

Two Good Conversations

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There are several reasons I love my call. One of them is that I get to have great stewardship conversations with very interesting people. Yesterday, I had two such conversations, both over a meal.

I had lunch with a Doctor of Ministry student here at Luther Seminary. We talked about several topics related to his thesis, which will be on stewardship. Toward the end of the conversation he asked me, "When it comes to stewardship, what are you curious about? What do you wish you knew more about?"

Those are great questions for someone about to begin a research project. It occurs to me that they are also great questions for a stewardship committee meeting. I suspect your committee could have a very fruitful conversation around the question, "**When it comes to stewardship, what are we curious about? Or, what do we wish we knew more about?**"

In my mind, I can imagine the conversation raising some very important issues. I would also hope that you might set out to explore answers to whatever issues you identified. What are you curious about? Figure that out, and then go learn more.

I had dinner with several stewardship leaders from a congregation in Minneapolis. The food was wonderful, the beverages were adult, and much of the talk was about the important connection between missional clarity and effective stewardship. We talked about how important it is to ground the stewardship message of the congregation in the mission, and how difficult that is if the congregation doesn't have a shared sense of what that mission is.

This might be another conversation for your stewardship committee. What do you understand your congregation's mission to be? Another way to ask the same question is, "**What do you think God is calling you to be and do?**" As you discuss this, do your committee members answer the question in a similar way, or are your answers all over the map? A next step might be to expand this conversation to other members of the congregation. How about exit conversations after worship some Sunday. When people answer the question, "What is our congregation's mission?" are there answers aligned or scattered?

If the answers are scattered, perhaps an important first piece of work for your stewardship committee is to help the congregation through a process that leads to a more aligned sense of mission. When most of you are on the same page about your mission, then telling your stewardship story aligned with that mission can be a powerful message.

Two good meals. Two good stewardship conversations. Not a bad day!