

DEEP – our relationship with one another (discipleship and community building)

RESOURCES

INTERNET

- **ARE:A Renewal Enterprise – “The Shift: 5 Big Ideas that will (probably) shape your work in the emerging future”** <http://www.arenwalenterprise.com/download-the-5-big-ideas-ebook.html> This downloadable booklet by Kelly Fryer & Tana Kjos offers a quick journey through 5 of the most important ideas being kicked around by some of the leading figures in the fields of design, organization development, leadership theory, and social innovation. The ideas are presented in a down-to-earth way and could help a congregation explore new approaches to mission and ministry. This could be used by councils, vision teams, or anyone interested in renewal. Includes a discussion guide.
- **ChurchNext: Grow My Church** <http://churchnext.tv/> Pr. Christ Yaw (ECUSA). This is a program designed to stimulate stalled congregations and help them grow again. The course is specially designed for small/medium size churches (under 200 average Sunday attendance) who want the knowledge of expensive consultants for a fraction of the cost. It is a 12-session, video based course aimed at starting conversations around congregation’s most important issues. The mission of ChurchNext is to help build healthier congregations and to act as a counter-weight to an increasingly secular society that is trying to convince us that the only option for the Christian church today is decline.
- **CRG (Congregational Resource Guide)**, <http://congregationalresources.org/> A wonderful project of the [Alban Institute](#), and [Lilly Endowment Inc.](#) and a free gift to America's Congregations. The abundance of resources available for congregations and their leaders can be overwhelming. CRG constantly sifts and mines these materials for those that demonstrate a high likelihood for usefulness in congregational life. The site strives to point leaders to materials that can assist congregation's becoming healthy bodies of worship and agents of transformation in their communities. Categories include CARE (for neighbor, congregations, clergy); DISCOVER (education, spirituality, traditions); ENGAGE (congregation, community, future); MANAGE (facilities, technology, finances) WORSHIP (sermons, styles, music). Resources include books, podcasts, programs, links, blogs, etc.
- **Discipleship/ELCA**, <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Christian-Education/Discipleship.aspx> Resources for adults, youth, and children
- **Assessment tools/ELCA** <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Evangelizing-Church/Assessment-Tools.aspx> For Spiritual Gifts, Congregational Hospitality, Evangelism essentials and more.
- **Front Porchin’ (Making Disciples and Forming Faith in Exile)** <http://wrestlingwithjakob.com/> A free download from Harold Jacobson, DEM NWPA Synod (click “Mission Resource Downloads” choose Category “Faith Sharing” About discovering God’s Story/My Story/Your Story and where they meet. Recommended by Diane Jacobson.
- **Gifts for You: Opening your spiritual gifts** <http://www.womenoftheelca.org/alphabetical-listing-pages-58.php> A resource that can be downloaded and used for self-study, group study, Bible Study, or retreats. It is meant to assist persons as disciples, increasing their capacity for ministry by embracing their spiritual gifts and discerning how God is calling them to use those gifts. Includes Bible Study, an assessment tool, and reflection questions.
- **Vibrant Faith Ministries** <http://www.vibrantfaith.org/index.html> Focuses on equipping congregations, families and individuals through various services (trainings, coaching, articles, downloads, etc.); equipping innovative leaders; supporting underserved and multi-cultural ministries for transformation.
- **ELCA Mission Planning Website**, <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Mission-planning.aspx> Growing lists of information and resources for mission planning and with links to what other synods are doing and providing.

- **Soul café** <http://www.soulcafe.org/home> Soul cafe is an online resource that enables communication and collaboration within the Church. It is a place to initiate ongoing and vital discussions after meetings and event, sharing what works and doesn't work in congregations and ministries, and breaking down "silos" of communication. Soul cafe offers an archive that can be mined to provide insight for solutions to current and future challenges. There is a "High, Deep, and Wide" group at: <http://www.soulcafe.org/group/high-deep-and-wide>

BOOKS

- **A Spirituality of Living**, Henri Nouwen, Upper Room Books. Nouwen identifies 3 essential disciplines for maintaining a life of discipleship: solitude, community, and ministry. In solitude we learn to listen to God through prayer. In community we learn to celebrate, as well as to practice vulnerability and forgiveness. Through ministry we respond to God's call to serve a hurting world. This insightful 64 page booklet seeks to encourage and inspire persons to live a fruitful, Spirit-filled life.
- **Blessed to Follow: The Beatitudes As a Compass for Discipleship (Lutheran Voices)**, Martha Stortz, Augsburg-Fortress. More than a study on the beatitudes, this is a journey through scripture and the realities of life. The Beatitudes become a tool to discover the journey of being a disciple of Jesus. Each chapter ends with discussion and reflection questions.
- **Discover Your Spiritual Type: A Guide to Individual and Congregational Growth**, Corinne Ware, Alban Institute. A framework for people to name and understand their spiritual experience. Explores four spiritual types--head, heart, mystic, and Kingdom--and includes exercises that allow individuals and groups to assess their type.
- **Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations**, Gil Rendle and Alice Mann, Alban Institute. This book views planning as a "holy conversation," a congregational discernment process about three critical questions: Who are we? What has God called us to do or be? Who is our neighbor? Recommended by Diane Jacobson.
- **In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership**, Henri Nouwen, Crossword Publishing. Most widely read among Nouwen's 40+ books. For a society that measures successful leadership in terms of the effectiveness of the individual, here is offered a counter definition, a leadership that cannot function apart from the community. Includes a short study guide.
- **Pathway to Renewal: Practical Steps for Congregations**, by Daniel Smith and Mary Sellon. No pastor can lead a congregation to renewal alone; it requires a complete change of heart for the whole congregation. Renewal goes far beyond adopting a mission statement or adding a few programs. The book offers a framework for understanding and addressing the deep cultural shift facing people during congregational renewal and helps make sense of where a congregation might get stuck and guides them through what needs to be addressed for renewal.
- **Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church**, Michael Foss, Fortress. The book makes the case for transforming congregations from a membership model to a discipleship model. Chapters detail the unique leadership and organizational needs of a discipleship model and provide practical helps for assessing the present and strategies for moving into the future. It is addressed to professional and non-professional church leaders interested in transforming their churches into centers for discipleship and mission. It proposes a grace-centered, rather than legalistic, model of discipleship and builds a bridge through transferable principles between congregational mission mindedness and the individual Christian's life of faith. This book utilizes assessment tools and practical helps.
- **Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples**, Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, B and H Books. Based on case studies of 400 American churches, the authors discovered that the disciple-making process is often too complex. Simple churches thrive by taking four ideas to heart: Clarity. Movement. Alignment. Focus.
- **The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on Its Gifts**, Luther K. Snow, Alban Institute. Shows congregational leaders how to help a group recognize its assets and the abundance of God's gifts and to act on them in ministry and mission. Includes the tested Quick and Simple Congregational Asset-Mapping Experience.
- **The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church** and **Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church**, Reggie McNeal, Jossey Bass. McNeal, a Baptist, looks at key questions and significant shifts in focus, direction and leadership that churches need to make for effective mission.

- **The Thin Book of SOAR: building strengths-based strategy**, J. Stavros and G. Hinrichs. SOAR is the acronym (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) for a new planning process that is based on discovering and multiplying what an organization does well. It takes the “Appreciative Inquiry” philosophy and applies it to provide a planning and dialogue process. (Used by the SW Minnesota Synod).
- **The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community or Sacred Acts, Holy Change: Faithful Diversity and Practical Transformation**, Eric H. F. Law, Chalice Press. These books examine diversity, meaningful dialogue, and transformation. They explore differences and the reasons for them and offer practical suggestions for group settings to encourage the participation of all; suggestions that have been tested and refined by the author over a number of years. The practical guidelines of Law (an Episcopal Priest) can be applied to a congregational setting for transformation and renewal. Also, refer to the Kaleidoscope Institute: <http://www.kscopeinstitute.org/index.html>
- **The Other 80 Percent: Turning Your Church's Spectators into Active Participants**, Scott Thumma, Warren Bird, Jossey-Bass. The authors draw upon new research across a broad range of Protestant churches of all sizes and show how to create more active members. Offers solid information of what church leaders need to know about the factors and practices that create church members who are more actively and passionately involved in their congregations. A first of its kind resource for developing engaged congregations with practical advice for moving church members from being spectators to living a life of discipleship and faith.

OTHER

- **The Alban Institute.** <http://www.alban.org/> The Alban Institute was founded in 1974 as a major resource for American congregations facing the challenges of a changing society. While today’s challenges are even more pressing than they were three decades ago, the opportunities have never been clearer for congregations to be vital communities of faith, health, and leadership. Books, articles, podcasts. Annual membership.
- **Asset-Mapping.** A process of cataloging and integrating the resources of a community. These include individual, group, economic, and association resources. The book, The Power of Asset Mapping: how your congregation can act on its gifts, by Luther Snow, Alban Institute, gives a comprehensive “what, how and why” of the process. Or a congregation can quickly engage in sampling the process through the guide at this link: http://www.alban.org/uploadedFiles/Alban/Bookstore/pdf/resources/Asset_Mapping/resource2.pdf
- **Community building – Messiah/Red Lodge.** A best resource for building community has been the book Gracious Space: A Practical Guide to Working Together. Several members attended a workshop where the principals of “gracious space” were taught. Then a 4-part series for their Sunday forum was offered. The congregation’s leadership feels that “Gracious Space” has helped immensely in having civil peaceful dialogue over difficult issues, e.g. sexuality, biblical interpretation, purchasing land and visioning for best use of that land. This is not a "churchy" book, but biblical passages can easily be incorporated. The book is easy to grasp but challenging to live out and reflects our Lutheran theology rooted in grace and the cross. www.ethicalleadership.org/programs/gracious-space
- **“Claiming Our Biblical Identity: A Guide to Help Congregations Name and Explore Their Defining Story for the Sake of the Mission in the World”**, ELCA Faith Practices Initiative, Book of Faith Initiative, Mission Development. Congregations are invited to discern the biblical story that is defining for them. The process is aimed at helping congregations form their identity as a missional community. Shared by Diane Jacobson.
- **Crossways – Christ/Libby.** The congregation has deepened its understanding of scripture as well as established on-going support groups through the Crossways program <http://www.crossways.org/#> They began with one-day seminars then hosted a week-long seminar at their church. They have four lay-led groups that have continued strong.
- **Go Make Disciples: An Invitation to Baptismal Living**, Augsburg Fortress. This handbook is intended to help congregations implement the task of making disciples in their own community. It provides updated resources for preparing adults for baptism or affirmation of baptism, and for Christian discipleship. Materials intended for group use and distribution are available on the companion CD-ROM, which is sold separately.

- **Lifelong Faith and Faith Formation 2020/Lorie Hughes, King of Glory/Billings, Secretary/Historian of LACE (Lutheran Association for Christian Educators.** <http://www.faithformation2020.net/> LifelongFaith Associates is committed to helping congregations develop lifelong faith formation for all ages and generations. Part of this includes the Faith Formation 2020 Initiative <http://www.faithformation2020.net/> This offers the vision, tools, and resources for designing new models, practices, strategies, and activities to address the spiritual and religious needs for today and into the future. Both websites are rich in materials for spiritual formation, discipleship, and outreach. Lots of good stuff on these sites from Roman Catholic educator and innovator John Roberto.
- **One-to-One Relational Meetings and Six Practical Applications,** Susan Engh, Dir. for Congregation-based Organizing, ELCA. This paper introduces congregations to 1-to-1 conversations that can assist them in listening deeply to one another and to their neighbors and context. (available soon on the ELCA website)
- **Professor David Lose – Lutheran Church of Sunburst.** The congregation has used Lose’s “Making Sense of...Scripture/the Christian Faith/the Cross” for adult studies. On the congregation’s Facebook page items from Lose’s blog “In the Meantime” <http://www.davidlose.net/> are posted, along with Bible verses, and justice issue items.
- **South African Bible Study** (developed by Lumko Missiological Institute of South Africa) Open up the Bible anew. This simple method allows small groups to read the Bible together and meditate on it in order to be able to live from it. A no-fear-everyone’s-an-expert approach to listening to the Word of God.
- **Up-In-Out: Lifeshapes – Immanuel/Missoula.** The leaders and council use what they describe as a fun and easy book called *A Passionate Life* by Mike Breen and Walt Kallestad (which includes a CD and workbooks) to evaluate and plan each year. They use the “triangle” lifeshape which focuses the congregation on its relationship with God, one another, and the community. http://www.amazon.com/Passionate-Life-Small-Group-Resource/dp/B005Q6NNOC/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342194383&sr=1-3&keywords=the+passionate+life+breen Breen’s efforts have evolved into **3DM** <http://weare3dm.com/> which seeks to train churches and Christian leaders to do discipleship and mission in an increasingly post-Christian world.