



Born of Water, Born of Spirit: Supporting the Ministry of the Baptized in Small Congregations

Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook

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What does the church look like if we take the ministry of the baptized the priesthood of all believers seriously? How are congregations transformed when the church supports and affirms the ministry of all the baptized, particularly in small congregations without the means to hire a seminary-trained pastor? And what ecclesial structures and educational models need to emerge in the next decades to assist these small congregations in the recovery of baptismal living and their own vitality? Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook and Fredrica Harris Thompsett explore these questions as well as the variety of ways people in small congregations many with no more than fifty members are living out their baptism and the impact their actions are having on their congregations, judicatories, and communities, and the institutions that educate clergy. The authors argue that just because a community cannot pay a seminary-trained minister a growing problem in remote regions it does not mean that there is no ministry there. It does mean that we need to look at ministry and the church in a more expansive way. The stories of the congregations revealed in this book serve to inspire us about what is possible when we live intentionally as the reconciling presence of the body of Christ in the world. They also educate us about what will be needed in the years to come to lift up still more small congregations for their work in the larger community.

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