author and pastor Jim Wallis says that Jesus came into the world not only to transform our lives, tell us about God’s love for us and show us the way to salvation, but also to transform the world. Jesus was part of God’s plan to make the world a better place for all people. And the way that God intends for this to happen is to involve all of us as grassroots leaders!



Creation was not a one and done deal that happened in the beginning of time. Instead God is still creating and recreating, and we are God’s partners in that work. In the parable of the talents, the stewards that multiply their endowments are the ones who are praised. It is through this strategy of multiplication that our own lives are blessed as the world is blessed, too.

What do we even mean by leadership? In the book [“The Truth about Leadership”](#) by James Kouzes and Barry Posner, the authors share their extensive survey results on leadership, collected around the world for more than 30 years. When people think of leaders, the top four characteristics identified by at least 60 percent or more of those surveyed are honesty (85 percent); forward looking (70 percent), inspiration (69 percent) and competency (64 percent). All other characteristics drop significantly after these four. In general, leadership is about being a person of integrity but also a person that can get things done. It is about seeing a different future and motivating others to work toward that future. Isn’t this what Jesus modeled? Isn’t this what Jesus invited his disciples to consider and all of us, too? Check out these [quotes](#) on leadership for more thoughts on the topic.

Authority, leadership and adaptive change

Marty Linsky on why we need to lead

Marty Linsky is a Harvard professor who specializes in leadership. In this [video](#), Linsky talks about the confusing difference between being a person in a position of authority and the opportunity to behave as a leader. It’s confusing because we think that being in a position of authority automatically makes a person a leader and inversely, a leader must be in a certain position to lead. We think this even as we recognize all the situations where our authorities don’t meet our expectations for leadership.



Linsky explains the problem this way. Authority is often about providing a sense of direction, protection and order, or an atmosphere that everything is okay. This is what constituents expect and reward, but the challenge for authorities is that behaving as a leader may require violating those expectations for the purpose of creating necessary change. That in turn can be risky and dangerous, so authorities frequently err on the side of maintaining order at the expense of leading.

Whether we have a position of authority or not, as God's stewards, don't we need to be partnering with God by behaving as leaders instead of being managers of the status quo?

Creating leaders

Leadership development as culture

When Jesus began his kingdom movement here on earth, he started by calling his disciples. Jesus was multiplying leaders as he said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." His leading concern was not teaching them how to give fish away or how to better manage fish, but instead how to grow the movement through multiplication.



By Eric Schmidt & Jonathan Rosenberg with Peter Dinklage
www.google.com/howgogoogle

Pastor, author and leadership trainer John Maxwell calls this the law of explosive growth. "Leaders who develop followers impact this generation. Leaders who develop leaders impact the next generation." Maxwell says that just as we don't want our children ultimately to be dependent on us as parents, so leaders equip and encourage those around them to thrive and accomplish on their own. [Watch](#) Maxwell explore this theme in this video. See these slide decks to learn more about how [Google](#) and [Netflix](#) work at having a culture where everyone can behave as a leader.

New resources

Synod assemblies, storytelling, and more

It's time to begin thinking about your upcoming Synod Assembly! Will your synod's Mission Interpretation ministry make an appearance? Many Mission Interpreters are working together to host information tables or include their work in a "Mission Moment" or plenary discussion. Connect with your director of evangelical mission and your synod's assembly planning team today to ask how you can lift up Mission Interpretation at this important gathering.. This regional resource, [Making a Splash at Synod Assembly](#), might be useful in getting those discussions started.



Synod assemblies are also a great place to recruit people to become Mission Interpreters. If you choose to attend yours, be visible by wearing a bright T-shirt or button. Also be sure to engage in conversations with a variety of people, and ask them to share a mission story of their congregation. Then of course, invite them to consider volunteering as a Mission Interpreter! Be sure to bring several brochures and/or business cards to share, and find more recruiting resources from my region [here](#).

Giving a talk? Storytelling and making presentations come naturally for some folks while others struggle. Teresa Nygaard, Mission Interpreter Coordinator in the South Dakota Synod, says storytelling is like cooking! She whipped up a recipe for you if you'll be speaking to a large group soon. "[How To](#)" is full of tips to tell a scrumptious story - she even included a yummy recipe for beef stew! I think you could easily develop this into a workshop format or use it as a conversation starter around presentation skills.

Holding a training event? Jan Borchers, Mission Interpreter in the Southern Ohio Synod recently engaged in a question posed on the ELCA Mission Interpreters Facebook page. The results are Jan's [top 10](#) list for a successful Mission Interpreter training event.

Sayings, quotes, thoughts

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

"One cannot lead a life that is truly excellent without feeling that one belongs to something greater and more permanent than oneself."

Biblical foundations

2 Timothy 2:2

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who

will also be qualified to teach others."

Upcoming events for [Mission Interpreters](#)

Aug. 28-30, 2015

Location TBD

ELCA Mission Interpreter Coordinator Gathering

Sept. 17-19, 2015

Waynesboro, Pa.

ELCA Network Gathering

Get connected! Find ELCA [stewardship resources online](#)



We'd love to hear from you! Have a link or idea you want to share in our next issue? Email stewardnet@elca.org.

If you'd prefer to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please [let us know](#).

[Privacy Policy](#) | [ELCA.org](#) | [ELCA Community member?](#) [Manage your preferences](#)