

FROM THE DESK OF BISHOP MAAS

CHURCH LEADERSHIP



“If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.”

That scene, rooted in servanthood, doesn’t exactly scream “leadership” to most people. Yet it’s a leadership text. You’ll note a recurring theme of Church Leadership throughout this month’s newsletters. Some bristle at talk of leadership in the church, insisting that it’s much more important to focus on followership. Certainly as disciples that’s our primary role, and we will always have much to learn about how to follow faithfully. But being a faithful follower doesn’t contradict being a faithful leader.

As a synod, we invest a lot of time, energy and resources in identifying, raising up, forming and supporting leaders. What we consistently strive to do is encourage leadership after the model of Jesus. Like him on that last night of his life, good leaders lead by example; they know the power of humility; they are self-aware; they communicate. In this one simple scene alone, Jesus underscores the need for leadership in the church: “I have set you an example, that you should also do as I have done to you.”

No matter our role in the church, the need to learn about and step into leadership falls to all of us. Whether it’s leading one other person to know how to share a volunteer duty I have, or leading an entire congregation through massive change, opportunities for leadership fall to each of us. It can be unexpected and it can be daunting, particularly if it involves leading through change. But the call to leadership can’t be ignored. We live in a chaotic time. Clear, competent leadership is essential.

I encourage you to look again to the example of Jesus to ask, “how can I follow his example?” And I encourage you to be open to discovering the many opportunities for developing your leadership skills that you’ll find in these newsletters and throughout the Nebraska Synod.