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## Comparing Turnaround Leadership in a Rural Church and in Schools [Dissertation Notice]

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weekend retreat, the pastor preached on the same themes for the next four weeks. The effect of the training event and preaching series were measured through two inventories conducted before the elder retreat and then after the preaching series to measure the changes in perception of the participants. In addition, an evaluation of the retreat explored the experience of the training. The biblical role of eldership explored four themes: Servant Leadership, Spiritual Leadership, Shepherd Leadership, and Shared Leadership. These themes, informed by Scripture and the Reformed tradition, provided the basis for the retreat and preaching series. The content of the curriculum included both theological and practical application of these themes. This project identified the importance of well-planned leadership development and the importance of a concentrated time for training. The project reclaimed the importance of elder training for the congregation.

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***Comparing turnaround leadership in a rural church and in schools.***  
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This qualitative study sought to illuminate successful practices of a turnaround leader in a rural church that are applicable cross-contextually, so as to inform the leadership efforts of various organizations seeking to reproduce organizational renewal on a wide-scale basis. Utilizing the principles of case study research, the researcher conducted participant observations, mined documents, and interviewed the pastor, three part-time staff members, and 24 members of a rural congregation in a south-central Kentucky congregation that had grown 289% in active membership over the last 14 years. Proceeding with the assumption that leaders can,

by the practice of specific, intentional behaviors, positively impact the ability of a congregation to reverse its path and experience turnaround, and seeking to illuminate those behaviors, this study was guided by the following research questions: (a) In a rural church that has experienced revitalization (“organizational turnaround”), how do the pastor and congregants perceive the experience? (b) How do they perceive the characteristics and behaviors of the pastor as “catalysts” in this transformation? (c) What leadership principles of successful turnaround church efforts can be extracted from their experiences that are comparable to those reported in the literature on school revitalization efforts? The data from the study revealed that members did not recall specific events as much as they did their pastor who helped bring peace and a culture that was conducive to revitalization. Responses to the question of precipitants to growth essentially described their pastor's personality and five intentional behaviors. This study revealed consistent themes that existed in the theoretical framework on schools provided by Kouzes and Posner (1987) as well as in the church and school turnaround lore. These findings propagate the notion that turnaround leaders often bear striking resemblances to one another, exhibiting many of the same personal character traits and intentional behaviors. These findings also suggest that turnaround leadership is not so much a product of individual, charismatic leadership as it is the product of consistent, sustained attention to sound leadership behaviors.