

A Word of Encouragement

"Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places."

— Ephesians 3:8-10

Congregational leadership can seem like an impossible task. Congregations are complex collections of people and organizational structures. There are many things to think about, anticipate, plan, and react to every time congregation members gather together for nearly any purpose at all.

This complexity makes serving as a congregational leader challenging. Who can possibly do everything? As we've seen, no one person can excel in all aspects of leadership. Leadership is the combination of gifts that all members bring. Leadership belongs to the whole church, and grows from our interactions with one another. You are not expected to know, and do, and be everything as a leader, but simply to contribute the gifts God has given you for leadership, trusting that God will use them to the greater good of all.

As a congregational leader, you follow a path traveled by many others before you. For almost 2,000 years, Christian congregations have faced these same challenges. Other leaders, no more or less talented than those of today, have served in their congregations during good times and bad, and carried out the mission and ministry of the church in their time and place.

As you take your place in this long procession of leaders, remember that ultimately your congregation is not actually "yours." Rather, it belongs to Christ and falls under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. If you are faithful in using all of your gifts to the full extent you are able and carrying out your leadership responsibilities to the best of your ability, you can trust God to see to it that your efforts will bear fruit for the gospel. The God who has claimed you and blessed you with good gifts, and the members of your congregation who have placed you in this position of leadership, have every confidence in you. You are a child of God!