

Announcer:

Welcome to The Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast. A podcast all about leadership, change and personal growth. The goal? To help you lead like never before in your church or in your business. And now, your host, Carey Nieuwhof .

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, hey everybody, and welcome to episode 367 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Today's episode is brought to you by Remodel Health. Visit [remodelhealth.com/carey](http://remodelhealth.com/carey) to start learning today about how your organization can save on healthcare costs, including free access to their savings calculator and brand new ebook. And by Pro Media Fire. Book your free digital strategy session today at [promediafire.com/churchgrowth](http://promediafire.com/churchgrowth).

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I am so happy to welcome back Jim Tomberlin and Warren Bird to the podcast. We had different episodes with both of them, and they're back. They got a brand new book on church mergers, and we are talking about future church attendance. What's it going to be like in the future? The rise of church mergers, and also what to do if you don't think your church can make it. I do another podcast called ChurchPulse Weekly with David Kinnaman. One of the data points we're checking is that some pastors say about, depending on the week, 20% say, "Yeah, I'm not sure if our church is going to make it or not through COVID."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Jim Tomberlin back in 2005, founded MultiSite Solutions, a church consulting company that's assisted hundreds of churches work through multi-site church merger and multiplication consultation. Then last year in 2019, MultiSite Solutions merged with Tony Morgan and The Unstuck Group to expand its capacity to assist more churches. Then Warren Bird has ... my joke with him is always, "You've written more books than I've read," which is somewhat true. He has coauthored or authored 33 books for church leaders, and he is currently Vice President of Research for the Evangelical Council of Financial Accountability, the ECFA. He helps churches and not-for-profits and is based in New York City.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So glad to have them back. This is just a really unusual time, and what I want to talk to you about at the very end of this podcast, and What I'm Thinking About segment is just what do you do now that you're online a lot more? Are there some traps you should watch for as the pastor of a local church or a local leader? I think there are. I will outline five of them for you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If you're a little bit tired of your expensive, outdated group insurance plan, the health insurance industry is hard enough to navigate, but annual rate increases make it especially painful, especially in these really crazy times we're in. Listeners of this podcast alone have saved over a million and a half dollars during the last 18 months with Remodel Health, because what they do is they go out and find you new health care plans that are less expensive and often provide better benefits than your current plan.

Carey Nieuwhof:

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Carey Nieuwhof:

Then speaking of social media, my goodness, you need a lot more of it, right? A multi-site church with six campuses ran into some big problems lately. Each campus had a high demand for social media content and creative work in the new normal, and the central team couldn't handle it. It just got worse. Two creatives got overwhelmed and they quit.

Carey Nieuwhof:

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Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I am so excited to have Jim Tomberlin and Warren Bird on the podcast. Let's go. Here's my conversation with both of them about mergers, multi-site, and the future of the church. Warren and Jim, welcome back to the podcast. It's so great to have you, but together this time. Last time, I think it was different episodes.

Warren Bird:

A delight to be here today. Thank you, Carey. I listen to you, I learn from you, and it's exciting to be part of the conversation.

Jim Tomberlin:

It's great to be back as well, Carey, and I echo Warren's appreciation of your contribution and help to our work.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, it's fun, and it's great to come full circle where the people whose books we've read and counsel I've studied are now friends, and we get to have these meaningful conversations. So much has changed. Both of you, Jim in the multi-site world, and then Warren, who I always joke has written more books than I've read, which is almost true. Both of you have gotten new assignments, which is really exciting. But you have your finger on the pulse of what's happening in the church, both statistically, but also through your vast networks and consulting.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's been the most disruptive year in any of our lifetimes. I think we can safely say so much has changed in 2020. What are some of the big issues, just to start at the broadest level, that churches are struggling with this year? What are you seeing them in the middle of this disruption? What would you say the pain points are that have emerged on your radar screen?

Warren Bird:

Great question, Carey. Let me give two metaphors. One is the one Ed Stetzer has popularized about playing without the queen and learning to be a better chess player by not using your queen. That's what's happening for so many pastors, not having the queen, which is the facility. The other one is an analogy Levi Lusko popularized that I'd like to expand a little bit, is we all think it's a race, and all of a sudden we ... and that's what we prepared for and we're doing, and all of a sudden, we turn the corner and we realize, "Oh, no, this is biathlon. I have to learn to swim."

Warren Bird:

We do the swimming, and that was the shift to online everything. But now surprise, surprise, we get out of the water with the swimming, and we're headed bicycle, and said, "Oh no, actually, this is a triathlon." You got yet another skill to learn, and that skill is still, that third phase is still emerging, whether it's learning to deal with people with anxiety and the suicides that a whole range of stuff that's going to emerge as the pandemic's lifting or what. But it's a leadership issue that must translate into empowering the people of the church. Leaders have to get, as they figure out their act, if it's not ultimately translated to the people of the church, it's not going to have the impact that's needed.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Jim, what would you say you're seeing as some of the big pain points in the church leaders you're consulting with? You're now part of said Tony Morgan's Unstuck Group, which is really exciting. Tony's a leader I deeply, deeply respect.

Jim Tomberlin:

Well, I think Warren mentioned it's somewhat passing here. I think we have had this level affair with buildings for centuries. We've made Christianity a building-centric faith. I like to remind my team here for the first 300 years of the Christian faith, there was no church buildings to go to. There were small groups, house churches. They were meeting by a river. I think one of the breakthroughs that has come with time is to really break us out. Buildings don't reach people. I've been saying that for years. People reach people, ministry reaches people.

Jim Tomberlin:

What we also realized, buildings don't bring in money. We panicked. We thought we can't survive if we don't meet. Well, we quickly figured out we don't have to have buildings to generate income. People were very quickly willing to make that shift to giving online. I think this is all bodes well, I think for the future.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, by the time this airs, I'll have a blog post out called Our Church Building's Dead, or something like that. I think this is a real moment for the church. Both of you have had your finger on the pulse for a long time, and you've been looking at trends. When you think of crisis as being an accelerator, that's not

really a surprise, right? Like you've been saying for a long time, "Okay, we got to rethink our buildings." Yet, you're also, Jim, I'll start with you, you're the multi-site guy, right? Or multi-site guy, wherever you happen to be located in the country with your vocabulary. Is multi-site dependent on buildings, or facilities, or physical meeting, or how might this morph in the future?

Jim Tomberlin:

Well, it's definitely going to be morphed. You get all these trends that we're seeing now in this COVID season, and then predicting for the post-COVID season, we're only accentuation or accelerations of what we were seeing before COVID. But there are a lot of multi-site churches that we're not going to make, even before COVID, they weren't going to be getting out of the multi-site because they never really fully embraced the multi-site mindset. They really still were stuck at the model site with one or two satellite campuses. But those churches will fade, especially if they're not financially feasible.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They were fading before already?

Jim Tomberlin:

They were fading before.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Jim Tomberlin:

A few high profile church leaders got out the multi-site movement, and everybody was saying, "Hey, the multi-site movement is dead." Well, no, a few got out. Very few are getting out. More and more are getting in. Multi-site, more church planters now are starting their churches with a multi-site vision or strategy. But I think those who embrace the model and really make this shift will survive and thrive in this new model because this is all about taking church to the people, and buildings are a means to the end. They're not the end game. That was the point I'm making.

Jim Tomberlin:

We've made the Christian faith all about the church in the past. We've started church, the goal of a new church is a building, and the bigger building, the greater the success. Well, we learned we can go too big, and building churches to instrument a means to the end. Those in the multi-site new normal will be what we were already predicting, recommending before all this. We need smaller facilities, launch big, smaller facilities, multiple services, get to financial sustainability within a couple of years. Those churches that are good at that will flourish in the next season. Those who have not, will fade in terms of their multi-site model.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a really succinct summary of a lot of the trends that I've been seeing too, right? Smaller footprints, financial sustainability, not just, "Oh, we're going to launch a campus because well, it's a cool thing to do." Warren anything on, and we'll come back to multi-site, but anything you want to add in there?

Warren Bird:

Yeah. I'm just been involved with a megachurch study that happened pre-pandemic and well, the results will be out about the time this podcast is. We've tracked, it's a survey that happened in 2000, '05, 2010, 2015, and 2020. We can track long-term. One of the things we tracked is maximum seating capacity. In 2015, for mega churches, churches of 2,000 or more in attendance, in 2015, the maximum seating capacity average was 1,200. In 2020, the average seating capacity was again 1,200. The building is not getting bigger, but the turns of it and the uses of other sites has grown astronomically.

Warren Bird:

Likewise, let me give you the numbers on multi-site growth because it is just staggering. In the year 2000, 23%, 27, 46, 63. Now, in 2020, 70% of megachurches are multi-sites. Inherently, they are using the building multiple times and other locations, and as Jim says, having to do it wisely. ECFA just did a survey of churches that were most at-risk in the pandemic. What we learned is those that were financially troubled going into the pandemic are the ones that are most likely not to make it once they come out of the pandemic, and that will include those that were multi-site, but didn't quite get how to do multi-site realistically.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Already, there's so many places we could go with even the things that you've raised. We only have an hour. It's like, "This is great." I realize this is a bit of speculation. If you prefer not to answer this, don't answer. But do you have any sense, even a rough idea of what percentage of churches may not make it through this season, knowing that we don't even know when the season is going to end? We have no idea. By the time this thing airs, who knows what will have happened. An asteroid could have hit us. We have no clue. It's that kind of year.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But I think that's a really good, and that's what they say about businesses too, right, the businesses that were running on five days cash flow, they're like a bug on a windshield. They're already gone. But there are churches that are going to be caught too. Any idea of what percentage or number of churches may not make it, and then what are the conditions for churches that won't make it?

Warren Bird:

Churches have an incredible lingering ability. It's not like the pandemic lifts and three weeks later, X number of churches decide, "We can't do it. Let's merge. Let's do something else." It's a long lingering, painful death of saying, "God," of prayer, of, "Let's try this, let's try that." Then finally, like the the dying swimmer picture of one's down, two down, three times down, finally saying, "We need help." Any statistics are going to need to look back several years after the pandemic to tell us the actual closers because it's going to be drip by step by one here, one there, 10 there, 10 there.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a good answer. Jim, any thoughts on that?

Jim Tomberlin:

I would say at The Unstuck Group, we have, Tony Morgan has a chart that we use in valuating where churches are at, a bell curve chart. On the left side of the bell curve is where the healthy churches are.

We have these seven stages of churches. But on the right side, the declining side, 17% of churches, this is pre-COVID, were on life support. Another 8%, what we call preservation. It's about 25% of the churches in America before COVID were, holding on, but definitely declining in the last stages, a lot like JC Penney was holding on.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah.

Jim Tomberlin:

COVID settled it. They could have probably lingered on a few more years, and a lot of churches before COVID could probably, like Warren just said, have amazing ability just to keep hanging on. I consider those kind of churches, and by the way, 61% of those churches are in the maintenance mode, in addition. That's about 85% of churches in America before COVID were in maintenance, preservation, or life support. That 25% of maintenance or preservation life support, COVID will accelerate their decline unless they turn themselves around.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Two notes real quick, Tony actually blogged on that, Tony Morgan, on my site a couple years ago. We will link to that in the show notes. Secondly, you guys can correct me, because you may have even known Lyle Schaller. I never did, but-

Warren Bird:

I wrote a book on Lyle Schaller. I took the best of his wisdom, and in his senior years, we worked on it together to make it possible.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You once again make my opening point. Thank you, Warren. That's fantastic. You can maybe tell me this, because I've either quoted or misquoted Lyle Schaller, who I'm pretty sure I read when I was just starting out a book he wrote in the '70s or '80s that said, "Small churches," and by that he means like 30 people, that little country church with the Tomberlins, and the Birds, and the Nieuwhofs, and they kind of hang out. He said they're like cats. He says they have nine lives and you can't kill them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Lyle actually say that, and there is truth to the small church. I think that's very true that it's going to be death by 1,000 pinpricks. It's like, "This family's gone, this family's gone. We only need a few dollars to keep the lights on, oh, I guess it's over." We'll get into that when we talk about mergers too a little bit later on in the interview, but any thoughts on what are some signs in your mind that a church will not make it? Because you got thousands of pastors listening going, "Gosh, we may have been in maintenance mode, or death rattle, or survival before." What are some things I should be looking for?

Warren Bird:

Whatever you measure, baptisms, conversions, attendance, growth, newcomer percentages, whatever it is, if it has declined for several straight years, that needs to be addressed, or that trajectory will continue to the death of the church, even if the, as you say, the death occurs before people realize it. Just by the way, the national number is 2%. 2% of churches close each year, which is why the church

planting community says if a denomination or anybody else isn't planting at least 3% new churches, you're not even gaining ground, which sadly most aren't.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Jim, did you have anything to add to that?

Jim Tomberlin:

Probably what makes the decision final is the finances. I think this is what we saw in this as well, churches were willing ... who would never change even though their baptisms are down, their attendance was down, everything was down in terms of people, and discipleship, and conversions, and all that, but they're not willing to change still. But when they saw that, "If we don't get online, we won't have any finances." Unfortunately, the good news is, they demonstrate they could change, because the financials, "If we don't have any money coming in, we cannot stay open." The sad thing is, I wish they had that same kind of motivation to change to reach more people, make more disciples.

Warren Bird:

Here's a Schaller-ism, he says to ask the question, are our churches' best years yet ahead? The healthier the church, the more people who feel that the church's best years are yet ahead. The closer to death the church is, the more people who feel like, "Our church's best years were in 1973. If only 1973 could come again, or whatever year, we'll be ready." They are ready for that, sadly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Okay. Now, you said something really interesting, and you both sent me some data, some summary from the book that you worked on together. One of the surprises, I think this is in Tony Morgan's research too, Jim, is that your finances can be healthy, and your volunteer base can be healthy, and yet you can still be in decline. Can you explain that? Because first of all, is that accurate? Secondly, it seems so counterintuitive. Can you explain why that is or nuance that?

Jim Tomberlin:

I would say yes, you can be financially well-sustaining, and that gives us an artificial sense of life and success, but be in decline with attendance, and have enough volunteers because everybody is serving that you have. but there's no new life, there's no new growth. But we're not feeling any concern because we have plenty of money, from endowments, from older attenders who have more financial margin and are generous to the church, et cetera. Some of the healthiest-growing churches in America are short on finances. They have more vision than they have money. A lot of declining churches have more money than vision. Yes, that can happen. It does happen.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Warren?

Warren Bird:

On the flip side of your question, there are an awful lot of fast-growing churches that are in trouble financially and haven't paused to realize it in that they are counting on the new people who keep coming in and adding their amounts to their budget, and not realizing that they're really not growing the stewardship and generosity of the flock that God has given them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

According to some Barna data, and I don't want to make this all data-driven, but it's fascinating, so about roughly, it changes month to month, but let's say 25% of churches who are meeting online are experiencing record attendance. Often, these are churches that had an online presence before, so they can benchmark it. There is a small segment of churches, and I've talked to numerous pastors like this, I'm sure you have too, who are like, "You know what, we don't want to say it too out loud. We never had more people join us online, never had more decisions, and never had a better financial year in the worst collapse, the worst unemployment." That's roughly a quarter of all churches. Any thoughts on that? I'd just love your reactions.

Warren Bird:

I'm delighted anytime the gospel goes out and more people hear it. I think Easter 2020, more people heard the gospel because of everybody being online and having opportunities, or at least recorded the gospel for people to hear sometime in the future. But with you, Carey, I'm strongly concerned about what many call the vanity metrics of looking at online numbers, which Facebook especially, you linger on something for three seconds, and it's counted as a view. I realized that many people reset to count different ways. But really, the engagement, Carey, one of your themes for at least the past year, are the things that we really must measure.

Warren Bird:

How many people go into our online prayer room after the service? How many people come to the after party after the service? How many people download this resource during the week? How many people call a friend in response to something in the message, and then in their online groups, talk about how it went? How many people take the online survey? How many people pray to receive Christ and then say it in the chat? There are ways to measure engagement online, and I really think a realistic picture of what's happening online will happen more and more as churches look at those statistics.

Jim Tomberlin:

I would agree, Carey, that the online experience that churches are having shows that we can expand our footprint, our reach, but the new normal will be, as it's been said on your podcast and other places, the online campus now, instead of a side door or the back door, need to become front door to the church. But in a multi-site model or even a model site model, but it will be the front door in and with the goal of directing them to local congregations, physical locations. I like the word the digital church. That the new normal will be both and.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Yeah, it's a hybrid model. What are some thoughts, because this is speculation at this point, but just because crisis is an accelerator, any thoughts or research you've seen on what you suspect will happen to future in-person church attendance, people actually going to church? It was already on the slide for decades, but any thoughts on where that might be? Let's assume for the purposes of this question that there's a vaccine, that it's safe, that you can drop the mask. Okay, and life is into whatever the new normal is, and there's not the threat that there is today. Any thoughts on where in-person church attendance will land on the other side of this?

Warren Bird:

You have two aspects of that question. First is the frequency of attendance, and as researchers have documented, that is less and less frequent. I grew up as a kid and saw perfect attendance pins. That was kind of the standard. Now, here I'm an elder at a church, and if I'm there two weeks, or maybe three, that's incredible back when we could meet. Now, I was somewhere else in church, maybe at my kids church, or visiting a church, or whatever that other week, but you can be very active and engaged in a church even if your attendance frequency has gone down.

Warren Bird:

The question of overall attendance in terms of packed room, the so called 80% rule that says, "Once you hit 80%, it's too full." People are in suburban and urban settings are willing to gather up to 80%. That's going to change. There's a lingering discomfort that's going to take a long time to rebuild the confidence and the analogy of a music concert, I can either go to church and sing and be part of it, or I could listen to it on the radio is by heart. Each of them has a different contribution to feeding my soul. But I have to be more motivated. There has to be more value given for me to take the time to drive to the church building for the in-person worship than just watching it online and singing along embarrassingly with just my wife and myself in our home.

Jim Tomberlin:

Carey, I don't think we're ever going to go back or see the pre-COVID church attendance.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, can you tell me why? I'm not disagreeing with either of you. It's just an extremely unpopular message. Again, every single day on our channels, we see people going, "No, it's going to go back to normal." Tell me why you landed there, Jim, because I do not disagree with you at all.

Jim Tomberlin:

Well, as Warren said, the frequency was already in decline. This gets back, I think to the fact that for 200 plus years in America, North America, there was a value in our culture that said church attendance is important. Good people go to church or should go to church. It didn't mean they all did. But that value that a church attendance and local church is an asset to the community that has shifted certainly before the turn of the century, but in this century, we are in that post-Christian era, where no longer is church attendance seen as a positive value. If anything, it's suspect.

Jim Tomberlin:

Church attenders, used to be respected. Pastors used to be respected in our culture, just for their position with who they were. Now, there's almost suspected, if you're one of those that go to church every week or go to church often. But we saw every generation, the builder generation, they were in church every week. My in-laws are 92 and 87. They ask us all the time, "Were you in church this week?" They forget we can't go to church right now. But that's such an important value to them. Then the Boomers of my generation, me and Warren's generation, we went pretty off. Three out of four Sundays a month, I would say when I was a pastor, that's what people mostly did. They were assumed to be in church every week if they were committed to Christ and to the local church.

Jim Tomberlin:

But every generation, the Gen X were less, Millennials were even more less. Gen Z even less. I think for that reason now, I do think this experience has highlighted to churchgoers how important it is to meet together in person with other people, not just to hear a sermon or even just to worship, but just to be tangibly with others. I think that need will be felt stronger. I don't know that it means that they'll come back every week. It won't be. We were down to 1.7 times a month. As you know, before COVID was average church attendance. I think I could go to once a month, but I think there will be more of an emotional commitment to be connected with a local church, but it won't be there every week or every couple of weeks.

Jim Tomberlin:

Now, I think also the online experience has been so good for so many churches and for churchgoers, it gives them now an alternative to, "I can still be engaged." As you talked about, the new language isn't attendance, it's engagement. Then we got to figure out just the varying levels of engagement. But I think we can engage people who are not in the room. It's not just about being in the room anymore.

Warren Bird:

Jim, you say the online has been so good for larger churches that have the skill, and the staff, and the equipment, it has been. Smaller churches have really struggled just to get the iPod. I'm sorry.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Hey, in some cases, that's extremely accurate, Warren, but keep going.

Warren Bird:

I have watched each during the pandemic. I go to quote "my church," and then I take a couple hours and visit a lot of churches of a lot of different sizes in a lot of locations. It's painful to watch how awkward and limited a lot of churches have done the worship, and it's not a drawing factor at all. Even in talking with people who've been part of churches like that, it's painful for them to watch. They're not excited about it, and frankly, they've watched the services of other larger churches that technologically can put it together, which is going to lead, I think as the pandemic lifts, to more church shuffling by people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I want to talk about that with you because you have both just written, coauthored a new work about church mergers, et cetera. One of the things, underneath that 25% stat we talked about earlier, where regardless of how you measure online numbers, it's pretty clear because when the offerings follow, and you've got record givings and a record downturn year, something is going on to the ... I've talked anecdotally, and you got to be careful not to plot trends by anecdote, to numerous people who are like, "Well, I used to go to X Church in my small town, but I've discovered Elevation, or I've discovered Hillsong, or I've discovered whatever."

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think even at Connexus, which is not a gigantic church, we're a larger church for Canada. But we picked up all kinds of people, and some of them have started giving, some of them have started to go into groups, and the church transposed, I think of that as consolidation. In other words, you look at what's been happening in multi-site over the years, some of that is definitely evangelism, but some of that is consolidation. In other words, five local churches closed, but mega church X moved in and opened up

two new locations in the area, and some of the people who used to go to the smaller churches are now going to this campus of a larger church. It's a bit of speculation, a little bit of wetting your finger and putting it in the air to see which way the wind is blowing. But do you think some of that could be happening right now precisely because of what you talk about, Warren, where it's a pretty lackluster experience online for some churches? They found a church with better production and better preaching and like, "Oh, this is where we're camping out." Any thoughts on whether there's further consolidation coming or happening?

Warren Bird:

People who are anchored in a church are anchored because of relationships there. This is actually the downside of the very large church that doesn't necessarily have relationships. Although interestingly, in this megachurch survey, we found that 90% of mega churches say that small groups are central to their strategy for doing ministry, all time high. In a large church, you get bigger by getting smaller through the small groups. In the smaller church, if you don't have those cohesive relationships, those are the people that are going to look elsewhere and say, "Well, it really doesn't matter."

Jim Tomberlin:

I would say, Carey, that the churches that are ... many churches that will go into the merger conversation is to do what Warren just said. They want to stay together as a group of people that they know and love, but they know they can't sustain themselves. Maybe we could join another church in the area that we respect, become a campus of theirs. We could have their life-giving DNA reenergize us, revitalize us, come under their direction, and still stay in place, and still have our church family here, versus just everybody dispersing going somewhere else. I think we'll see both of those things happening.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Interesting. Yeah.

Warren Bird:

One more word to mention, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah.

Warren Bird:

Yes, it's true for multi-sites that more than one out of three multi-site campuses come by way of merger. But the flip side is something Jim and I discovered in this national research project we did about mergers that led to the expanded and updated edition of Better Together. That's that one out of five church plants, new churches, acquire their facility through a merger. Your image just a minute ago of the bringing of all the the smaller churches together into one big one is not necessarily the right image going forward. There's also the image of a church that went through its lifecycle and says, "We don't know how to bring Jesus to a new generation," that the merger is with a church planter, who starts a new chapter in that facility and brings new life, and it just starts everything again. It's a win all the way around.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Tell me when you updated Better Together, what were some things that have changed in the church merger movement? What were some of your key findings?

Jim Tomberlin:

Let me just say, in our first edition that was nine years ago, the big takeaway from that was the multi-site church movement has really changed the merger conversation from a lose-lose, or a win-lose to a win-win. We've discovered that to our big takeaway from that 10 years ago was how many those churches that initiated that merger conversation were not the large growing churches. It was the struggling declining churches who initiated the conversation. Fast-forward 10 years later, we're still seeing the largest group that are initiating conversation are the declining churches, but more and more lead churches are learning how to initiate those conversations. Or just by being a better partner in the community, and a relationship grows to a place where it makes sense, "Hey, let's join together. We could be better together." But the multi-site was the big aha eight, 10 years ago.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Can you define lead churches just for a moment, just for people who haven't read the book?

Jim Tomberlin:

We describe a merger as a dance. In a dance, there's one who leads and one who follows. You can't have two leads. One lead, one follows, or one leads in a church merger dance, one leads and the others join or follow. When we talk about a lead church, that's who's the lead church where that culture, that DNA is the dominant culture. It's that vision, that mission of that church is what's leading the way. The big takeaway 10 years ago was these are more mission-driven versus survival-driven, although there's usually a church in trouble or stuck and they say, "This as a way for us to get unstuck or turn around by joining with a lead church that we respect and follow." We talk about a lead and a joining church.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's great.

Warren Bird:

Carey, the old bottle, which Schaller was the first one to articulate, was two struggling churches joining together thinking, "Well, we'll just take the best of both of us, and that'll leapfrog us forward." It didn't. It saddled the two of them, and they ended up declining. The merger of two equals almost never works. But the flip side, using the new model of lead church and joining church, in our survey of 1,000 merger churches, 82% said, "We would do it again." There are ways to make this work in a healthy, joyful kingdom winning way for both congregations.

Jim Tomberlin:

Carey, I would say one of the takeaways in our new book though was not just ... There's still the multi-site benefit and factor in mergers. But we also saw that 39% of church planters acquired a facility through a merger.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I have a number of friends who would fit that bill. Yeah.

Jim Tomberlin:

There's a lot of declining churches with assets, with property in decline, and need a desperate need of a vibrant ministry. There are a lot of new church startups in schools or other places like that, that are have a vibrant ministry in desperate need of a facility. There's a huge win-win when those churches find each other. We also see that a growing number of church leaders are seeing mergers as a wonderful succession strategy or pastor search strategy. The old strategy of, "Let's look all across the country and move somebody across the country, who we hope might be a good fit," a lot of risk with that. Or we could join the church down across town that we know and respect, and who's been there for many years and fits. There's a lot less risk in that, in the old way of getting a pastor, finding a pastor.

Jim Tomberlin:

But we're seeing the succession, the church planting benefit. We're seeing churches that see this as a way to diversify our church, become a more diverse church. We're seeing a lot more applications to church mergers, and with the decline in the church attendance before COVID, there was a major transition coming. I think this season, as we said, is accelerating those conversations. Almost weekly, Carey, I'm aware of or in touch with a church that's having these merger conversations. We've seen several mergers occur all virtually. Town hall, virtual town halls.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Really?

Jim Tomberlin:

Votes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What is precipitating those virtual mergers? Because you would think that people would almost want to say, "Okay, with the world going crazy, let's put this on hold for a few months. We'll come back to it when things normalize." What is behind those virtual mergers?

Warren Bird:

Well, let me give you a specific example. Carey, you wrote the foreword to the book, Liquid Church. In it, one of the currents of evangelism that it talks about is the merger strategy. Just in the middle of the pandemic, there was a church that had been talking with Liquid Church about, "Our pastor's getting ready to retire. We can't seem to get the gospel out into our community more. We've got solid people, we've got a wonderful building. Can this merger idea happen?" During the pandemic, a vote was taken virtually. Everything happened online, and the congregation is being welcomed into the Liquid Church congregation and integrated in different ways. When the pandemic lifts to the point that construction and stuff like that on the church to ready it for physical presence further will happen. But it's a great story of an intentionality that, "Hey, we're not going to let a pandemic slow us down. This is what we think God is up to."

Jim Tomberlin:

I have a church in Boston, a growing multi-site church that put the word out to the local churches in Boston when COVID hit, "Hey, if you need any help with learning how to do ... We have a studio. You can use our studio. If you need help on helping people give online, any help we can offer you, we're here for

you." Well, that word went out, and there was some churches that responded that needed help. One of those churches just recently came to them and said, "You know what, we're down to 15 people. We were before COVID. We started in 1815. They've been around so long, they couldn't find their church by-laws, and so they suspended them a year ago. Now they said, "You've been helpful to us. We realize we're all over 70 years old. We have a 30-year old pastor that's helping us right now who grew up in the church. But can we talk to you about joining with you?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. I have another friend who leads a large church, over 10 campuses, and he says he's getting multiple approaches a week during COVID, which is interesting. What other trends did you find in your research, things that have changed with church mergers in the last decade or so?

Jim Tomberlin:

I would say first of all, the acceptance of mergers as a viable option has become ... It doesn't have the baggage it had 10 years ago. When we were first writing about this 10 years ago, that was the biggest ... We wrote the book to demonstrate this is a viable option, and there's a lot of win-wins in this. We tried to give some language to the conversation. We talked about four different models, four different kinds of mergers. It's very important to understand which kind we're having, which kind of relationship do we see this merger? We try to get some language and some process about how to have these conversations. We've identified 25 distinct issues that every church merger has to address.

Jim Tomberlin:

When we did this updated version of our book, we thought the good news is we didn't have to repent of anything we wrote 10 years ago. But we were able to update a lot of the stories. We've got a lot of new stories that we have been able to share as well, and to develop some more templates, some more processes. As Warren mentioned, we did a survey of nearly 1,000 churches last fall who have had mergers. They gave us 28 distinct new facts, but these are some of the things that came out of our recent update of our book.

Warren Bird:

Carey, one of the learnings, a question that always comes up early in the merger discussion is, what about the lead pastor of the potential joining church? We found 79%, so four out of five, that pastor stayed. Not in the capacity of still pastoring that congregation as lead pastor, but in many other roles available, whether missions, small groups, senior adult ministry, and so forth, maybe on another campus if it's a multi-campus church. But the idea, the stereotype of, "Oh, that just means all of a sudden the pastor is out of a job," maybe. But maybe not.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So gives life, of course, to the struggling congregation, and life to the growing congregation as well to lead congregation is the idea of it, right?

Warren Bird:

Yeah. Usually, it shifts from an inward focus that almost always characterizes a joining church, though there are significant exceptions, to an outward focus of, "How are we going to make disciples of Jesus in our community?" We have new momentum, new tools, new draw in order to be able to do that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm sure you turned in the manuscript prior to COVID. Or certainly not knowing what we know now. What do you think the new disrupted reality, the accelerator that crisis is going to do to church consolidations and mergers?

Jim Tomberlin:

Let me just say about how that book got written. Last fall when the publisher approached us and said, "Jim, Warren, we'd like to republish in paperback format," because it was only in hardback. "Are you okay with that?" We said, "On one condition, we'd love to do it on one condition, that you allow us to do an update expanded version of it." They said, "That'd be great." That was last fall, we started this process, and we looked at releasing this fall, year later. About the month before COVID hit, we gave our final manuscript. Then COVID hit, and we said, "Can we just have one more ... add a few more words to our book in light of COVID?"

Jim Tomberlin:

The good news is it only ... there was nothing that we had to undo, it just accelerated us and said what we'd already seen. But then they came back a couple months later, after we got the ball, well, further down the road, and said, "We're not going to release any books this fall, any new books, except for one book, your book, because it's so timely." We would agree with that. This was going to help. When we asked them in our survey, one of the questions was, "Why did you do the merger?" The joining church had two primary reasons. One is the big one was financially, "We're not going to make it financially." But secondly, even if we are making it financially, we're not having the impact. We need revitalization. We think this could be the best way forward, is to join with another church instead of trying to do it ourselves.

Jim Tomberlin:

When we asked the lead churches that question, they had two responses, almost equal, the bigger one was, "We did this to revitalize declining churches. We did this to reach more people by adding more campuses." That was very heartwarming to see that, that especially for the lead churches, they really wanted to help. We found it, and where mergers best occur when there's some kind of relationship already.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right. It's not just the, "We're walking in, put your hands up, everything on the table."

Jim Tomberlin:

Yeah, yeah. That's often the perception of a merger, is an acquisition and takeover. But we've had a whole chapter. We just talk about what makes a good ... Are you a merger-friendly church? Talk about are you a merger-friendly leader, church leader?

Warren Bird:

See, the goal is you want to keep as many people as possible. These are people who love Jesus, who have relationships in the community, who understand the background and the heritage of that church. The more of them that you can engage in the new chapter, it's a win all the way around. That's just the

opposite of the acquisition mentality that says people don't matter. We're just here to swoop up your facility.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Having turned it in a month or two after COVID, but obviously, this is going to be a disruption, not an interruption, what do you think is going to happen to mergers in the next two or three years?

Warren Bird:

Jim's going to be very busy doing consultations, and The Unstuck Group, of walking people through the process, and of training denominational leaders. We had one, happened to be Lutheran, write us when we were inquiring about successful merger examples from his particular setup. He said, "I've never considered a merger as a mission-minded, kingdom-gaining approach. I've only seen it as a last resort consolidation reactive strategy." I think a lot of people are going to say, "Oh, it doesn't have to be that. It could be a proactive, people-reaching, kingdom-expanding approach. How do we do that?" That's what the book is designed to be a handbook. Of course, Jim and The Unstuck Group are available to walk those through who want it. But bottom line, mergers are going to be on the rise.

Jim Tomberlin:

Definitely that. We'll be offering an online course that you can download yourself and walk through the process of the merger conversation, as well as coach churches through individually if they need it, as they need it. I found that for most mergers, it's really helpful to have a third party to help them navigate those difficult conversations. That's the role I played in a number of churches over the years. Sometimes it's hard for a lead. A lead church pastor can't say to the declining church, "If you don't join with us, or somebody, you're going to be out of business in three years." If I say that as a consultant, as an outside third party, I can say this because I care for both. You have a chance to choose your destiny instead of that having it chosen for you.

Jim Tomberlin:

I like to say to joining churches, "If you stay on this path, your story is going to come to a close, your 150-year old story, or 25-year old story, it's going to finish. But if you join with this other church, the chapter closes, but a new chapter begins. The story continues on." That's where people begin to see churches this way. Really what you're doing when you're joining another church, you are really choosing, "Who do we want to lead us? Who's our next pastor?" But you're not only getting, typically, if it's a multi-site model, you're not only getting a new lead pastor, you're getting a new local pastor, and you're not just getting a pastor with his five kids, you're getting a church with maybe 500 or 5,000.

Warren Bird:

Jim, the same could be said if you're adopting a church planter, to you've built a relationship and you're, in essence, welcoming that person to say, "We're going to technically close," and by the way, we have a whole chapter on the legal ways of doing the closing, "but in essence, we're going to adopt you as our child to birth a whole new congregation through us." That's very exciting. Again, one out of five church planters that end up with the facility, acquire it, or it comes by way of a merger. That is significant.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You've got thousands of church leaders listening, tens of thousands. Some of them are leading that small struggling church. Or maybe it's a mid-sized struggling church, or a church over 1,000 that saw its best days in the '90s, and they're thinking to themselves, "I don't know what the future holds. I don't think our team has the skillset to take it forward into the digital world. I don't know what in-person worship is going to be. I don't even know, maybe our hour has come. A merger might be right for us." What would you say to the leader listening right now who is in that position? What counsel would you have for him or her?

Warren Bird:

That God has a plan that all the good foundation that you have laid is not going to end, or doesn't have to end, that God will lead you. The first thing by far is are you praying together as a leadership team, and maybe as a whole congregation, for that clarity of vision, for what the next chapter needs to look like? Now, maybe you'll read along the way a book like Better Together. it was designed not just for the clergy, but for a leadership team to be able to read and discuss. That might give you a sense, is this something God could show you or not, or is prompting or not? Maybe there are other solutions. But not remaining content with the status quo is the most important thing, and knowing that God has a future and a plan, and would love to reveal it or unfolded is part of that next step.

Carey Nieuwhof:

A good word, Pastor Warren. Jim, what would you say?

Jim Tomberlin:

I wouldn't add anything more to that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's good.

Warren Bird:

Well, there are so many pastors and valiant leaders who love God. They just don't know how to navigate forward. This should not be a low self-image booster to say, "We don't know what to do next." But it should be a prompt to say, "Lord, there are resources here, there are people to be reached. Show us what's missing to connect the dots so that we can do it for a new season."

Carey Nieuwhof:

What feels like the end of the road might actually be the beginning of a new one. That's-

Jim Tomberlin:

You'll love this story. The church where I'm serving right now as an interim chief of staff here in Miami is 103 years old. About 10 years ago, the church that started it, the Central Baptist Church of Miami, downtown Miami, birthed my church, Christ Fellowship. It was called First Baptist Church in Perrine back then 103 years ago. 10 years ago, they approached us and said, "We're down to 50 people downtown. Beautiful campus, 1,200 seats, historic registered church. We're not going to survive and make it. But we'd like to give you our building. You're a multi-site church. We want to give our daughter church of 103 years ago our building, and because you can relaunch back here and have a vibrant congregation here," which is what we did.

Jim Tomberlin:

That was an incredible story. So many good things have come out of that. I don't have time to talk about that today. But that was a group of people. Big building down to 50 people cannot make it. But one of the longtime members there still with us said it was the best thing to ever happen to us, was to join our daughter church. Warren, our best days are in front of us now, and now, that happens to be right in one of the most growing districts of Miami.

Warren Bird:

Let me tell you my favorite story from the book. It involves Mark Jobe downtown Chicago that had worked with a aging Lutheran church. Turned out the bishop was going to close the church. The church said, "Well, why can't we give it to and become part of New Life?" The bishop had said, "Fine." Now, there's this ceremony where the handoff is supposed to happen. The last days, the gathering of the senior saints. They were part of that congregation. The memories and it was a wonderful time of praising God for all He had done through that church. Then the time where the president of the congregation stood up to Pastor Mark Jobe and said, "Now at this point, I'm supposed to give you, in the ceremony, I'm supposed to give you the keys of the building, but I'm not going to do that." Dead silence. Uh-oh, is there a big surprise coming?

Warren Bird:

He reaches in a paper bag and he pulls up a little plaque, and he said, "About 20 years ago, when it was very popular for everybody to develop a mission statement, we developed a mission statement." Ours says, and he read it, and it's in essence, love God, love your neighbor. It's very similar to New Life's mission statement. I'm not giving you the keys without giving you the mission. You take this mission and agree to do it for a new generation, and we'll give you the keys, our support, our prayers, and everything else." Not a dry eye in the place. That's the best of what a merger can be.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's awesome. For the church planters listening, for the growing churches listening, going, "Hey, one day when we do meet, a facility would be great, or I have a heart for this. We've got the momentum." Who may be saying, "I wish we had churches approaching us." What would you say to that leader who thinks that they might be a candidate for becoming a lead in a merger?

Jim Tomberlin:

Well, that's one of the number one questions I get asked all the time, Carey. How do you initiate a conversation without coming off abrasive or takeover hostile? Our answer is it's always about relationship. Best mergers have come out of a relationship, maybe where you have already demonstrated your heart for the local churches, that you've been collaborative, that you show that, "I care about the body of Christ." I think those people who are kingdom-minded have a better opportunity for these conversations to happen versus my kingdom, my own church.

Jim Tomberlin:

Now, many times, we'll say to churches, leaders who want to launch a campus in a location, or a church planter who's looking for facility, is to approach a church that might be interested in saying, "Would you be willing to rent space to me? Not merged with us, but just to rent. Can we rent space? Can be your worship center? Can be your worship your fellowship hall, your gym?" I've had some churches do that,

and then the relationship, it grows. Then it becomes natural to say, "We've gotten to really know you and love you, and maybe it'd be good for us to join together." But that's one way that we've seen, where I've had churches where we've sent letters to an area where they wanted to launch a campus in their city, and just saying that, "We're looking to launch a campus in this community. We're not coming to the community. We already have a lot of people that live in this community, and attend our church, and we're looking for a facility. Would you be willing to rent to us or even join us?" Every time we've sent that letter out, there's several churches that call and say, "Let's have a conversation."

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's cool. Warren, I'll give you the final word. Anything you would want to say to people who may be in the position of being the lead role because of growth, or momentum, or a bright future?

Warren Bird:

Remember that it's God who's building the church. It's easy to think, "Oh, we found the secret sauce in a way." I know you never want to go public in admitting that, but it's like, "Oh, we're really onto something here." Well, yes, God has showed you a certain way to connect with a certain segment of the culture. But it's God who wants to build the church, and in, as Jim has voiced, in humility. Do you really see another congregation as a way to build up the body of Christ, even if the names and the labels get changed? Are you approaching it with that attitude? Is it a kingdom mindset?

Warren Bird:

Just to carry it one step further, Dave Ferguson with the Exponential movement in the book Hero Maker and other things, has said that really to become a level five multiplying church, you've got to learn to network with other churches. It doesn't happen alone just because you have good theology and a great fog machine. You've got to figure out, "How do we become a kingdom player where I care more about the expansion of the gospel in this city or community than I do about whose name goes on it, and who gets the credit. and where the money ends up flowing?" If that's your mentality, then God is going to open up doors of connection for you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I can't thank you guys enough for another great conversation, this one together. Tell us about the book, where it's available, the release date, and then where's a website they can visit to learn more?

Warren Bird:

The book released August 5th, 2020. Our friends at Amazon, by the way, 82% of pastors buy their books on Amazon, the last statistic I heard. All the major booksellers will have it. It's by Fortress Press is the actual publisher. We'd love to hear from you. If you read it or look into it, we'd love to serve you and field your questions.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Awesome. Awesome. Great. Gentlemen, thank you so much. I really appreciate this. You helped a lot of leaders today.

Jim Tomberlin:

Thank you, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I just love picking leaders brains on things. One of the things I love about this podcast is people have different opinions. They didn't 100% agree on everything, but some of my other guests might say, "No, it's a little more like this, a little more like that." I think you make the best decisions when you have the widest variety of opinions. If you want to do a double click on some of the things they talked about, we have show notes for you. You can find those at [careynieuwhof.com/episode367](http://careynieuwhof.com/episode367). Well, we've got things that you can share on social media there as well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've got a brand new podcast page too. If you have not yet checked out, [careynieuwhof.com/mypodcast](http://careynieuwhof.com/mypodcast), do that, or just go to [careynieuwhof.com](http://careynieuwhof.com) and click on the podcast tab. You'll see it there. Much easier to navigate. We spotlight some episodes. Recent episodes are there, and we would love to know your favorite episodes. We may actually feature you in a section we're calling Listener Favorites. We have the top episodes outlined, the most recent. But we want to know what your favorite are. Some of you, I know because I get this mail, right, some of you have listened to all 367 episodes, which is unbelievable. Which is your favorite? We'll start profiling you there, so you can see yourself, eventually, over at my podcast page at [careynieuwhof.com](http://careynieuwhof.com). Make sure you check that out.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, we got some great guests coming up. I am super excited to have Chris Hogan from Dave Ramsey's company coming up on the next episode, and I'm just interested in studying human behavior. Chris shares some surprising data and insights from a 2017 study of 10,000 millionaires, largest ever done, and the habits that made them wealthy. It is not what you think. A lot of them never made a six-figure salary. If you're like, "I work for a church or not-for-profit, I'll never be rich, and blah, blah," rich is not the goal. But I'll tell you, if you got financial stress, you got stress. Chris and I talk about that. Here's an excerpt.

Chris Hogan:

I'm going to tell you, the big salary thing was totally a myth, looking at this. I know people want to believe that, but it's just a third of the millionaires that we study, a third of them did not have a six-figure household combined.

Carey Nieuwhof:

All right, that's coming up next time on the podcast. Guys, if you subscribe, wherever you're listening right now, just hit the subscribe button. So many of you have done that. This has been massive growth for us over the last few months on this podcast. Thank you. We have a lot of guests coming up. You're not going to want to miss. Greg Atkinson is back for round three on how to attract and keep church visitors. We have Rich Villodas Lecrae, Harris III. Who else is coming up? Anne Graham Lotz, Lysa TerKeurst, Beth Moore just said, "Yeah, I'll come on the podcast." Wow, so many more. Very excited for that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Now, it's time for What I'm Thinking About. We're going to talk about some traps you can fall into on social media. I have felt these tensions. Make sure you check out our partners at Remodel Health. Visit [remodelhealth.com/carey](http://remodelhealth.com/carey) today to learn how to run your organization. Some savings in healthcare. Get

access to their free savings calculator, church buyer's guide, brand new eBook at [remodelhealth.com/carey](#), and by Pro Media Fire. Book your free digital strategy session today at [promediafire.com/churchgrowth](#).

Carey Nieuwhof:

You are online now more than ever before, and I think there are some traps for local pastors. Because you got your primary audience, which is the people that you serve, the people that attend your church, maybe the people in your local community. But you also got the world, right? Because that's what the internet does, is it brings the world to you. How do you navigate this tension? Here are just five things I have to keep my heart in check. I've seen this in other leaders as well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Number one, I think one of the traps for local church leaders to fall into is you'll be tempted to ignore your people in search of a bigger audience. I think that's one of the secrets of growth, right? People ask me all the time. It's like, "How did the podcast gets so big. What about your blog? How did you get so many readers?" I think if you focus on serving, you always have the new people in mind. But if you focus on serving the people you have, that has a way of producing organic growth, right? But you can tell sometimes. There are people who are online. It's like, "I just want a bigger audience." You have like 318 followers. It's like, "Why don't you just serve the people who follow you and the people that you're called to?" Then sometimes other people show up.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Second trap is that you spend more time with people you don't know than with people you do. This applies to people who are in climbers, right? It's like, "Oh, I want to meet so and so." You are trying to reach out and connect with people that you follow who might be "famous," who're internet famous, or niche famous, or whatever that happens to be. I'm just like, "Why don't you just, again, hang out with the people that you know really well, serve them." Then eventually what I think happens is some of the people who you may want to meet notice the good work you're doing and go, "You know what, I'd love to connect with you." Or maybe they don't, and you just serve your people really well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Third trap, you'll try to impress people you'll never meet. Yeah. You got to watch it. If you're on social hoping to get noticed, to pick up followers, hoping to get picked, as Seth Godin writes about, you're signing up for a lot of frustration. You'll likely fall prey to imitation. If you're always trying to impress people you'll never meet, you'll spend so much time trying to be someone else that you'll fail to develop who you are. Just, I would say, stop trying to impress people you don't know. Start serving people you do know.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Number four, fourth trap is you'll focus more on image and less on substance. I was having a conversation with a leader that I really respect the other day. He said the fun thing that he sees in this podcast and the blog I write, right, and the books I do, it's like the audience came because of content. He's totally right. I did not have staff when I started doing this podcast. I had some people produce some graphics and that kind of thing. But have you ever noticed this, that there's some people with incredible websites, but there's no substance there? It's like it's beautifully designed, it looks gorgeous, but you're talking to air. Yeah, you don't want to make your website or your podcast really dense or difficult to

access. On the other hand, you just focused on producing really, really good work, and a little more on substance, less on image. I think it's easier to get traction.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Then number five, the fifth trap is your sense of success will rise and fall with likes and shares. I see this a lot, where it's like, "Well, I'm just not growing as fast as I want to grow." Here's the reality, does it really matter if some follower 1,000 miles away thinks you're awesome if your spouse or staff thinks you're awful? I don't think that really matters. You shouldn't really depend on the opinion of people you will never meet and can't know. It's the people who are closest to you who should be the most grateful for you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Those are just some thoughts that I hope help you as you navigate this new world of social media, what is new, or advanced, or accelerated for a lot of you. Those are some things I'm thinking about this. This is the stuff I love to write about over at careynieuwhof.com. If you haven't yet subscribed to my newsletter, I've got one that I send out almost daily to over 70,000 leaders. You can get it for free. It's short, it's just a little daily dose of leadership wisdom, hopefully, or tips, or insights, or hacks. You can get it by texting the word CAREY to 33777. That's CAREY to 33777. Text it there, and we'll put you on the list.

Carey Nieuwhof:

All right, listen, thanks so much for listening. Back next time with a fresh episode. Super excited for it, and I really appreciate you with you in the season, and I hope our time together today has helped you lead like never before.

Announcer:

You've been listening to The Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast. Join us next time for more insights on leadership, change and personal growth to help you lead like never before.