

MISSION: **POSSIBLE** FOR THE SMALL CHURCH

Simplifying Leadership, Structure, and Ministries in Small Churches



Presenters:



Blake Bradford, D.Min.

District Superintendent and Co-author of
Mission Possible Series



Amy Ezell

Director of Communication and
Congregational Vitality



Simplifying Leadership, Structure,
and Ministries in Small Churches

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Kay Kotan & Blake Bradford



UNITED METHODISTS OF
Arkansas



Opening Prayer
Amy Ezell

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Agenda

Equipping leaders in
small churches for a
simplified approach
to reach more people

Introduction

1. Simplifying Leadership
2. Simplifying Structure
3. Simplifying Ministries

Quick Review

Next Steps

GROUP TIME

What do you hope
to leave with this
afternoon?

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Introduction - Amy Ezell



- What's a small church?
- The Vital Role of the small church
- Strengths of the small church

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Contextual Leadership & Ministry - Amy Ezell

- Rural
- Towns
- Cities



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Leading the Small Church - Amy Ezell

- Superpower of Relationships
- Family Systems
- Conflicts and Clashes



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PART 1

Simplifying Leadership

Pastoring the Small Church

Simplifying Leadership, Structure,
and Ministries in Small Churches

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**Coach and
Spiritual Leader,
not CEO**

**Lead from the
porch swing,
not the
boardroom**

Leading the Small Church

Simplifying Leadership, Structure,
and Ministries in Small Churches

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**Small churches
are NOT
Small Big
Churches**

HEY NEIGHBOR!

Turn to your neighbor and name one ministry that may have run its course and needs to be left behind so your church can move forward.

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PART 2

Simplifying Structure

Two Common Governance Types In Small Churches

“We are ALL the Board”

Problems:

If everyone is in charge, no one is actually responsible.

Possible legal consequences: land, banking, BOD processes

The good goals of transparency and “buy in” are accomplished at the expense of missional leadership

“Keeping up Appearances” with all the BOD committees

Problems:

The membership size means folks are serving on three or four different administrative committees, making governance a cumbersome burden.

The responsibilities of each committee are often a blurry mess

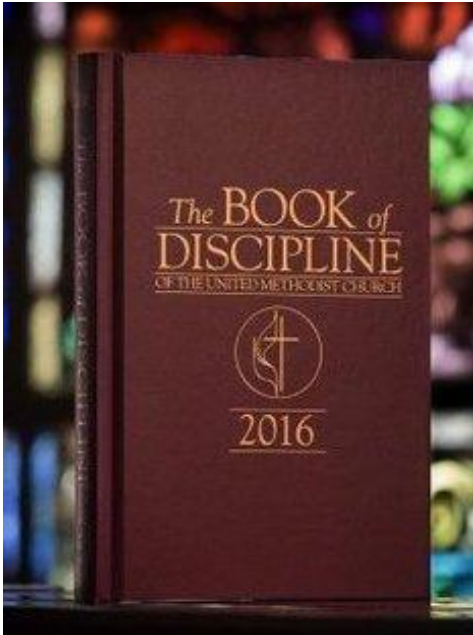
The whole exercise seems artificial

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¶247.2 “modify the organizational plans”



The charge conference, the district superintendent, and the pastor shall organize and administer the pastoral charge and churches according to the policies and plans herein set forth. When the membership size, program scope, mission resources, or other circumstances so require, the charge conference may, in consultation with and upon the approval of the district superintendent, modify the organizational plans, provided that the provisions of ¶ 243 are observed.

Recommended Simplified Structure

Six to Nine members elected by the Charge Conference

- All of the six to nine members (plus pastor) serve simultaneously as a unified PPRC, Trustees, Finance, & Church Council
- Must also include in the total:
 - Board Chair #
 - Lay member to Annual Conference #
 - Lay Leader #
 - Optional UWF
 - Optional UMM
 - Optional Youth
- Trustees must be 18+ years of age
- Chair, Lay Member of AC, and Lay Leader can be combined positions.
- Note that a separate and independent Nominating Committee is still required.
- Note that Treasurer and Financial Secretary are functional, not governance, positions

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What is Involved? One Board, Several Hats

One Leadership Board is responsible for leadership and governance.

All administrative committee responsibilities and functions are vested in the Leadership Board.

Existing ministry teams continue.

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While the SAS Leadership Board “wears all the hats” of the **Church Council**, **SPRC**, **Finance**, and **Trustees**, these *Book of Discipline* functions are now approached in a **holistic** way, with the SAS Board able to claim opportunities and face challenges with all the resources and authority of the congregation.



is really a
holistic
leadership lens



GROUP TIME

How might this shift to a single board help bring clarity?

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Stay in Your Lane



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Four Responsibilities of Governance

Stewardship

Tending to the fiduciary responsibilities and alignment of God's people and resources

Generative

Discerning God's dream and working to set the congregation's next steps

Strategic

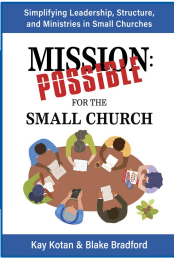
Leveraging the resources to be aligned with congregational priorities

Accountable Leadership

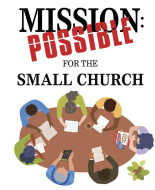
Setting a culture of well-aligned, impact-focused ministry



Small Church using SAS

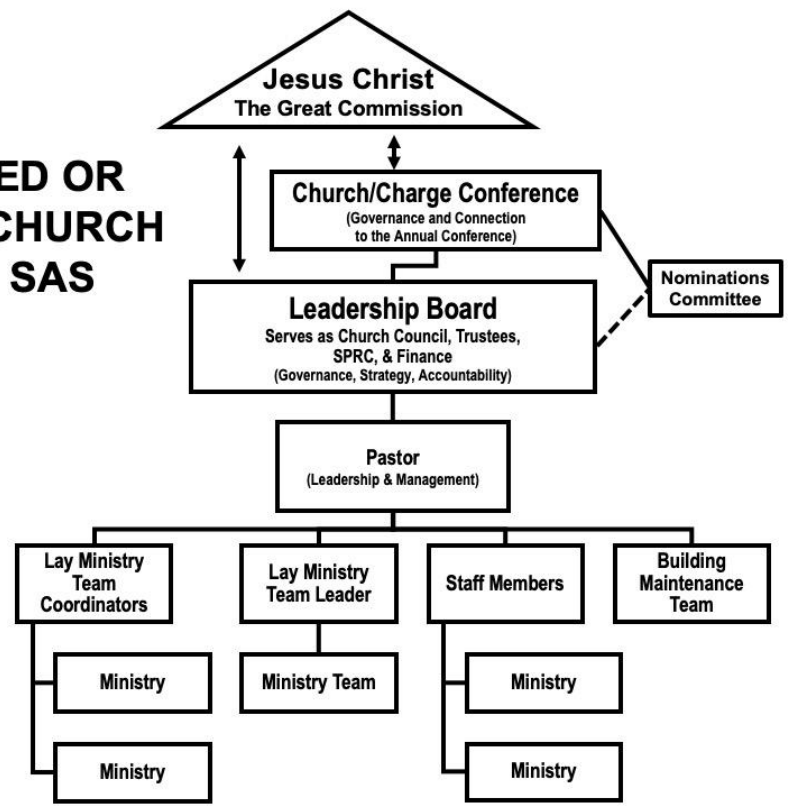


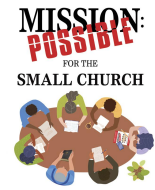
Having a bivocational or “part-time” pastor means that oversight of particular ministries (i.e. ministry teams) will need to be clearly defined



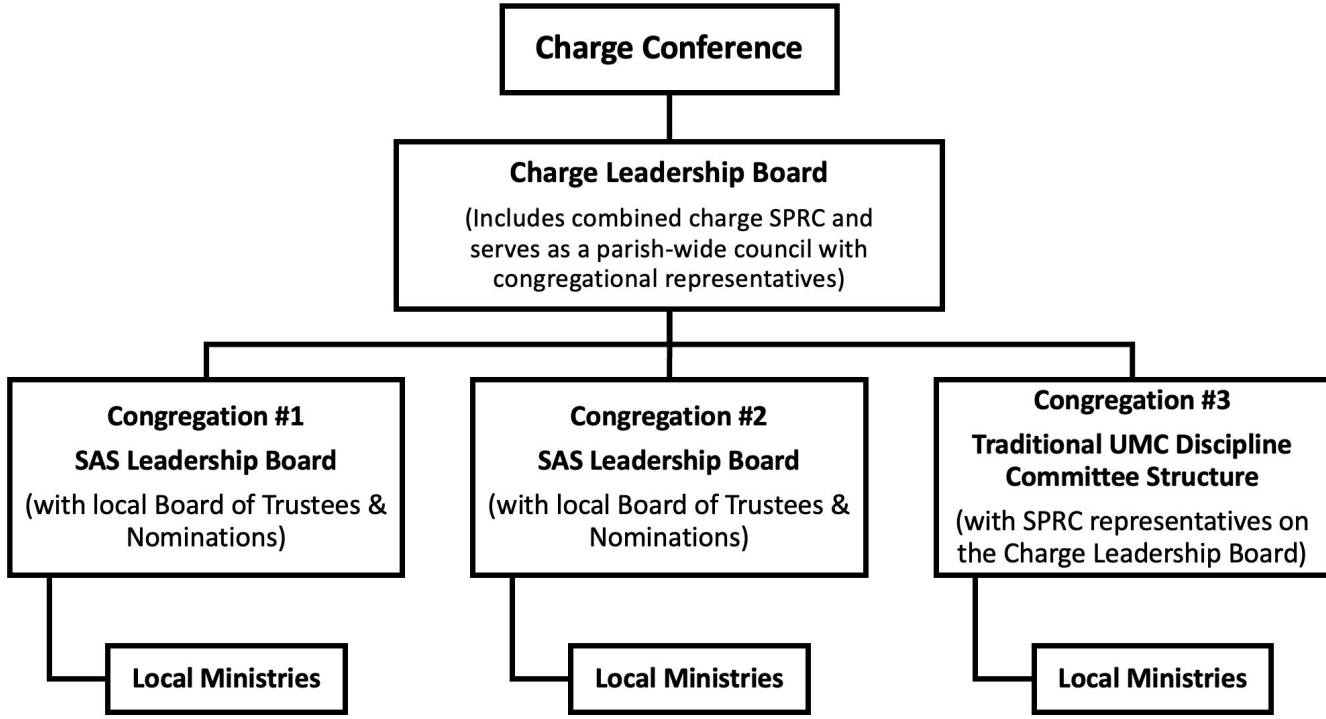
Mid-Sized or Larger Church using SAS

**MID-SIZED OR
LARGER CHURCH
USING SAS**





Multi-Point Charge or Cooperative Parish using SAS



The Charge Leadership Board's role expectations and (limits of) authority of the will need to be clearly defined.

Each congregation maintains its own separate legal identity, so each has its own board of trustees.

Toolbox or Briefcase?



**Launch a Building
Maintenance Team!**



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Small Church Leadership Board at Work

Use a
template
*Functional
Agenda*
to stay on
track
and help
everyone
stay in
their lane

- ❖ Opening Prayer
- ❖ Spiritual Formation
- ❖ Leadership Development
- ❖ Consent Calendar Work
- ❖ Fiduciary Work
- ❖ Missional Accountability Work
- ❖ Planning Work
- ❖ Pressing Issues and Problem Solving Work
- ❖ Executive Session (PPRC or legal work)
- ❖ Communication Work
- ❖ Closing Prayer

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Leadership Covenant: Rules for the Road



1. Decisions are Made by the Board Members Who Show Up
2. Leadership Board Members are Disciples of Jesus and Fiduciary Officers
3. We Will Speak the Truth in Love (*Ephesians 4:15*)
4. We Will Balance Transparency and Confidentiality
5. We Are a Leadership Board with a Unified Voice

*Mission Possible for
the Small Church
pgs 94-98; 179-181*

Leadership Covenant: Rules for the Road

Decisions are Made by the Board Members Who Show Up

1

- Election by the Charge Conference
- Quorum
- Attendance expectations
- Teleconference/ Zoom Meetings
- Executive Session rules
- Prepare by reading meeting pocket
- Don't delay meetings b/c someone is missing



*Mission Possible for
the Small Church
pgs 94-98; 179-181*

Leadership Covenant: Rules for the Road

Leadership Board Members are Disciples of Jesus and Fiduciary Officers

2

- Carry, support and promote the mission & vision
- Role models for the congregation (membership vow expectations)
- Encourage, support, & pray for pastor and board
- Offer and receive accountability
- Conflicts of interest
- No unique personal authority
- Fiduciary expectations: good faith, loyalty, obedience to the BOD



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the Small Church
pgs 94-98; 179-181*

Leadership Covenant: Rules for the Road

We Will Speak the Truth in Love (Eph 4:15)

3

- Communication will be respectful, open, and honest. No “parking lot” conversations.
- Expect conflict and use Matthew 18 for conflict transformation. No secret meetings
- Always represent the Leadership Board
- Hold one another on the board accountable as disciples and church members
- Hold the pastor accountable in collaboration with the Bishop and DS



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pgs 94-98; 179-181*

Leadership Covenant: Rules for the Road

We Will Balance Transparency and Confidentiality

4

- Open Meetings within certain limits (§ 722)
- Confidentiality in PPRC/SPRC role
- Mindfulness about personnel conversations outside the Collective Board / DS
- Keeping executive session minutes
- Pastor present for all PPRC/SPRC business



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Leadership Covenant: Rules for the Road

5

We Are a Leadership Board with a Unified Voice

- Invest in board discussions with vigor and passion
- Don't undermine decisions once made.



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pgs 94-98; 179-181

Three Phases to Simplified Accountable Structure

Discerning

3-6 months (First Quarter of Year)

- DS ¶247.2 Consultation
- Conversation in the local church
- Coaching Begins
- Formal DS ¶247.2 Request
- Discernment of the DS, congregation, and its leaders if this is the right model in the right season for the church
- Church Conference

Equipping

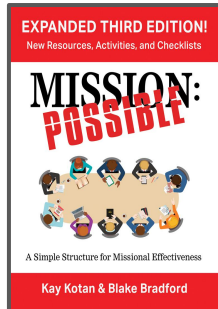
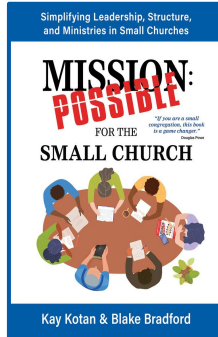
Begin mid-year, before Charge Conference Season

- Coaching continues in an training capacity
- Training Nominations Committee
- Charge Conference for Nominations
- Training the new Leadership Board to begin service January 1
- Annual equipping is crucial

Implementing

January-December (First Full Year of SAS)

- Coaching as resourcing, accountability, and reflection
- Use a new style of Agenda and distribute a Leadership Packet
- Creating the initial guiding principles, leadership covenant, policies and procedures
- First strategic ministry planning retreat
- Living into both the technical and adaptive leadership changes in this model
- Training Nominations to continue the model



MISSION: POSSIBLE 3+ A Simple Structure for Missional Effectiveness | Kay Kotan • Blake Bradford

EXPANDED THIRD EDITION!

New Resources, Activities, and Checklists

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A Simple Structure for Missional Effectiveness

Kay Kotan & Blake Bradford



Simplifying Leadership, Structure,
and Ministries in Small Churches

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*"If you are a small
congregation, this book
is a game changer."*
Douglas Powe

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PART 3

Simplifying Ministries



Eight Keys for Simple Ministry Planning

1. We, Not They
2. Get Face to Face
3. Evangelism is Not an Extra
4. Dream Up to Team Up
5. Deep, Not Wide
6. When in Doubt, Experiment
7. Simple with a Signature
8. Keep Accountable

**KEEP IT
SIMPLE**

A white hand cursor icon with a black outline is positioned over the word 'SIMPLE' in the large text graphic, pointing towards the bottom right corner of the word.

Pages 117-128, 189

Simple Ministry Planning

1. We, Not They

Use all your “assets” -- “All Hands on Deck” is the rule, not the exception, so plan with all active attendees of all ages being involved in implementing the ministry.

Also see #4 - Some of the assets God has given your church for ministry are not “in the church.” They are in your neighbors, local schools, nonprofits, other churches, and local businesses



1. We, Not They



Gifts, Assets, and Skills:

**Ministry Engagers
+ Ministry Provider**

Simple Ministry Planning

2. Get Face to Face

The gift of small churches, however, is intimacy—doing life together as disciples of Jesus.

Focus on building relationships, not complex systems.

Plan ministries that encourage this sort of intimacy and community as a reflection of God's very Triune nature.



2. Get Face to Face



You can't put
"authentic caring"
in the budget

Church of the Resurrection 2018
Bradford, "Small Church, Big Impact"

2. Get Face to Face

Instead of....

Get Personal!



2. Get Face to Face



Ministry With,
Not For

Simple Ministry Planning

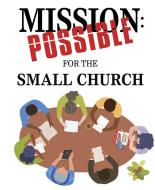
3. Evangelism is not an Extra

Embed evangelism (reaching new people for Jesus) into every ministry, every event, and every opportunity.



3. Evangelism is not an Extra

Be intentional with
invitational
language such as
“plus one,” “fill the
empty chair,” and
“bring a friend with
a hammer



3. Evangelism is not an Extra



Digital Bridge Events

Simple Ministry Planning

4. Dream Up a Team Up

Partner with local institutions and nonprofits, especially for organizing the infrastructure for community ministry, leaning on their expertise & organization:

- The local community itself is strengthened by building relationships inside and outside the congregation.
- The church can share or even offload logistics to partners, allowing the congregation to focus on relational ministry.
- The church can rely on expertise & access from partners.
- Teaming up can often produce a larger Kingdom impact.



4. Dream Up a Team Up



Discovering Community Assets

HEY NEIGHBOR!

Turn to your neighbor and name a local “asset” outside the church.

How could you partner up for ministry impact?

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Simple Ministry Planning

5. Deep, Not Wide

Not even the largest church can “connect with everybody.” With whom is God calling you to build relationships?

Choose one niche and go deep relationally and with ministries for this one group.

You’ll reach more people using fewer resources without burning your volunteers out.



Simple Ministry Planning

6. When in Doubt, Experiment



Allow yourselves to try ministry experiments.

In a season when many of our inherited ways of doing ministry are no longer effective, try something new every season or at least twice a year.

Sometimes experiments fail; that's ok. At worst, you will learn something. At best, folks will discover and experience the love of Jesus Christ.

Group Time

Imagine!

What new ministry do you feel a stirring of the Spirit to try, with the congregation you have?

If money was not the issue, what would you want to do?

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Simple Ministry Planning

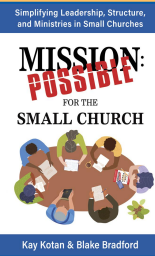
7. Simple with a Signature

Instead of having multiple low-impact ministries, take a simple approach by discerning and focusing on one or two signature ministries.

These signature ministries may change with the seasons or have a cycle of a few years, but focusing on a few high-impact signature ministries will build momentum and community awareness.



7. Simple with a Signature



Instead of....



Your kitchen only has a few burners



Rightsize your ministries and plans for the size and capacity of your congregation

Stay focused!



Simple Ministry Planning

8. Keep Accountable

Be good stewards of God's people and resources by pruning ministries regularly and using the "Accountable Leadership Cycle" to keep the church on track and always learning.

Accountability is not about "blame" - it's about learning and stewarding the church's future.

Staying sustainable and focused keeps ministries more impactful and serving disciples away from ministry burnout.



Purpose
Mission &
Vision for
IMPACT

DISCERN
+ Research

REFLECT:
Leading and
Learning

PLAN
+ Set Goals

EVALUATE:
Fruitful Impact

IMPLEMENT:
Ministry Impact

Impact-Focused Accountable Leadership Cycle

What are your systems
for holding ministries
& leaders accountable
to the church's mission?

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Keeping it Simple:

RELATIONSHIPS are the Key to Simplifying Ministry

1. Leverage local assets to create Partnerships for Mission & Evangelism
2. Leverage UMC Connectionalism:
 - Shared Ministries
 - Cooperative Parishes
 - Multi-Point Charges for Missional Purposes
3. Be Relational:
 - Ministries
 - Discipleship
 - Worship
 - Congregational Care
 - Fellowship



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Simplifying Small Church Operations

Finances & Bookkeeping Church Office Policies & Guidelines



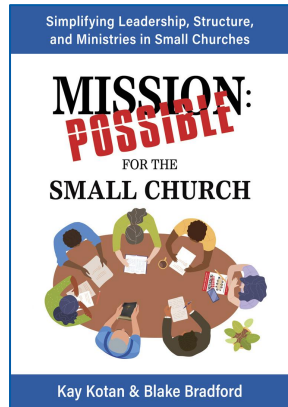
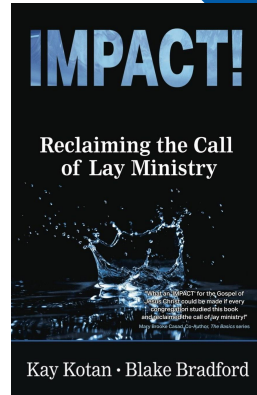
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Whose Church Is It?

“ Those of us inside the church must clearly understand to whom the church belongs. The church does not belong to the pastor, the lay leaders, the biggest giver, the longest-tenured folks, or even the congregation as a whole. The church belongs to Christ. As Christ followers, we gather to do the work of the church by planting seeds, fertilizing and watering the seeds, and harvesting the crop. We are the laborers - not the owners. When a congregation fully understands this, the potential **IMPACT!** will be far greater!

IMPACT! Reclaiming the Call of Lay Ministry
Kotan & Bradford



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Review: What did we talk about today?

Pastoring the Small Church



In most small congregations, pastors should lead relationally from the porch swing



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One Board, Several Hats

One Leadership Board is responsible for leadership and governance.

All administrative committee responsibilities and functions are vested in the Leadership Board.

Existing ministry teams continue.

Leadership Covenant: Rules for the Road



1. Decisions are Made by the Board Members Who Show Up
2. Leadership Board Members are Disciples of Jesus and Fiduciary Officers
3. We Will Speak the Truth in Love (*Ephesians 4:15*)
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5. We Are a Leadership Board with a Unified Voice

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pgs 94-98; 179-181*



Reminder: Simple Ministry Planning

1. We, Not They
2. Get Face to Face
3. Evangelism is Not an Extra
4. Dream Up to Team Up
5. Deep, Not Wide
6. When in Doubt, Experiment
7. Simple with a Signature
8. Keep Accountable

**KEEP IT
SIMPLE**

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Pages 117-128, 189

RELATIONSHIPS are the Key to Simplifying Ministry

1. Leverage Partnerships for Mission & Evangelism
2. Leverage UMC Connectionalism
3. Be Relational in your Ministries



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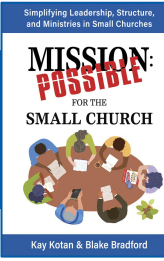


NEXT STEPS

Next Steps



- 1. Gather a team to work through the book, process the Team Questions, take Action Steps based on questions, reading, and team collaboration**
- 2. Let go of unreasonable expectations on how to “Do Church”**
- 3. Find a local ministry partner and try an impactful ministry experiment**

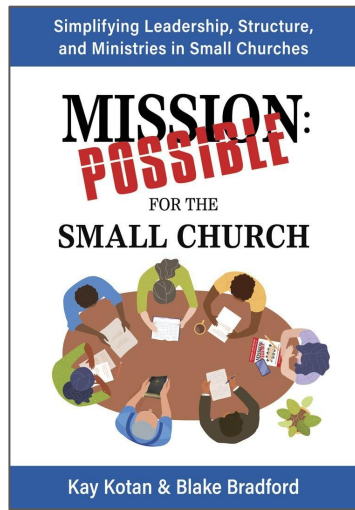
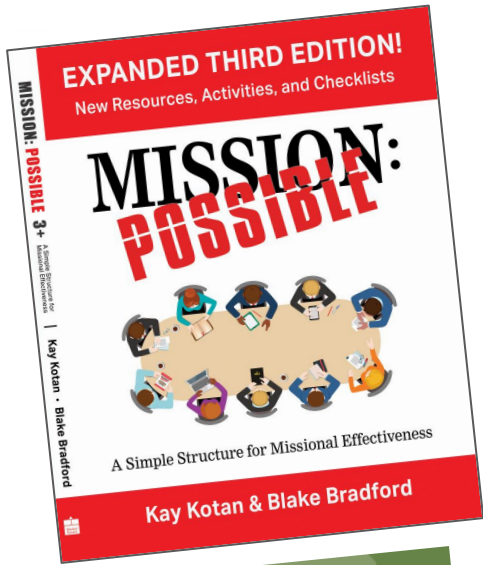


Group Time

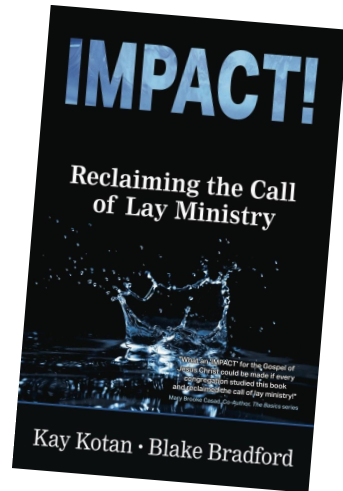
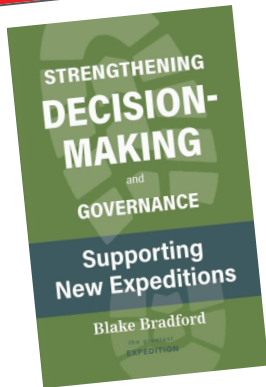
What is your
next step
to do in the
next two weeks?

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**Thank You for Investing in
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Closing Prayer for our Communities