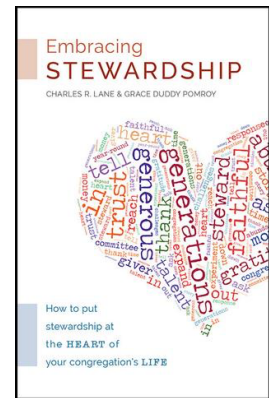


Embracing Stewardship, Charles Lane and Grace Pomroy, 2016



Why I loved the book:

- Authors' diverse perspectives: Charles Lane has been a Lutheran pastor for over 45 years and Grace Pomroy "has been a live for a lot fewer years than that". She also has a more ecumenical perspective and a lay seminary degree.
- "Why is stewardship so stinking difficult?" chapter: identifies all the ways stewardship gets a bad rap, including the business/spiritual split, consumerism, and more.
- Practical tools for embracing stewardship: guidance for where to begin, how to identify challenges, and how to overcome them
- 8 ways to put stewardship at the heart of your congregation's life: helping people understand that stewardship is how we, as followers of Jesus, faithfully travel through life

Points that really resonated with me:

- If we abandon the word *stewardship*, we lose a lot; it would be better to reclaim its wonder (and unlink it from paying the congregation's bills)
- "Trust" vs. "Giff" language: Did God give it to us (hint: no) or did God entrust it to us? How do we behave differently when we think of everything as being entrusted to us by God?
- "Owner" vs. "Steward": As stewards, we ask ourselves, "What would God have me do with this?" instead of "What should I do with this?"
- Theology of abundance: Abundance for all? Not really. Grace speaks to how the systems we've created make God's abundance available in less equitable ways.
- Stewardship challenges: for each challenge, the authors shared a "What might you do?" response
- Design thinking: reframing "gripes and dreams" into positive opportunities. For example, "Young people at our church don't give" becomes "How might we get to know our young adults,

find out what's meaningful to them, and make sure they feel included and valued in the life of our congregation?"

- Steps to take: all support **embracing** stewardship, not avoiding it, not equating it only with money....they're holistic and will help leaders form faithful and generous stewards in all aspects of life, just as stewardship is what we do all the time with all God has entrusted to us
 - Ways to put stewardship at the heart of your congregation's life:
 1. Talk about money when you aren't asking for any
 2. Conduct an excellent annual response program
 3. Tell your congregation's stewardship story to your congregation
 4. Develop a plan for thanking
 5. Expands the ways of giving to the congregation
 6. Talk about stewardship all year
 7. Reach new audiences
 8. Talk about money in two ways: financially and as discipleship
- Which one or two of these do you think holds the greatest possibilities for your congregation?