

A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

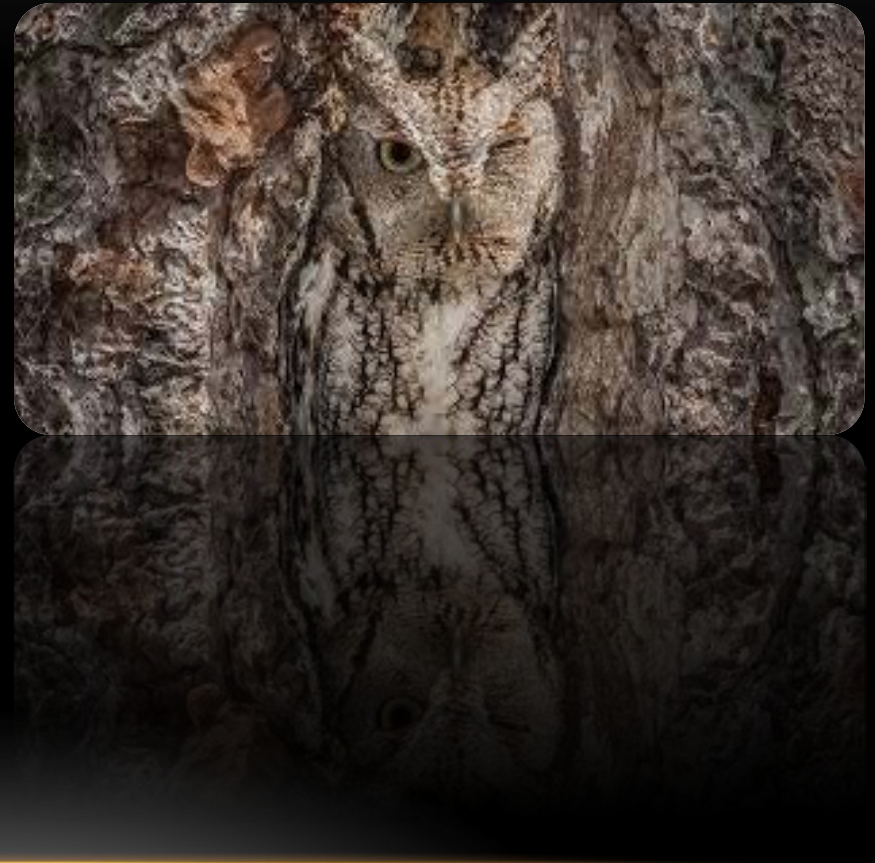


Bishop Wayne Miller
Metropolitan Chicago Synod
June 9, 2018



HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT!

- For Paul... the Old Era and the New Era COEXIST!
- We do not know the future of the Church...
 - But we can pay attention!
 - The signs are there!



WHO ARE WE? – CONGREGATIONAL PERSONALITY TYPES

- Regional Mission Centers: Gather from everywhere; Love and serve local and remote mission fields
 - Commuter Congregations: Gather disbursed historic members; love and serve disbursed historic members
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PERSONALITY TYPES

- Community Congregations: Gather from local mission field; Love and serve local mission field; Congregation is an EXPRESSION of neighborhood
Financially connected to remote mission fields through synodical and denominational "mission support."
 - This is the normative ELCA congregation.
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PERSONALITY TYPES

- Family Congregations: Gather those already gathered; love and serve those already gathered
– limited resources for outreach
- New Mission Communities: Gather from ?????; love and serve ?????

IN THE NEW ERA...

- Commuter Congregations and Family Congregations will survive only as long as existing membership holds on.
 - Healthy mission-driven New Communities, Community Congregations, and Regional Mission Centers CAN STILL GROW.
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STRATEGIC SYNOD PRIORITIES

- Helping Commuter Congregations and Family Congregations become Community Congregations
- Helping Community Congregations become Regional Mission Centers.
- Helping Regional Mission Centers generate New Mission Communities

STRATEGIC SYNOD PRIORITIES

- Turnaround Synod Initiative: Helping congregations become Community Congregations or Regional Mission Centers
- Affiliated Mission Communities: Helping Community Congregations and Regional Mission Centers GENERATE New Mission Communities
- Mission Endowment Structure: Converting assets into strategic congregational investment resources

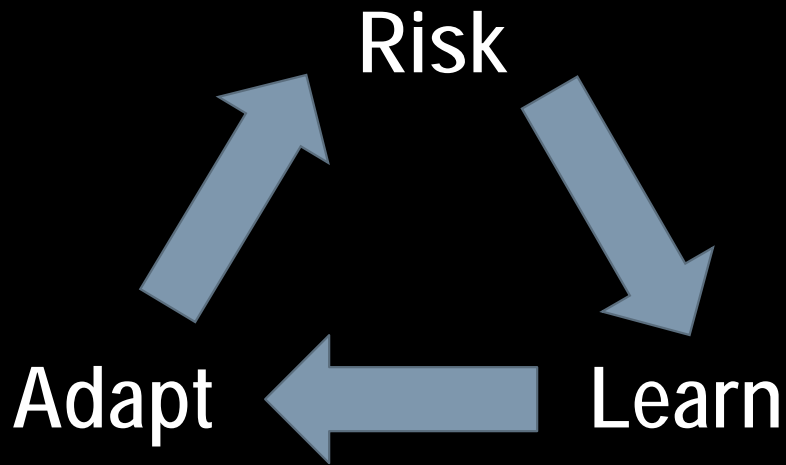
SIGNS TO WATCH FOR...



- Risk...
- No Bible stories of faithfulness without risk
- Risking the adventure of the unknown
- Risking the loss of the familiar

CULTIVATING RISK CULTURE

- Congregations of the New Era...
- Practice trying and releasing
- Celebrate calculated risk
- Learn from both success and failure

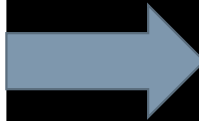


IMPERMANENCE



- Lutherans build for ETERNITY!
- We live in a world of impermanence
- Innovation is the END not the MEANS
- Learning to enjoy creating and letting go

MISSION EXPANSION STRATEGIES



ATTRACTION, ASSIMILATION OR GENERATION

- Newcomers must make the first move and incur all the emotional risk
 - Program attraction is getting weaker in a culture not seeking church
 - Assimilation requires cultural homogeneity and devalues cultural diversity
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GENERATIVITY NOT ASSIMILATION



- New Era Congregations will not be single communities
- They will be organizations always generating...
 - New Groups
 - New Cultures
 - New Missions

GATHERED AND SCATTERED

- As our institutional or organization strength declines...
- More of our energy and anxiety focuses on how many and how much we gather.



GATHERED AND SCATTERED

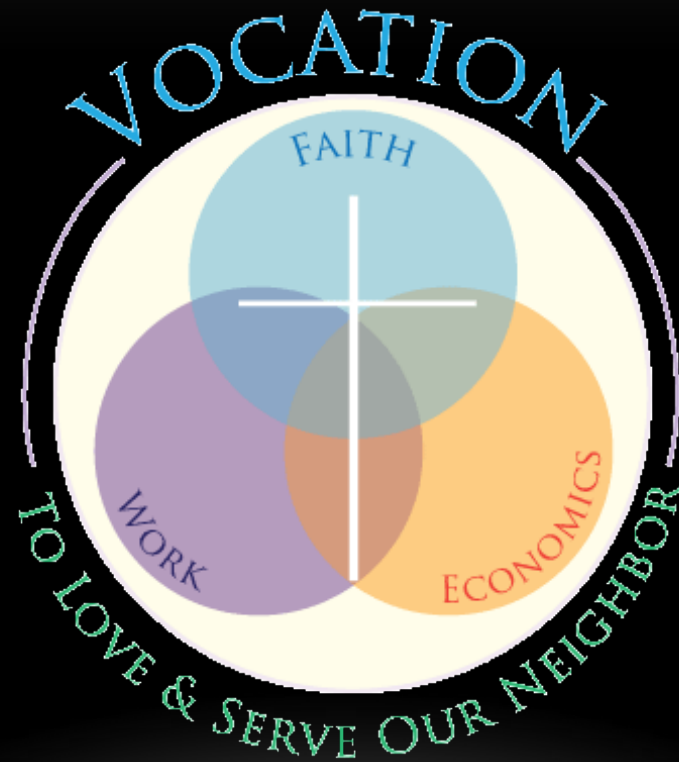
- The question people are asking is “How do I live life well?”
- They need the Church to encourage, shape, and support them “scattered” into the world



WHAT IS PUBLIC CHURCH?

- Baking a Bigger Loaf?
 - Building a public organization with the power to impose values on society for positive transformation
 - Scattering More Yeast?
 - Forming and transforming lives and values to be scattered into every corner of society
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RENEWED EMPHASIS ON VOCATION



LEADERSHIP!



- The Conditions in the Mission Field are beyond our control.
- Creative, Constructive Engagement with those conditions requires leaders equipped for the new era!

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

