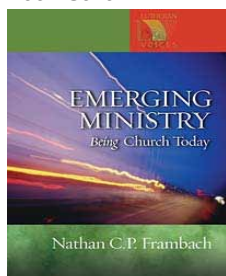


MINISTRY IN TODAY'S CONTEXT

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Emerging ministry: Being church today

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Review Title:
Ministry in today's context

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at:**
<http://www.hts.org.za>

The author is Associate Professor of Youth, Culture and Mission at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. With this publication he gives a voice to a Lutheran contribution to the wider emerging church conversation. Curious about the world in which we live and informed by the emerging church conversation, he asks: 'What does it mean to be church as we live – not as we think or remember or long for, but as we live God's mission today?' He directly and explicitly deals with Christians' concerns about being church in a totally different world than the one we used to know.

He states that the main reason for writing the book is that some questions about God's mission in the world, the ministry of the churches and Christian leadership preoccupied him. His book is an invitation to everyone who is curious, yet confused about what this emergent, post-modern or post-whatever conversation is all about, to enter into what can be called *a whole bunch of conversations*. He offers an entry point free of jargon and full of story. As far as he is concerned, the question is not so much what the church should do, but what the church is, namely: God's people called to God's mission in their own context of space and time.

In five chapters he deals with the following:

1. Living God's mission today: An emerging landscape.
2. Being church today: The gathered and gathering community.
3. God spotting: Evangelical listening and storied living.
4. The emerging church: Postmodern worshipping communities or emerging ecclesiologies?
5. Mobile leadership: Navigating new wilderness roads.

Four questions for reflection and discussion are included at the end of each chapter. The author clearly understands the importance of helping congregations to ask the right questions. In more stable times or when one is dealing with routine or technical problems, leaders typically provide direction by giving answers and furnishing solutions. But in the time we live in, a time that can be called a time of adaptive challenges, more is required of leadership than providing solutions to technical problems. It calls for a more challenging skill: the skill of asking the right questions. The nature of the questions for reflection and discussion included at the end of the chapters contribute greatly to the value of the publication.

I would like to add my voice to those who have said that this book is long overdue. This publication is highly recommended. Everyone who is wrestling with the question of what it means to follow the missional God, being who we are, where we are, will benefit a great deal by reading *Emerging ministry – being Church today*. ■

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