



NOTES TO ELI

Reflections of a Samuel

Who Is Engaged in the Adventure
of Pastoral Leadership.

A Pilgrim Hears the Call of God and
Seeks to Be Faithful.

by **Mark A. Olson**

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“Eli, sometimes it is hard to distinguish between your voice and the voice of God. Like Samuel I get confused and turn to you. In your wisdom you point me to God. My teachers and mentors, like wise Eli, remind me to listen carefully—not to them—but to God.”

-Mark Olson

THE BOOK: “Notes to Eli” are Mark Olson’s “reflections of a Samuel, still listening for the call of God.” His message? The church must have a clear, focused agenda: God is central, the community gathered around the word and sacrament is fundamental, and worship needs to be participatory.

The notes begin in late 2001. From June 2002, Mark writes under the diagnosis of multiple myeloma—a disease that ended the notes, and his life, in October 2002. Even though his personal situation changed dramatically through these writings, his focus remained on being a pastor in a post-modern world.

The further you delve into the “Notes,” the more deeply you will experience Mark’s wisdom and the more you will be captured by his vision for evangelical leadership.

THE REVIEWS: “I have opportunity to write ‘blurbs’ for the jackets of many new books. It is standard procedure for me...to skim a book, get an impression or two, and dash off a surface paragraph. I was prepared to do so for this book...but then I got hooked...I could not put it down until I had read every page of it...This is a deep book, readily accessible. It is thick with faith and joy and sadness. I anticipate that many readers will, like me, also read every page and be changed by the reading of it.”

-Walter Brueggemann, Columbia Theological Seminary

“These are the writings of a profound theologian, a visionary prophet, an insightful teacher, a friend—but most importantly, a pastor...These letters...will invade your head, heart and spirit—and you will be changed.”

*-Ted Schroeder, Director for Education,
Division for Congregational Ministries-ELCA*

THE AUTHOR: Mark Olson was a pastor in five congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) or its predecessor bodies, served on the evangelism staff of the Division for Congregational Life of the ELCA, was an assistant to the bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod of the ELCA, authored three books and developed the Center for Congregational Leadership. He lectured and taught widely across the church and often did workshops with his wife, Elaine. He died at fifty-one from multiple myeloma, a form of cancer of the bone marrow and blood plasma.

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