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Dinosaur Heart Transplants: Renewing Mainline Congregations

R Robert Cueni

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Many mainline churches make the mistake of thinking that in order to reverse decline they must become something that they are not. Often that change of identity has to do with worship. In a study funded by the Lilly Foundation, Robert Cueni has interviewed pastors and members of dozens of large-membership mainline churches that have turned around long-standing patterns of stagnation or decline. The common denominator he identified is that the leadership of these churches have found ways to incorporate the church's story and sense of identity into a new story of change and renewal. They work with the strengths they find, move away from the weaknesses, and arrive at a newly thriving congregation. In *Dinosaur Heart Transplants*, Cueni shares the findings and conclusions from his groundbreaking study and demonstrates how even small and mid-sized congregations can incorporate these patterns of renewal.

Key Features: • Addresses a problem that is being faced in numerous ways by many churches today • Applicable to mainline churches of all sizes • Makes available in an accessible format the findings of a Lilly Foundation study

Key Benefits: • Readers will understand the factors that cause or characterize stagnating churches • Readers will understand the outlook necessary to move churches that have reached a plateau into renewal • Readers will understand how to crystallize a church's story and sense of identity • Readers will learn how to incorporate that story and identify with a new story of change and renewal • Readers will learn how to identify churches' weaknesses and move away from them

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