

## Assumptions and Propositions

### **1. We are in managerial systems being asked for leadership.**

#### **Management**

1. Stability
2. Past
3. Are we doing things right?
4. Smooths things
5. Satisfies people
6. Decisions

#### **Leadership**

- Change  
Future  
Are we doing the right things?  
Confuses things  
Brings discomfort  
Discernment

Stephen Covey Example:

*The mission is to produce a new path through the jungle. The task needs three people:*

1. Producers: Those folks hacking through with their machetes and actively clearing the path. What's in front of them is the next tree, root or obstacle. Focused on completion of task.
2. Managers: Those folks (smaller number than producers) who are providing direction, encouragement and resources for the producers - folks with the machetes, shovels and backbone. Managers have a longer term view and focus on getting the job done efficiently and accurately as they planned on. The goal of a manager is to encourage and economize the work of the producers. The focus is on making sure the job is getting done and done right (and maybe, even having fun.)
3. Leaders: Even less folks yet, those who are up in a tree and are shouting down to the managers that they are in the wrong jungle. To which the manager replies, "*So what! We're making great time!*" Leaders focus on doing the right job in the first place.

- ➔ Leadership needs to be "Univocal" in leading the church. Too many voices vying for control of direction keeps a church stuck.
- ➔ Leaders and managers need to stay close and communicate often.
- ➔ Leaders push for overall clarity – especially in outcomes.
- ➔ Tension between the leader(s) and management is healthy.
- ➔ As a manager you are clear about whether people are happy or comfortable. Managers focus on system stability so that there are few complaints.
- ➔ You know you're doing a good job as a leader when people are talking about their discomfort.
- ➔ It's normal for people to complain about their discomfort, tension, and confusion about what they don't understand. Count on people feeling a bit disoriented and somewhat confused! That does not mean leadership has failed or made a mistake. It's normal in a changing system to feel disequilibrium, and not because someone's doing something wrong. Too much, though, and the system will naturally sabotage the leader. This is all normal – don't personalize any of it.
- ➔ The role of the governing board is to define what is normal.

## 2. Management while still necessary and effective is now incomplete – More is needed!

- ➔ The cultural shift from group to individual is the shift from the Manager to the Leader.
  - ✓ **GI generation** (and/or Tenure is 20+ years in a congregation) – general issue: The individual's responsibility is to change to the group's expectations...group think, high loyalty to institutions and joining; stewardship is practiced because that's just what you do when you do your part – Pledging appeals to this generation; ultimate outcome for this generation is: being a good, responsible member. Pay your dues, show up for worship (group experience) and conform to what's expected. Sing songs from the General Issue hymnbook. Assumed consensus in decision making; Assumption that all congregations are uniform, just need to transfer membership to another "general issue" congregation – Sunday school, Confirmation, Adult education hour, etc. MANAGEMENT is most needed for this type of system. Clergy are hired to be "excellent" managers of this type of system. Governing Boards/Church Councils manage a more or less unchanging, good system. A spirituality of PLACE is dominant. Church is something you go to, together. Attitude about money: Save, save, save for the rainy day. *Deferred Pleasure – committees are an exercise in deferred pleasure.* FLC example of group conformity: People do not leave the chancel area during Table Communion until everyone is communed.
  - ✓ **Consumer generation** (and/or tenure is 10 years or less) – more individual and custom designed; loyal to personal development and journey; stewardship is to causes not to institutions; not committed to institutions; hungry for authenticity not conformity; many subgroups and diversity from one congregation to the next - no "McLutheran"; LEADERSHIP is needed for this generation; nobody's completely clear on what is emerging from this generation. A spirituality of JOURNEY. Money attitude: Debt management versus save. Teams...not committees. Individual journey. Diversity in musical style, communication media, and learning. Every new generation seeks to correct the excesses of the former generations. Church is boring because it is often limited to an one hour group experience on Sunday morning with general issue songs, looks, and styles of communication.
  - ✓ Both of these generations exist in most congregations. They represent the majority of the congregation.
  - ✓ Each generation wants each other in the church and like each other BUT they CONFOUND each other greatly. Their differences often offend each other.
  - ✓ Personal observation: WELCA all throughout the ELCA bemoans the fact that younger woman are not joining. I think that the above factors explain much of why.
- ➔ Charles Handy: "Convergence/Divergence"
  - ✓ Convergence defined: The same question for everyone and same answer for everyone. Illustration: How long will the flight be to Austin? 4 hours. Same question and same answer.
  - ✓ Divergence = same question posed for everyone, but different answers for each person.
  - ✓ We live in Divergent times. The GI generation, those born before 1950, lived in more convergent times following WWII. Divergent times need leaders.
  - ✓ In today's context, most people have a very shallow theological language, however, they have a very deep preferential language (consumer). People will communicate with clarity what they want, but they don't know basic Biblical or theological language to understand who they are.

**3. Systems produce what they are designed to produce.** My question: What is First Lutheran know for in terms of outcome? What would Lodi community members say? What has been FLC's stated outcome, or what conclusion can one draw from observation about First Lutheran's outcomes? If we continue with the system we have and merely tweak it, you can bet the farm that we will produce very similar outcomes.

- ➔ **If you want different results, you have to change the system.**
- ➔ Systems by their nature seek to change the individual to fit the system. Systems are built to endure and stay balanced. How resistance comes from the existing system: by anyone who resists change, especially in matters of authority, governance and communication.
- ➔ CORE PROCESS – this needs to be defined at First Lutheran Church:  
Input → Throughput → Output (outcome) (from Edward Deming)

**4. When systems don't know what to do, they do what they know. When what they do doesn't work they do it faster, harder and longer.** Translation: Churches get busier doing the things that produce the same outcomes as before, but with higher burnout, stress and dissatisfaction. Churches that are stressed, tired and unclear about outcomes - measure success by their input rather than their output. For example, pointing to how many people are visited and how full our schedule is (all input into a system) is where people focus instead of clearly defined outcomes.

- ➔ LEARNING IS REQUIRED TO GET UNSTUCK.
- ➔ **Clarity means choosing one thing over something else.** This does not produce harmony or comfort. It takes authority and nerve. Which most congregational leaders don't have so they stay stuck. This is why congregations have so many standing committees – they cannot choose the fewer, more strategic things over every other thing currently vying for attention, energy and time. This is because churches are often led by managers who focus on merely improving the system so that the majority of people will be happy. Customer satisfaction, i.e., member harmony, is what drives keeping the system as cluttered as it is. Less is more.
- ➔ A word on controlling management: The tighter you hold the less room there is for God's surprises.

**5. In order to exercise leadership one must exceed the authority that the system is willing to give to the leader.** *This statement was addressed to the clergy. His observations and experience has led him to believe that most clergy stay within the lines drawn for them, and because of that, the system never really changes.*

- ➔ CLARITY IS NOT ABOUT COMFORT.
- ➔ Pastor has power of agenda by framing it. He or she should frame the questions. Agendas should be driven by outcomes and strategic plan, and the three questions below, Who are we?, What is God calling us to be and/or do? And, who is our customer?
- ➔ Board has authority to set direction based on conversation and prayerful discernment.
- ➔ Boards are wired to think that if they don't make a decision then they must not be doing their job. Boards need to do less decision making and more discernment.
- ➔ Governing Boards need to lead NOT manage. Effective boards know the difference between decisions and discernment and balance the two. This is the part of the SYSTEM that needs changing if congregations desire different outcomes.
- ➔ Governing Boards: "Just tell us what to do!" Only to respond with "No Way" and resistance to what is fed back by the leader. What's up with that?

**6. The paradox: “It is common, if not axiomatic, for established organizations to request leadership only to resist it and reward management instead.”** (pg. 4)

- ➔ Clergy are in a double bind. An example given was: the expectation that the pastor increase the amount of care shown especially in visits but to also hear at the same time that he should spend more time in the office.
- ➔ Evaluations are usually summaries of performance over the course of a year or more and built upon management expectations versus leadership expectations. Versus, providing ongoing feedback that is generative and formative.
- ➔ “Interviewed with the expectation that the church will change through this new pastor’s leadership only to be evaluated based on how well she or he managed the system that produced the results that they say wanted changed.”

**7. Mission statements are static. Conversations about mission and mission statements are not.** *What changes organizations is intentional, ongoing conversation: people talking with one another about the Church’s mission [even more importantly, God’s mission.]*

- ➔ Pastor/clergy person’s main job is to frame the conversation and to make sure that the Governing Board is having the conversation at their designated meeting times. Otherwise, clergy have failed in one of their main aspects of their calling by not holding leaders accountable.
- ➔ **There are formation questions that lie at the center of missional conversations:**
  - ✓ *Who are we? (identity)*
  - ✓ *What has called us to do? (purpose)*
  - ✓ *Who is our neighbor? (context)*
  - ✓ Governing Boards need to be in the thick of this conversation.
  - ✓ Examples of congregational governing boards that met weekly to pray and continue conversation. What becomes realistic is being realistic about what it takes to lead a healthy, thriving church but not what most people are willing to do. Why? Because it’s assumed that the existing system (church) is just fine and only needs a monthly meeting to manage.
  - ✓ Gave examples of different types of planning. This is an additional attachment – pdf.

**8. Outcomes are primary tools for leadership and systems alignment. Individual members of the church together with clergy are human resources to be “utilized” to accomplish the defined outcomes.** Without knowing the needed outcome it is difficult to know how to utilize the resource of staff.

Definition of Outcome:

1. An action to be completed.
2. A target to shoot at.
3. A strategy to be developed.

Where do outcomes come from?

1. Mission – Who are we (identity)? What has God called us to do (purpose)? Who’s our neighbor (Context)?
2. Strengths – SWOT analysis
3. Context – Size of church and community. **Size of congregation determines how you do it.** Small, medium or large?

**10. Vital systems need to be steady in purpose and flexible in strategy.** An example from FLC: *Making disciples is non-negotiable, however, WELCA circles are negotiable. Why?*

- ➔ Question: How does a church get to their stated outcomes? By structuring new processes into the congregation’s life!

KEY CONCEPT: Core Process exercise.

## **CORE PROCESS**

What's the CORE PROCESS of First Lutheran Church?

**INPUT** -----☒ Who? If “make disciples” is our core mission, who would be our primary input? It all depends on what we understand as our OUTPUT/Outcome. What kind of disciples? Who do we begin with?

**THROUGHPUT** -----☒ What's our core process? What does it take to make a disciple of Jesus Christ who is fully devoted to him and his cause? What kinds of relationships need to be formed and nurtured? What kind of environments do we need to create and sustain in order to encourage a person to become a follower of Jesus? What experiences form a heart ready to surrender to God's will?

**OUTPUT** -----☒ What does it mean to be a disciple? Fully devoted follower of Jesus? Is this completely measurable? Is it describable?

The whole point of the CORE PROCESS conversation is to bring all of our resources, energy and attention into alignment in achieving our Desired Outcome. It's a matter of FOCUS. Someone's has to be leading the church and its governing board in this directed, focused conversation, or the church will keep spinning its wheels.

**Types of Committees and Purpose of Each**

1. Standing Committees
  - Say “no”
  - Security
  - Keep Status Quo/control
2. Study Committees
  - Discover new avenues for growth
  - Look at possibility
  - No real authority
3. Action Committee
  - Authority to act

\*\*\*Smaller Congregations have shallower hierarchies and strong relational networks.

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