

September, 2018

Peter Block, Walter Brueggemann, and John McKnight, *An Other Kingdom: Departing the Consumer Culture*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2016.

A business consultant, a community activist, and a biblical scholar walked into a bar ...

... and the result of many conversations together is this book.

Now, that's a mythical backstory that I have created. But Peter Block is a respected business consultant, John McKnight one of the leading thinkers and teachers in community organizing, and Walter Brueggemann one of North America's most revered biblical scholars. It's a strangely wonderful and provocative set of conversations that is well worth your consideration.

Their book confronts us, in the best Gospel way of using that word, with a prophetic call to change our ways of living together and find innovative schemes of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with this world's Creator who has serious problems with how we are messing up the gifts we have been given.

Presbyterians have spent generations refining a system of governance – we call it 'polity' – that will enable people to participate fully in the church's walk with Jesus Christ in blessing God's creation through the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We are convinced that the church is Jesus Christ and his people with their government. That means that people who hold a leadership position in our denomination should see themselves as servants of Jesus and his people, called to enable them to discern, decide, and deploy their resources to bless God's world by contributing to God's Commonwealth. These longish phrases are used to give you a sense of the initiatives of the Holy Trinity in this whole process. In one of the great summaries of the responsibilities and privileges of leadership with The Presbyterian Church in Canada, found in our governing manual, *The Book of Forms*, we say that our congregational council of elders, called the Session, should ensure:

... that Christian education for all ages is provided so that people "may be confronted by the Gospel, may grow in the faith, participate in the life of the Christian community, and be active witnesses to Christ in the world;"