

More than Good Worship:

Congregational Health

Pastor Adam Mueller ♦ March 15, 2025

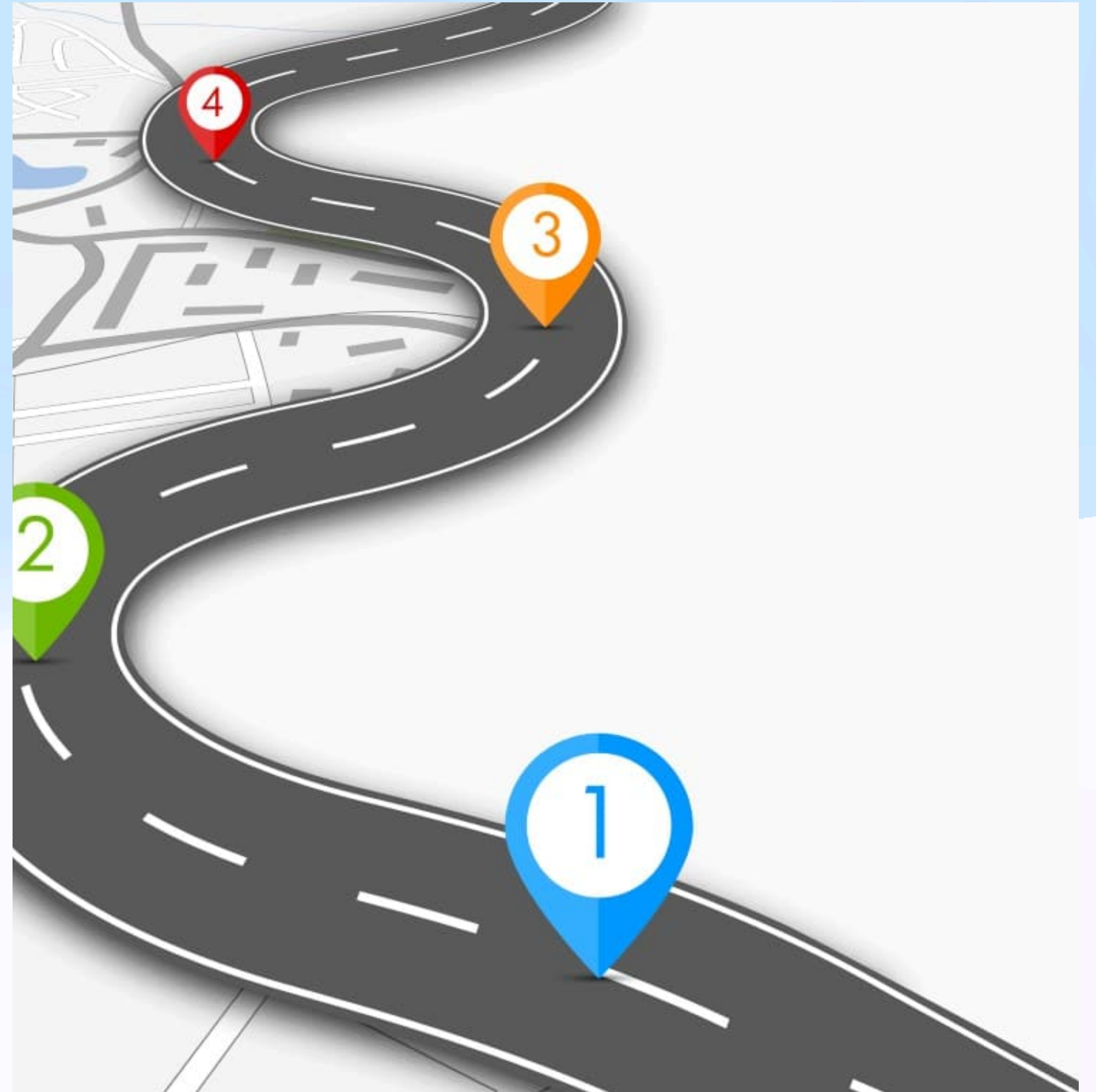
Adam Mueller

- 1998 WLS
- MLS tutor
- Faith & Peace, Kokmo, IN
- Redeemer, Marana, AZ
- DMB, evangelism, congregational counseling, translation teams, Lutheran Leadership, HIP



Roadmap

- Congregational health
- Sunday morning destination
- Creating a culture of discipleship



Congregational Health

Precedent

- Biblical - OT prophets, Corinthians, Titus, Revelation
- Historical - Acts, Luther



- “Moreover, the conditions in the congregations are pitiful.” ...the people “learn nothing, know nothing, never pray, do nothing but abuse their liberty.” There’s a total decay in Christian knowledge among the people. Their faith is atrophying from lack of exercise. No one is praying. Confession of sin is ignored. Holy Communion is despised.

Martin Luther

| Question | Agree | Disagree |
|---|-------|----------|
| 1. Determining whether something is right or wrong depends on the situation. | 61% | 39% |
| 2. The main emphasis of the Gospel is on God's rules for right living. | 59% | 41% |
| 3. Justification is the Bible's word for the truth that God guides us by his Holy Spirit. | 79% | 21% |
| 4. The major religions of the world all lead to the same God. | 34% | 66% |
| 5. Stewardship means that everything belongs to God and we manage things according to his principles. | 87% | 13% |
| 6. People who don't recognize Jesus as their Savior from sin will spend eternity in hell. | 79% | 21% |

Assessment

- On a scale of 1-10, how would you rank the health of WELS? Of your congregation?
- What do you consider to be the three greatest hindrances to congregational health today?
- What three things would you think are most important for building a healthy congregation?

Sunday Morning Destination

Three purposes

- Psalm 122:1 - I rejoiced with those who said to me
“Let us go to the house of the Lord.”
- Acts 2:44 - All the believers were together and had everything in common.
- Colossians 3:16 - Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...

Destination

- Worship
- Fellowship
- Discipleship



Assessment

- Does your current Sunday morning schedule facilitate or frustrate worship? Fellowship? Discipleship?
- How does your congregation make people feel welcomed or give them a sense of belonging?
- How does your congregation provide a “cradle to grave” approach for discipleship?

Creating a Culture of Discipleship

Psalm 1:1-3

- Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

- What does meditate mean?
- What is the difference between a sermon, corporate study, or personal study?
- Describe the value of daily meditation in the psalm's metaphorical terms.

- What are the benefits or drawbacks of...
 - Large group led by pastors, small group, family/personal?
 - Tiered curriculum, 101, 201, etc.
 - Technology, online, etc.

Discipleship is a big job

- Consider Jesus' commission
- Intentionalize
- Relentlessly encourage
- Embrace the continuum

No health without the Word!

- John 8:47 - He who belongs to God hears what God says.”
- John 15:5 - “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Adjustment

- Jot down one key takeaway that applies to you personally.
- Jot down one key takeaway that you might suggest to your pastor/leaders/congregation.

Thank you!

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Pastor Adam Mueller ♦ March 25, 2025