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# Models of Ministry: Afterthoughts on 50 Years

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Thanks for a good beginning, Joe. I remain your brother.

Love and Solidarity,

Oz

Oscar Cole Arnal  
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

### **Models of Ministry: Afterthoughts on Fifty Years** Henry E. Horn Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989

Henry E. Horn was for many years pastor of University Lutheran Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and pastor to students at Harvard University. Drawing on fifty years of experience in ordained ministry, during which time he has compiled "ninety-eight volumes of notes", Horn offers here "thanksgiving" for "my very own experience".

But he does more.

He offers valuable insights from experience to the current dialogue in various Christian churches on the doctrine of ministry. "One who has celebrated fifty years in the ministry knows that one passes, usually in ten years, from a situation in which the model shapes the person to that where experience shapes the model. I speak to the model from experience."

Horn presents and reflects on five areas of ministry for which "models of ministry have developed through an interchange of faithful ministry and human developments: the areas of scriptural interpretation, faith development, the discerning of spirits, ritual leadership and leadership in the civic space. The areas translate into five models of the ordained minister as preacher and teacher, pastor, prophet, priest and citizen."

This is an extremely personal book by one who is simultaneously an avid reader and a keen observer of human nature. Therefore, as Horn explores each of the areas and the respective emergent model his reflections take the reader on an exciting interchange between text and experiential context, between tradition and how he experienced the practice of ministry, especially in the university chaplaincy settings. Within the area of faith development, for example, he notes: "The task of the pastor is to engage people along the way by tying together the gospel and new steps in faith." In order to accomplish that "one has to develop a discipline of recognizing the currents, of 'discerning the spirit' " and to correlate that with faith expressions in tradition—biblical as well as church history.

Horn acknowledges that within his ministry, "I found two areas of my life especially worrisome. The first was my own life of prayer... The second

problem was presented by my need for continuously refreshed inspiration in my preaching." To help him with the discipline of prayer as well as with a way "to freshen up my mind, I decided I would keep a journal of surprise. Surprising happenings would give life to my preaching. Anything that stirred my mind I put down in a book. Any quotation from my reading that brought forth an 'Aha!' I set down in writing, often quoting whole paragraphs." What Horn articulates here is a worthy model for any pastor to emulate!

Not everyone is going to agree with Horn that the core of ministry will be captured with these areas and models. I suspect there will be those who would prefer to see more emphasis on pastoral counselling, teaching, or administrative responsibilities, to name but a few. But given the claim which the author makes on the grounds of personal experience, there is no disputing the point that he furnishes some helpful considerations within five particularly important areas of ministry. "When I tried to set out some vessels that held the riches of my own experience... I found that my experience broke down to five functions: scriptural interpretation, faith development, the discerning of spirits, ritual leadership, and leadership in the civic space."

"I offer these chapters as a legacy to young students headed for the ministry." Obviously this text will be of interest to seminary students. It will also, I believe, be a helpful dialogue partner for pastors currently serving in ordained ministry; they will want to compare their own "experiences of surprises" with what Horn articulates in this book. And I suspect it will be a welcome volume to those serving on various denominational commissions studying forms of ministry.

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## **Effective Church Leadership: A Practical Sourcebook**

Harris W. Lee

Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989

222 pp.

Harris Lee, who is currently serving as a director of stewardship ministries in Minnesota for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, brings 27 years of parish experience to the writing of this book. Somewhat reminiscent of his emphasis in an earlier volume, *Theology of Administration* (1981), he asks: "Why do some churches thrive while others languish? Why are some vital and purposeful while others flounder?" And then he goes on to state: