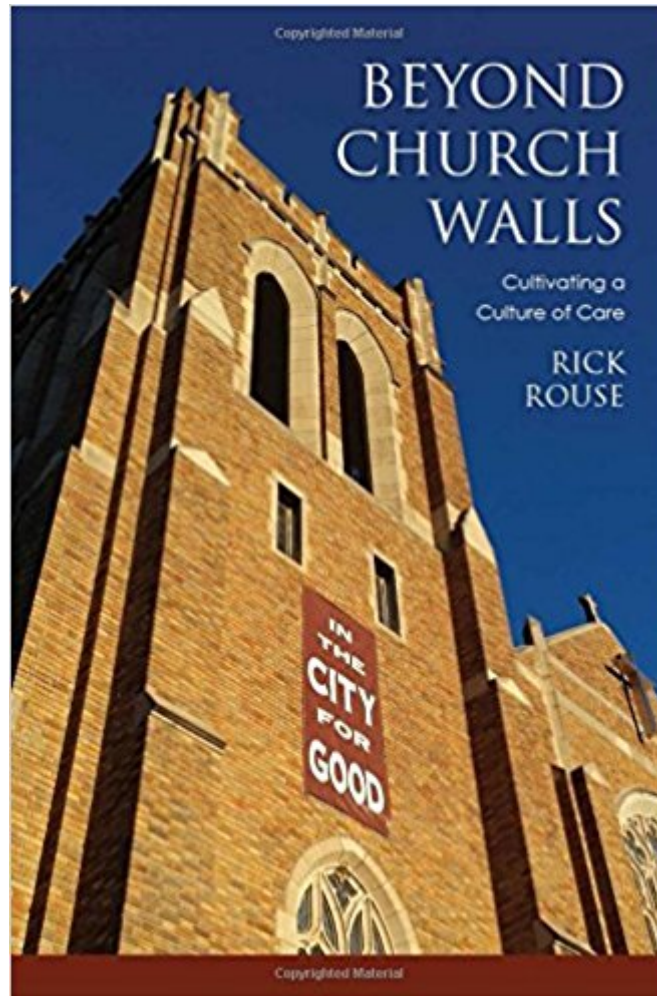




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# Beyond Church Walls: Cultivating A Culture Of Care



## Synopsis

Pastoral care has been traditionally understood as pastoral acts administered to individuals or small groups by an ordained or lay religious practitioner. As congregations in the twenty-first century begin to reclaim the missional nature of church, this view must be broadened to include care and concern for the needs of the larger community. A missional perspective of pastoral care embraces the notion that all of God's people—not just trained professionals—are called to partner in the healing and redemption of the world. In *Beyond Church Walls*, Rick Rouse sets out to articulate precisely what such an approach to pastoral care looks like; and the substantial impact it can have on congregations and communities. A skilled teacher and pastor with deep experience in real communities, Rouse leads readers through the changing realities of the twenty-first century and to new ways for missional churches to succeed in offering pastoral care for the whole community.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"What often passes for 'pastoral care' in many churches is a degradation of truly, peculiarly, mission-driven pastoral care. Rick Rouse connects our care with our leadership of a church that realizes we can only be faithful by being the church beyond the walls of the church, joining in Christ's active embrace of his beloved Creation. Rouse calls us forward to truly Christian pastoral care." --Will Willimon, Duke Divinity School

Rick Rouse is a vibrant, transformative, resilient, and evangelical leader whose rich life experience and passion for the church oozes through the pages of this book and its helpful appendices. Knowing that the church is called, in the name of Jesus, to heal and bless the whole world, Rouse makes the theological case

for congregations to turn their focus outward and to invest their energies in raising up and deploying people rather than maintaining programs. Congregations who are able to replicate the culture of care put forward by Rouse will discover they truly have become authentic communities who think like Jesus, love like Jesus, and act like Jesus." --Rick Barger, President, Trinity Lutheran Seminary

"Rick Rouse not only calls congregations to move into Christ's mission, he provides examples and strategies that really work! Discipleship is both an individual and community process that revitalizes Christ's church and Rouse provides a path for vital ministry." --Michael W. Foss, Pastor, St. Mark Lutheran Church, West Des Moines, Iowa

Rick Rouse is an ELCA pastor, having served congregations in Arizona, California, Washington, and Oregon. He has also served as executive director for church relations and continuing theological education at Pacific Lutheran University for twelve years. The author of several books, Rouse has also appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show and has had his story of forgiveness and healing reported in USA Today, Reader's Digest, and The Lutheran.

Rouse invites us to reconsider the mission of the Christian congregation in our time. This resource has process questions, and a good list of resources. The overall vision is that congregations not only are called to be caring with members, but more importantly to the wider community to be authentic.

I can share my thoughts about the book in two words, "Great book!"

The Church is going through many changes as it faces a multitude of challenges presented by today's culture. Business as usual doesn't work anymore. With so many challenges to face and so many changes to make, many congregations are like deer caught in the headlights of an oncoming car. They freeze. They don't know whether they should go to the left, or to the right or to jump.

Rouse's book gives congregations a clear path to follow. This book will not solve all of the changes and challenges that congregations face. That would probably take an entire library. It will help congregations, however, develop effective ministries for the people of their community that share God's love and grace and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Rouse's book does this by 1): Getting the care of people off the backs of pastors and church staff and placing it in the lives of laity, and 2): Shifting the focus of the congregation's ministry from inside the congregation to outside the

church's walls. Rouse shows the reader how this can be done. The book shines in its practical approach to congregational ministry. Rouse shows how to reframe pastoral care, address the roadblocks to change, create caring communities and catch a vision for ministry. He draws from his years of service in ministry, and also from the real life experiences of congregations that are making effective changes and meeting the daunting challenges that they face. Rouse's book isn't a hard read. It is interesting and it is motivating. I think this is an important book for pastors, congregational leaders and anyone interested in church and in effectively sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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