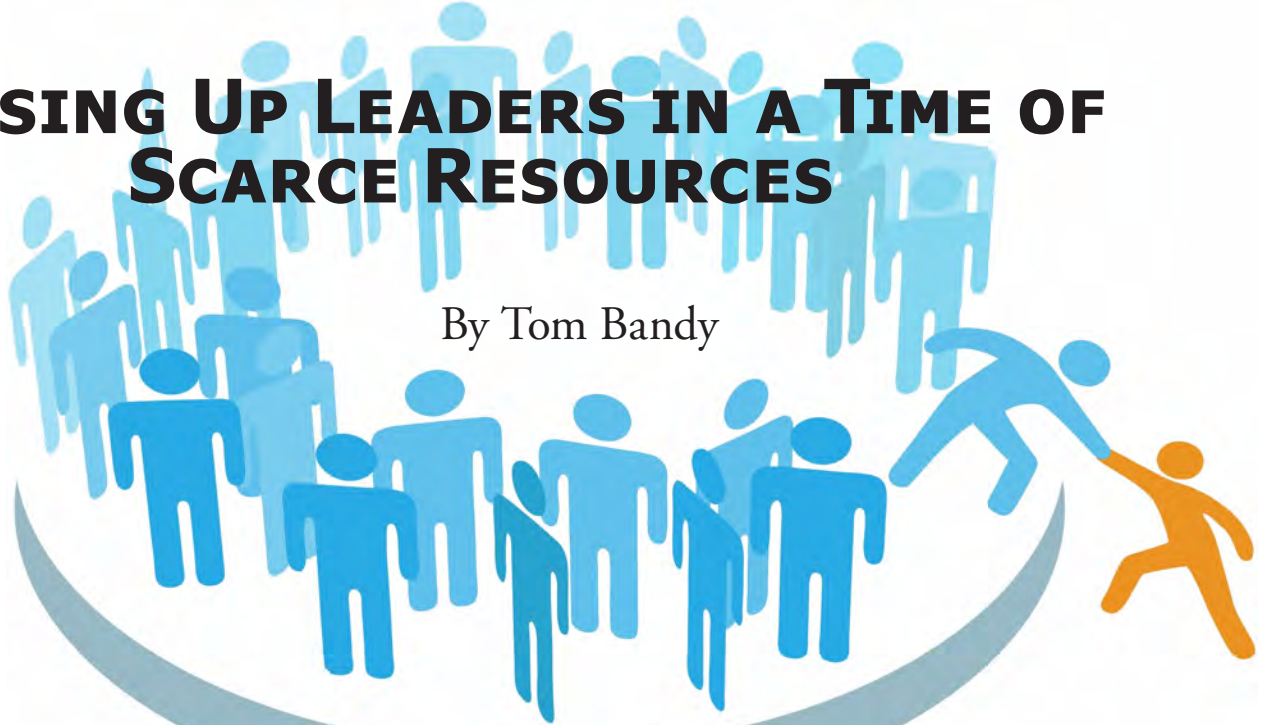


RAISING UP LEADERS IN A TIME OF SCARCE RESOURCES

By Tom Bandy



Australian and Canadian churches have long been familiar with the leadership challenges that are besetting American churches. It may take us awhile, but after fifty years of declining Christendom we are finally learning some lessons about creative leadership development.

We know that among typical established churches that are not prone to tithing, it requires about 125 truly active members and 100 regular worshippers (of whom 60 percent of the adults participate in midweek small groups) to sustain the minimum salary of a full time pastor. That also assumes a missional attitude that connects with about 100–200 visitors or seekers each year, and supports a major year-round signature outreach ministry. That may vary somewhat in the different economies of Western countries, and with different health plan subsidies from denominations, but I think it fits the situation of Protestant churches in (for example) Switzerland, Germany, Ontario, British Columbia, South Australia, Queensland, Kentucky, and Louisiana.

The fact that over 80 percent of established churches fail to meet this minimal standard (and most of those prefer *not* to merge, cluster, or close) reveals the urgency with which we are exploring how to focus part-time paid staff and how to equip volunteers. For the moment, I am not talking about church planting, alternative “ICC’s” (Intentional Christian Communities), faith-based nonprofits, or faith-based for-profits. These are all topics for different articles.

There are four fundamental strategies to raise up leaders in a time of scarce resources. *Churches must do all four!* You can’t just do some of them and ignore the others.

Here they are:

- Essential Services;
- Empowered Teams;
- Minimal Sidetracks;
- Stewardship as Spiritual Life.

The ability to raise up new leaders emerges from the synergy of doing all four things together. The bad news is that this is a huge challenge for small, aging, established churches. The good news is that those that succeed will also go deeper and further in Christ than they ever previously imagined.

Essential Services

Churches all know that they need to cut back on staff salaries and honorariums, but often do not know what to cut and who to keep. For example, I know churches that reduce the pastor’s income by a third, and yet continue to pay honorariums to bookkeepers, caretakers, landscapers, and choral conductors. Or for example, I

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Tom Bandy mentors Christian leaders for ancient mission in the contemporary world. He coaches congregations of all denominations, and is the author of numerous books on spiritual life and church growth. Reach Tom through www.ThrivingChurch.com.