

# Building Trusting Relationships

See Norma Cook Everist and Craig L. Nesson, *Transforming Leadership – new vision for a church in mission* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008)

- Leadership is fundamentally relational
- Relationships are built on trust
- According to Webster's...
  - “Trust: firm belief or confidence in the honesty, integrity, reliability, justice, etc. of another person...”
- Key Idea: God desires for God’s people: trusting, life-giving relationships with God and with one another so that together we might serve in transformational ways in a world hungering for God’s unconditional love.

# Building Trusting Relationships

*In the beginning... steps to creating trust*

- Listen! Ask... and listen some more!
- Take time for conversation, for learning narratives – the stories of faith journeys
  - Individuals (Supervisor and Intern)
  - Congregation
- Be clear on expectations
  - Reliably meet them
- Establish one's integrity
  - Walk the walk, not just talk the talk
  - Keep confidences

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*In the beginning... steps to creating trust*

- Be aware of baggage
  - Burn me once, shame on you
  - Burn me twice, shame on you
- Key Idea: We do have a trustworthy God. By resting in the arms of this God of covenant faithfulness, we are free from all that would enslave us, so that we can exercise trust even when we feel neither free nor safe.
- Take time to develop the relationship
  - The relationship is an end unto itself



# Building Trusting Relationships

*And it was good... maintaining trusting relationships*

- Spiritual practices strengthen trusting relationships
  - Prayer
  - Meditation
  - Bible Study
  - Devotions
- Maintain your relationships beyond your immediate ministry team and congregation
- Hear and speak the truth in love
  - Communicate honestly
  - Trusting relationships are not devoid of differing opinions or even disagreement

# Building Trusting Relationships

*And it was good... maintaining trusting relationships*

- Respect, respect, respect
- Maintain a trustworthy environment
  - Physically, emotionally, intellectually, culturally
- Congregations are called to respect and trust their leaders
- Leaders are called to respect and trust the people in their congregations
- Trust the giftedness of others
- Trust is earned and requires accountability

# Building Trusting Relationships

*After the fall... losing & restoring trusting relationships*

- Trust can be lost, betrayed, broken
- When trust is gone, systems become sick
- Sometimes “I’m sorry” isn’t enough
- Key Idea: To give up hope is to say we don’t believe in the gospel – in the power of forgiveness or the promise of reconciliation
- Even though trust may not be the same – forgiveness can be had and new patterns of communication learned
- In sum, we participate in God’s trustworthiness while we learn (again) how to trust one another. We live into that (renewed) relationship by being trustworthy, and yes, through caringly and carefully trusting.