

11-1-1990

Effective Church Leadership: A Practical Sourcebook

Arnold D. Weigel

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus>

Recommended Citation

Weigel, Arnold D. (1990) "Effective Church Leadership: A Practical Sourcebook," *Consensus*: Vol. 16 : Iss. 2 , Article 21.
Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol16/iss2/21>

This Book Reviews is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Consensus by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

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.

Arnold D. Weigel
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

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:

I am sure the reasons are many, among them the makeup of the community; the quality of the congregational life, especially its worship and preaching; the program and fellowship opportunities; and the prayers and participation of the people. After more than 25 years as a parish pastor in three different congregations, I conclude that there is another factor that is not often discussed. I refer to the leadership factor: the quality, quantity, and timeliness of the leadership exercised by pastors and elected leaders of congregations (11).

Initially, one gets the impression that Lee has tried to do too much in this text. His own outline of the book as identified in the Introduction conveys such.

In Part One, I consider the subject of leadership from a biblical perspective, viewing it as a gift and calling from God, and as a ministry to and by God's people. I then clarify the primary functions of leadership, state a general definition and consider several different leadership theories. Part Two focuses on the importance of knowing yourself, your group, and the appropriate use of power and authority. In Part Three, I turn to the people who lead, highlighting some of the marks and qualities that seem most appropriate for use in the church, then clarifying the leadership role and responsibilities of pastors and elected lay leaders. Here I also discuss and advocate the development of leadership teams. In Part Four, I take up the everyday tasks of leadership: planning, motivating, and managing conflict; coordinating, organizing, and staffing; and provide insights for the effective accomplishment of spirituality and leadership (15).

It must be stated, however, that Lee has done an excellent job in achieving his declared purpose: "The book is an overview of leadership ideas, a distillation of the insights of many. It is a sampler of leadership theory and practice. It intends to open doors to further study, to guide continuing reflection and practice" (11-12).

Effective Church Leadership is a rich bibliographical resource, citing many valuable texts in the area of leadership. Lee asked 80 leaders in education, business, church, government, and health care institutions to list the best books on leadership. In receiving these submissions, Lee gathered together "insights and principles that seem useful for the church". It is my contention that he has done this very well especially in support of his subtitle: "A Practical Sourcebook". Embedded in this survey is Lee's helpful integration of a theology of leadership with its practical expression, all with a view to strengthening personal, mutual, and corporate ministry through effective leadership.

Within Part Three, in addressing the question: "What are the personal qualities of leaders?", using research which addresses "traits that matter", Lee notes that it has been discovered that there are "four common traits: commitment to a vision, effective communication skills, reliability, and self-awareness" (90). The author concludes that these traits "will serve effectively in the church as well as in business and the public sector" (91).

Although a "sampler" in nature, I believe that this volume will be helpful to seminary courses in parish administration, to pastors serving in parish ministry and in special service and to laity who hold leadership positions within the church. There are parts of this text that could serve well as resource material within a board, committee or task-force retreat setting. The author, having served over some time in parish ministry prior to coming to his current administrative position, has used that rich experiential base well to explore leadership textual and human resources for key practical insights into strengthening leadership in the church.

Arnold D. Weigel
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

Heart to God, Hand to Man

Edward Read

The Canadian Pulpit Series, number 8 (Burlington, Ontario: Welch Publishing Co., Inc., 1989)

130 pp.

Welch Publishing Co. is to be congratulated for initiating and continuing "The Canadian Pulpit Series". Those of us who read sermons have been largely limited to American preachers; Canadian volumes have been rare, and so this series is exceptionally welcome. The series is important for historical and scholarly purposes, of course, but this deliberate attempt to publish "the best of Canadian preaching from a variety of regions and denominations across our country" affords an easy and exciting access to the preaching of our neighbor denominations. Here we can examine the characteristics of and be edified by the preaching of (so far) United Church of Canada (vols. 1 and 3), Presbyterian (vol. 7), Baptist (vols. 2, 4, and 6), and Pentecostal (vol. 5) ministers, and, in this latest volume, a Salvationist minister. Commissioner Read, a native of Nova Scotia, has served the Salvation Army across Canada and in several other countries; he is presently principal of the International College for Officers in London, England.

I found myself at once intrigued by two central emphases in the sermons, which I take to be two central emphases also in Salvationist doctrine, namely, holiness and social ministry. We all know of the latter; it is an eye-opener to discover that holiness (sanctification) holds the position in the Salvation Army that justification holds in Reformation churches! Of course, the saving cross is fundamental (expressed here via the substitutionary atonement image); but Salvationists insist that this propel the believer into the faithful actions of evangelism, social ministry, and holiness of life. Especially holiness. "We are chosen," says Read, speaking of the doctrine of election, "to be holy" (74); the Father's work, he says, quoting