



ARTICLES

Pathways to Maturity - Poop & Leadership

By Pastor Kevin Van Wyk

“Be diligent in these matters [watching your life, doctrine, and ministry]; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.” (1 Timothy 4:15 NIV)

In July’s newsletter, I explained that I am thrilled to see the [Alliance organize pathways](#) toward ordination. I get that most of you have no desire to be ordained, but you should have a desire to be mature, and the pathways to pastoral ordination lays out the [foundational competencies](#) for ministry leadership really well. In the coming months, I will walk through the major areas of spiritual maturity outlined by the Alliance, so that you can take steps to progress toward maturity and become more like Christ.

In August, I covered Spiritual formation and now we will hit on **Leadership/Administration**.

The Alliance Pathway has 12 Leaders/Administration competencies to be “certified” in this area. There are three competencies to be ordained. (Anyone who is ordained in the Alliance is expected to have an intentional plan to complete the other competencies and be certified.)

The three core Leadership/Administration competencies might be

summarized as submission, tech, and strengths. These are the three essentials for any pastor. I'd say they are essential for elders, deacons, and church staff too. But they are also worth developing for everyone. Let's consider each one.

Submission and Servant Leadership:

I am learning submission. We've jumped into foster care with a desire to submit ourselves to Christ. For us that is owning the call in Scripture for us to care for the orphans and widows (James 1:27). It also involves a surrendering to the Spirit's nudge and a call to us to step up and take in some kids.

At a practical level this is harder than we imagined (and more rewarding). Ladies, don't mock me for this... but this morning, Stephanie was discipling a couple ladies on Zoom and I was left to get our adorable 4yr old and 14month old going. I had to resist my to-do list and just focus on giving kids attention. Now, I love this time, yet everything in me says "go, get work done." So that was hard enough, but then the diaper started to smell. I hate diapers. No really, my stomach churns and I nearly toss my cookies. But, I submitted to Christ and served my wife (who does nearly all the diaper changing) and changed that diaper. **I gagged a bit, but learned a bit more about truly having a servant-heart, as well.**

Consider some of the questions from the Alliance Pathways on submission...

1. Do you submit to Jesus Christ? What are some specific ways you have submitted (or are submitting) to His almighty will in your life?
2. Do you submit to those in positional authority over oneself? What are some specific ways you have submitted to those who have a position of authority over you? Name at least two persons, including someone in ministry.
3. Do you submit to fellow Christians in mutual submission? What are some specific ways you have laid down your will to other Christians who do not necessarily have a claim to authority over you?

The Pathway gives this challenge... Devote four specific days to submission. For each day, concentrate on what it means to submit to a certain

person you will be with that day. Without telling the person, consider ways to submit to them. At least one of those days should be committed to submission to someone in positional authority over you (e.g., a boss, a parent) and one day someone who is not (e.g., a Christian in your care, a subordinate employee, a friend). Record what you learn about submission when you are actively, voluntarily submitting yourself to another person.

Office Technologies:

I love that this is a requirement for ordination, even though I feel more and more inept in this area. Software apps are changing constantly and they are never getting more simple. They add features and options, hiding the things you want behind three dots or some other stupid icon.

I confess, today, I wasted time trying to post a video on Facebook and finally had Megan, our office manager, come in and help. She quickly pointed me in the right direction and got it done. She says it worked, but I've not seen the post.

Tech can be incredibly frustrating, but if you want to have any influence or even a relationship with the next generation, you must use technology. So, show some humility and ask a kid to help you learn how to use your phone.

Stephanie's mom just learned to set up some text groups, so she can regularly text grandkids to pray for them. You can do this! Learn some new tech, so you can increase your influence and share the good news.

Awareness of Personality, Gifts, Strengths:

Exhibiting an awareness of one's own personality, spiritual gifts, and team-related strengths, is another essential for ministry. **If you don't know about yourself, you'll waste time doing things others can do better and faster.**

Fortunately for you, Alto Reformed Church has a fabulous tool for this. We've purchased surveys for you that cover all three of these areas, so it's free to you. Check it out at www.altoreformedchurch.org/discover-your-strengths.html. If you have already done these assessments, then dig into the results. AssessMe.org gives great insight into your specific personality, gifts and leadership style. **It's not as painful as changing a poopy diaper** - in my

opinion.

These three core competencies are good for pastors and good for you. So I urge you to learn something about submission, tech, and your strengths this month, so you can have a greater impact on your world.

PRAYER: Lord, help me grow as a leader. Remind me to serve others with humility, always submitting to your will. Help me understand technology and be willing to learn. Guide me in knowing who I am so I can serve most effectively for your kingdom. Amen.

The Promise Keeper

By Jessa Ter Beest

Youth Group Theme:

The Promise Keeper

Acts 4:12

There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.

In a world where promises are broken and truth is hard to find, our students need to know that Our God is The Promise Keeper. Here are some of the promises we'll be talking about in youth group this year.

God promised that if we search for Him we will find Him ([Deuteronomy 4:29](#)). He is not playing hard-to-get. "Our God is near us whenever we pray to him" ([Deuteronomy 4:7](#)).

God promised that His love will never fail ([1 Chronicles 16:34](#)). He is faithful in every way.

God promised blessing for all who will delight themselves in His Word ([Psalm 1:1-3](#)). Simple faith has its rewards.

God promised salvation to all who believe in His Son ([Romans 1:16-17](#)). There is no greater blessing than the free gift of God's salvation.

God promised that all things will work out for good for His children ([Romans](#)

[8:28](#)). This is the broader picture that keeps us from being dismayed by present circumstances.

God promised comfort in our trials ([2 Corinthians 1:3–4](#)). He has a plan, and one day we will be able to share the comfort we receive.

God promised peace when we pray ([Philippians 4:6–7](#)). His peace is protection. It will “guard your hearts and your minds in Christ.”

God promised to supply our needs ([Matthew 6:33](#); [Philippians 4:19](#)). Not that we get everything we *want*, but our *needs* will be taken care of. We are more valuable than the birds, and our Heavenly Father feeds them ([Matthew 6:26](#)).

Jesus promised rest ([Matthew 11:28–30](#)). Burdens are lifted at Calvary.

Jesus promised eternal life to those who trust Him ([John 4:14](#)). The Good Shepherd also promised to hold us securely: “No one will snatch them out of my hand” ([John 10:28](#)).

Jesus promised His disciples power from on high ([Acts 1:8](#)). In this power, they “turned the world upside down” ([Acts 17:6](#)).

Jesus promised that He will return for us ([John 14:2–3](#)). From then on, we will be with Him always.

There are many more promises of God that could be listed. All of them find their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. “No matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ” ([2 Corinthians 1:20](#)).

Equipping Children & Families Update

By Lynnae Loomans

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Alto Fair Fun Run. Thanks to the church for sponsoring it. Now it's time to get back into the routines and schedules of school, sports, and church activities. Bible class begins Wednesday, Sept 6th from 6:45-7:30 and Sunday School begins Sunday, Sept 10th at 10:45-11:30. I'm so excited to see everyone and start the year off. Thanks to all my volunteers this year who are taking the time out of their busy

lives to help these children grow closer to Christ.

MESSAGES

The Golden Lifers will begin their year with breakfast at 9:30am on October 4th at Go Dutch Solutions - all are welcome. Carl VanderKooi will lead us in a study on The Attributes of God starting on October 11 at 9:30am in the Consistory room.

We'd like to thank Pastor Ted for his many years of leading in Bible study. You've been a blessing to us.

Thank you to all those who sent cards and visited me but most of all for your prayers. A big thank you to those who helped me move. All was so much appreciated. God is good.

-Marilyn Westerveld

Psalm 121:1-2 I lift my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

A sincere and blessed thank you for all the helpers, visitors and prayers that have been bestowed upon mom and our family recently and throughout the many years that our family has been a member of this special church family. Mom does not always remember the visits or calls, but she really appreciates them in the moment and her face lights up. All the beautiful cards she receives are hung up on her door so she can look at, and read, them often. Thank you for all the blessed moments, visits, calls, cards, gifts and prayers.

With spiritual love,

Annice Hopp and family

EVENTS

Mark your calendar...

Alto Reformed Church

September 2023

— **Steps to Freedom in Christ**

September

01

Join us from 6:30-9:30pm in the Youth Room. "The Steps to Freedom in Christ" will give you practical tools and biblical principles for you and your children to overcome negative thoughts, irrational feelings, habitual sins, and spiritual struggles.

— **Bible Class & HS Youth Group Kickoff**

September

06

1st - 8th graders are invited to Bible Class at 6:45-7:30pm.
All 9th-12th graders are invited to High School Youth Group at 7:30-9pm.

— **Sunday School & MS Youth Group Kickoff**

September

10

Everyone 3 years old and up is invited to Sunday School at 10:45-11:30am.
All 6th-8th graders are invited to Middle School Youth Group at 6:30-8pm.

— **Women's Bunco Night**

September

15

Come for a fun evening of fellowship and bunco at 7pm. Come by 6:30pm to snack and hang out before the game starts. Signup at the Information Center.

— **Road Rally**

September

23

Put new batteries in your flashlight and fill your gas tanks! It's time for the Road Rally on Sept 23rd at 7pm! Head to the Information Center and sign up your group of 4 for an adventurous night of fun!

— **See You at the Pole**

September

27

See You at the Pole is a time of student-led prayer that happens at each school before the school day begins on the 4th Wednesday of September. Students lift up their friends, family, nation, teachers, and school to God.

For detailed information:

Call 920.346.5505 or email office@altoreformedchurch.org

NEWS

Births:

8/21/23 - Amity Kay, daughter of Ryan & Breanna VandeZande

UPDATES:

Alto Staffing Progress:

The position is now posted and Slingshot is receiving applications. You can share this link with potential applicants... <https://slingshotgroup.qwilr.com/Profile-Alto-Reformed-Church-Associate-Pastor-Waupun-WI-Twigg-hcpEvXELT9qb>

Also, Ashlan Bruins will be stepping into our Intern position this fall. The staff is very excited to have her involved!

Alliance Cluster & Network:

On July 26, Kevin, three elders, and others from the Wisconsin Cluster joined a meeting of the Upper Mississippi Valley Cluster as they began to organize as a Network. We were being invited to join them. On August 29, Our Wisconsin Cluster met to discuss this and other matters. We concluded that we did not have a compelling reason to shift from the Midwest (previously called the Dakota) Network. We're excited about the work in both groups and trust they will be working together. For the time being, we will keep connecting with the Midwest Network.

We are excited for some other developments too... Faith Reformed Church in Wisconsin Rapids installed Jeffery Visser as their pastor this past week and First Reformed (Waupun) hired Wyatt Guell as their youth director.

Alliance Gathering:

Marty and I enjoyed the event in Denver and came away encouraged about many things going on in the Alliance. You can watch videos of the whole thing here <https://arc21.org/packet>.