

MissionNorthwest

Resourcing and developing churches that connect people with Jesus Christ

Leadership Learning Communities 2021 Resource List

EVERY MONTH

Devotional/Prayer Book for Each Month's Meeting

Each LLC will choose a prayer guide or devotional book for personal prayer/devotions and to be used as a portion of each meeting.

Some Options:

- *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers And Devotions* by Arthur G. Bennett (Amazon Paperback \$16.00, or several used copies under \$10.00) Suggested by Pastor Lance Zagaris.
- *The Unvarnished Jesus: A Lenten Journey* by Brian Zahnd (Paperback \$11.22; Kindle \$9.99)
- *Prayers from the Ancient Celtic Church* by Paul Stratman (Paperback \$9.00; Kindle \$6.50)
- *If: Trading Your If Only Regrets for God's What If Possibilities* by Mark Batterson (Kindle \$10.99; Paperback \$12.69) Suggested by Pastor Mike Popovich.

JANUARY

Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change by Tod Bolsinger (Kindle \$12.58 ; Hardback \$13.24) [Part One: Pages 1 thru 103]

Topic: “Developing Resilient Pastors” One thing is certain, it is more difficult to lead a thriving congregation today than at any time in the last 60 years. The increasing secularization of society coupled with light-speed change have intensified the crucible of church leadership. In the face of these challenges many leaders are experiencing a “failure of nerve and a failure of heart.” One fallout is that churches hunker down and primarily taking care of their own. These congregations abandon the Missio Dei and no longer exert spiritual influence in their local communities. Bolsinger’s answer for pastors, and any church leader, is to develop resilience. Although similar to “grit”, a Spirit-empowered resilience goes deeper and further than sheer determination. Using the metaphor of iron shaped in a blacksmith’s shop this excellent book examines the themes of working, heating, holding, hammering, hewing and tempering as movements of the soul that hold promise for growing resilience in the leader’s character.

Bolsinger's Summary (from the book's back flap): To temper describes the process of healing, holding, hammering, cooling, and reheating that adds stress to raw iron until it becomes a glistening knife blade knife blade or chisel tip. When reflection and relationships are combined into a life of deliberate practice, leaders become both stronger and more flexible. As a result, these resilient leaders are able to offer greater wisdom and skill the organizations they serve.

FEBRUARY

Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change by Tod Bolsinger [Part Two: Pages 103 thru 221]

MARCH

The Sacred Overlap: Learning to Live Faithfully in the Space Between by J.R. Briggs (Kindle \$9.99; Paperback \$18.29) [Part One: pages xix through 106]

Topic: "Living Missionally in the Tension Between Two Worlds" This is a thoughtful, hopeful and helpful book providing wisdom for ministering in this world while remaining fully devoted to Jesus and His life formed within us. Some topics addressed:

- Hanging with saints and sinners
- Embracing justice and embracing grace
- Resident aliens: too Christian, too pagan
- Being peculiar: inhabiting the space between normal and weird
- Sacred celebration: embracing joy amidst a world riddled with pain
- Engaging in evangelism and discipleship at the same time.

Special Note: J.R. Briggs is scheduled to be the keynote speaker at the Mission Northwest Leadership Tune-Up Sept 27-28, 2021.

Book Description (Excellent Summary from Back Cover): The widening of political, racial, generational, and religious differences often leads to an "us vs. them" mentality all too common today. In *The Sacred Overlap*, author J.R. Briggs communicates a refreshing vision that embraces tension and calls us to live in radical love and faithfulness between the extremes that isolate and divide people.

Read the gospels and you'll see how Jesus was committed to crossing cultural, social, political and religious *either/or* waters, engaging in many *and/also* activities. He comforted the disturbed and also disturbed the comfortable. He was too religious for the pagans *and also* too pagan for the religious elites. He hung out with filthy lepers *and also* dined with the filthy rich. He was alarming *and* disarming at the same time.

This is not a spineless embrace of religious syncretism where we take bits from world religions, personal preferences, and ideologies and throw them into a cosmic blender for a tasty theological smoothie. Instead, Briggs offers a fresh understanding of evangelism and discipleship, showing how we need to be engaged in both of these at the same time. He shares creative ways to engage with God's mission with those who are intrigued about Jesus, but

turned off by church. He explores what it means to be joyful in the midst of heart wrenching pain and suffering in the world. And he models what it means to maintain a posture of convicted civility which emphasizes equally both grace and truth.

APRIL

The Sacred Overlap: Learning to Live Faithfully in the Space Between by J.R. Briggs [Part Two: Pages 107 through 232]

MAY

Each LLC will determine in advance what to study (book, articles or online resource) during May and September. Suggestions include:

- **Revisit a previous LLC book.** Refer to “Top LLC Book List” or lists by previous years. Lists are available at the Mission Northwest web site at <https://missionnorthwest.org/llc>. Select a book, review the best chapters and themes.
- **Choose one or two Youtube training presentations.** These could be webinars that have caught the attention of pastors. Or, consider previous M/NW webinars: Lee Spitzer, Adam Stadtmiller, Wayne Faison and others. (Contact Charles Revis for more information on these.)
- **Pro Church Tools Resources** (<https://prochurchtools.com/free-tools/?tab=latest-resources>) Numerous helpful video topics: “How to Reliably Track Attendance & Engagement for Online Church”; “Innovative Worship Sets for Church/Worship Ministry Ideas”; “Online Church for Smaller Churches – Casual Live Stream vs On-Stage”; “Best Color Schemes for Church Websites”. Choose one or two to view in advance and come prepared to discuss applicaton.

SEPTEMBER

Selected reading and/or resource continued from May. Or, choose additional resources to review and study.

OCTOBER

A Church Called Tov: Forming a Goodness Culture that Resists Abuses of Power and Promotes Healing (Kindle \$15.67 ; Hardback: \$16.50) [Part One – Pages 12 thru 111]

Topic: “Forming a Healthy, Goodness Church Culture” Some churches drift into a toxic culture often dominated by an egotistic pastor who resist accountability. It doesn’t have to be the pastor who abuses the congregation. It can be a church bully. Regardless, churches can fend off spiritual toxicity, which destroys people and community, by

nurturing a goodness culture. The authors advocate nurturing empathy, grace, people over programs, truth, justice, and service as the entire congregation is encouraged to grow in Christlikeness. These fend off a narcissist' culture, fear culture, institution creep, false narratives, loyalty culture, celebrity culture and leader-dominated culture.

Book Description (from Amazon): Tragically, in recent years, Christians have gotten used to revelations of abuses of many kinds in our most respected churches—from Willow Creek to Harvest, from Southern Baptist pastors to Sovereign Grace churches. Respected author and theologian Scot McKnight and former Willow Creek member Laura Barringer wrote this book to paint a pathway forward for the church.

We need a better way. The sad truth is that churches of all shapes and sizes are susceptible to abuses of power, sexual abuse, and spiritual abuse. Abuses occur most frequently when Christians neglect to create a culture that resists abuse and promotes healing, safety, and spiritual growth.

How do we keep these devastating events from repeating themselves? We need a map to get us from where we are today to where we ought to be as the body of Christ. That map is in a mysterious and beautiful little Hebrew word in Scripture that we translate “good,” the word tov.

In this book, McKnight and Barringer explore the concept of tov—unpacking its richness and how it can help Christians and churches rise up to fulfill their true calling as imitators of Jesus.

NOVEMBER

The A Church Called Tov: Forming a Goodness Culture that Resists Abuses of Power and Promotes Healing [Part Two: Pages 113 through 222]

DECEMBER

No book selection for December. Use this month to complete a book that took longer to read than expected, or catch up with one another and reflect back on the year that has passed.