**Module 2: Seminary Didn’t Prepare Me for This: Leadership and Adaptation**

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

**Devotion**

As pastors we often wear so many hats that we can forget who we are. We are educators when we teach conformation; marketers when we encourage non-members to join our fellowship; plumbers when we fix leaky faucets; counselors when we help grieving families or couple separating; CFOs when we deal with budgets; statisticians when we do parochial reports. It’s easy to forget that we are called to a Word and Sacrament ministry when so many details of church life are not centered around the Word and Sacraments. On top of that, we compare ourselves to others and find ourselves wanting. We don’t advocate for justice to the degree that Martin Luther King Junior did. Nor do we win souls for Christ like Billy Graham. Even at our best we feel we are underperforming.

Bolsinger asks us to be competent in the stewardship of (1) scripture and tradition, (2) souls and communities, and (3) teams and tasks. He asks us to be leaders who “create structures that hold people together through the very conflictive, passionate, and sometimes awful process of addressing questions for which there aren’t easy answers” (65). Likewise, he asks us to cultivate the “ability to innovate, to be creative, to consider new options, to ‘shift habits, beliefs or values’ all grounded in a ‘sturdy, trustworthy space’ fashioned out of healthy relationships” (65).

If managing or leading the church came down solely to me, all be lost. But, thank God, it is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is Christ’s church, not my church. Belonging to Christ I need not lose my identity in the various hats I find myself wearing. Instead, my identity springs from my baptism. I am claimed by Christ as one of his own. I’m empowered by his promise never to leave or forsake me. I may feel challenged about my competency to lead, but I can trust that I’m not bearing my congregation on my shoulders. Instead, Christ is. I can let him lead. In that freedom, I can experiment with new ideas for how to move my congregation forward. In Christ, there is no compulsion but only freedom.

**Prayer**

*Gracious God, increase my ability to discern what is important from what isn’t and so help me invest my energy in the former and not the latter. Thank you for the sacred privilege of providing me my current call. Help me to live out my ministry faithfully each day. Amen.*