

## Preface

Beginning in the 90s, “maintenance” ministry has been frowned upon. Who wants to be a maintenance church when you can be a mission-driven church? Somehow these two have been placed in opposition to one another, as if a church must decide which they will choose to be. Is it possible a church’s mission can be maintenance?

This is not your typical stewardship book. Beyond time, talents, and treasures, *Paddling in Tandem* suggests that to be faithful, congregations must first be good stewards of God’s Word, People and Things. Using rafting analogies, *Paddling in Tandem* advocates for a whole-life, whole-congregation approach to congregational life, where everyone must pull together towards the goal (Philippians 3:14). A congregation that pulls together will inspire others to jump onto the raft to weather the storms ahead. The church is often described as a ship or an ark.<sup>1</sup> In this book, the church will be described as a raft, nimble enough to traverse through an aggressively changing world. *Paddling in Tandem* offers practical and theological advice for congregations looking for how to navigate the rapids of cultural change.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://witness.lcms.org/2023/dont-give-up-the-ship/>.