



## Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership

By Ryan T. Hartwig Ph.D., Warren Bird



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2015 Readers' Choice Award Winner It's increasingly clear that leadership should be shared?for the good of any organization *and* for the good of the leader. Many churches have begun to share key leadership duties, but don't know how to take their leadership team to the point where it *thrives*. Others seriously need a new approach to leadership: pastors are tired, congregations are stuck, and meanwhile the work never lets up. But what does it actually mean to do leadership well as a team? How can it be done in a way that avoids frustration and burnout? How does team leadership best equip the staff and bless a congregation? What do the top church teams do to actually thrive together? Researchers and practitioners Ryan Hartwig and Warren Bird have discovered churches of various sizes and traditions throughout the United States who have learned to thrive under healthy team leadership. Using actual church examples, they present their discoveries here, culminating in five disciplines that, if implemented, can enable your team to thrive. The result? A coaching tool for senior leadership teams that enables struggling teams to thrive, and resources teams doing well to do their work even better.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"At Saddleback we've shared leadership from the beginning. While it's not always been easy, it's absolutely been worth it. This insightful book, with its strong research, real-life stories and practical how-tos, makes it easier for you to build a strong, thriving senior leadership team." (Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church and author of *The Purpose Driven Life* and *The Purpose Driven Church*)

"As someone who is passionate about helping teams become more productive and healthy, I strongly recommend *Teams That Thrive*. It draws out best practices and principles from hundreds of leadership teams, pulls together top marketplace research and then illustrates them with stories from churches at every level. I encourage you not to simply read it yourself, but to read it and work through it with your team. It will make you better. It will help you thrive." (Larry Osborne, pastor of North Coast Church and author of *Sticky Teams*)

"In *Teams That Thrive*, Ryan and Warren provide the church with valuable insight from research rooted in biblical principles to create a picture of team leadership that is sound and scriptural. Whether your church is two hundred or two thousand, whether your team is two or twenty-five, this book will be an essential resource." (Ed Stetzer, LifeWay Research, [www.edstetzer.com](http://www.edstetzer.com))

"The most effective churches in America today have strong leaders who surround themselves with a smart team of leaders. Finally, a practical book on leadership that helps churches develop the right kind of team to lead their church forward. This book is long overdue, greatly needed and high on my recommendation list." (Jim Tomberlin, founder, MultiSite Solutions, author, *Better Together*)

"We know that we're supposed to like working in teams, but how many of us actually get excited when we hear the word *teamwork*? It isn't that we hate working with others, it's just that more often than not teams seem to make things harder, not easier. Fortunately, in *Teams That Thrive*, Ryan and Warren promise it doesn't have to be that way. Read this book and start creating teams that work!" (Greg Surratt, founding pastor of Seacoast Church)

"Serious leaders are serious about their teams because something extraordinary happens when a team thrives, something much greater than the sum of its parts. *Teams That Thrive* is an unusual blend of spirit and practice. It is fresh, deep and eminently helpful!" (Nancy Ortberg, author of *Lessons in Non-Linear Leadership*)

"This practical book is full of tips and tools that church leadership teams can use to become better and to increase in impact. *Teams That Thrive* will be a great help to my own team as we help church leadership teams get unstuck." (Tony Morgan, founder and chief strategic officer of the Unstuck Group, author of *Take the Lid Off Your Church*)

"I can't think of a better, more needed topic than *Teams That Thrive*. The ability to build a culture of collaboration and team leadership is crucial to anyone's effectiveness in ministry. For years, Warren Bird has been a go-to expert for pastors wanting to learn how to do things better, and here he teams well with university professor Ryan Hartwig to pull together top research and great examples." (Dino Rizzo, executive director of the Association of Related Churches, author of *Servolution*)

"I wish I had read this book at the beginning of my ministry career! *Teams That Thrive* is an incredible resource to help you and your team rethink how you lead. Packed with outstanding research, helpful tips, practical wisdom and thoughts from expert commentators, this book is the how-to resource you need to move your team (and your church) from simply surviving to thriving." (Jenni Catron, church leader and author of *Clout*)

"In this rigorous and readable treatment of church leadership teams, Warren Bird and Ryan Hartwig show how shared leadership and an effective team at the top not only ensure high-functioning church operations, but they also provide the model for a thriving congregation and a healthy community culture. *Teams That Thrive* provides practical solutions and inspiring wisdom to those who would elevate their team leadership capacity in ways that genuinely contribute to effective, purposive and growing church communities." (Ruth Wageman, author of *Senior Leadership Teams*)

"I'm a better leader with a healthier leadership team because of the principles outlined in this book. In *Teams That Thrive*, Ryan and Warren have given all of us an accessible roadmap for high performance leadership teams in any church context." (Chris Lewis, lead pastor of Foothill Church)

"*Teams That Thrive* is an incredibly practical guide for church leadership teams. Dr. Bird and Dr. Hartwig understand that pastors don't need another book on leadership theory; they need practical tools to implement collaborative leadership in the context of day-to-day ministry. That's exactly what *Teams That Thrive* delivers." (Geoff Surratt, pastor, coach to church planters, and author of *Ten Stupid Things That Keep Churches from Growing*)

"Every time I meet with pastors, the subject of leadership comes up at some point in the conversation. The struggle for all churches is to build new leaders who are unified around a common vision. This is a needed book to help us build better teams and better churches." (Ron Edmondson, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church)

"The daily life of running a church ministry is all about teams. How are they doing? Are they growing? How do we get new folks on teams? *Teams That Thrive* helps us to answer these questions with solid research, stories and examples, and to form and maintain great teams." (David Fletcher, executive pastor at the EvFree Church of Fullerton, California, founder of xpastor.com, author of several books, including *Crisis Leadership*)

"Church leaders talk big about the priesthood of all believers, but too many don't know how to live that out on the leadership team level. This excellent book shows how." (Derwin Gray, founding pastor, Transformation Church, Indian Land, SC, and author, *Limitless Life*)

"What's essential and what's superfluous? What should we tackle head-on and what should we detour around? How do we course correct when we hit trouble? How do we keep momentum when we have it? From a strong mythbuster start to a next-best-step finish, this book is a one-of-a-kind resource for teams. Spoiler alert: help is here." (Kem Meyer, former executive team member and communications director at Granger Community Church, kemmeyer.com)

"Rarely does a book debut in the church arena that has a strong combination of understanding, analysis, solutions, research, biblical basis and real life usability. My friends Warren Bird, Ryan Hartwig and their team have produced just that in *Teams That Thrive*. Churches will be stronger because teams will be healthier and more productive, enhancing the kingdom of our Lord. Every leader in your church needs a personal copy of this book." (Samuel R. Chand, leadership consultant, samchand.com, author of *Cracking*)

Your Church's Culture Code)

"*Teams That Thrive* is about the work that leaders do to build high performance teams?and the things that are keeping them from it. If your team embodies the disciplines in this book, you'll be well on your way to a team experience that will not only change your organization but will ultimately change you!" (Josh Whitehead, executive pastor of Faith Promise Church)

"I'm a lay leader serving on the leadership team of a church of 225 and this fast-moving book has a lot of practical ideas and relevant application for us." (Ron Keener, former editor, Church Executive)

"Acknowledging that every church context is unique, Ryan and Warren clearly explain each discipline and how they are accomplished. Commentary from a recognized expert or veteran leader validates insights and provides further tips for implementation. Starting with a reality test of your current leadership effectiveness, take your church staff to a new level of spiritual maturity, mutual support, energized action and high accountability." (Thomas Bandy, Outreach Magazine's Resources of the Year, March/April 2016)

"Researchers and practitioners Ryan Hartwig and Warren Bird have discovered churches of various sizes and traditions throughout the United States who have learned to thrive under healthy team leadership. Using actual church examples, they present their discoveries here, culminating in five disciplines that, if implemented, can enable your team to thrive. The result? A coaching tool for senior leadership teams that enables struggling teams to thrive, and resources teams doing well to do their work even better." (Light Magazine Canada, April 2015)

"*Teams That Thrive* is especially helpful for pastors who lead a staff and want the staff to function as a team rather than as independent staff members who run in their own lane and rarely collaborate. Running a staff team that succeeds takes intentionality and hard work. This book helps spot areas of focus that will improve the pastor's leadership and the team's performance." (David Whiting, Baptist Bulletin, September-October 2015)

"I would recommend this book to any team that is struggling to grow their capacity and increase their effectiveness." (Mennonite Brethren Herald, July 16, 2015)

"Researchers and practitioners Ryan Hartwig and Warren Bird studied churches of various sizes and traditions throughout the United States that have learned to thrive under healthy team leadership. Using church examples, they present their discoveries here, culminating in five disciplines that will enable your team to thrive. Their book is a great coaching tool for senior leadership teams struggling to thrive, and a helpful resource for teams doing well but wanting to do even better." (Facts & Trends, August/September 2015)

#### About the Author

Ryan T. Hartwig (PhD, University of Colorado) teaches small-group, organizational and leadership communication at Azusa Pacific University, where he serves as associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In addition, he frequently speaks to groups of pastors and ministry leaders regarding senior leadership teams, teamwork in ministry, and small-group ministry design and leadership. His scholarship has been published in the *Journal of Applied Communication Research* and *Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal*, and presented at the annual meetings of the National Communication Association (NCA), the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA), and the Rocky Mountain Communication Association (RMCA). He and his wife Jill have three daughters and one son and live in the Los Angeles area.

Warren Bird (PhD, Fordham University) is the director of research and intellectual capital support for Leadership Network. He also spearheads ongoing research initiatives and Leadership Network's free bi-weekly e-newsletter, *Advance*. Warren has written many publications for Leadership Network and also collaboratively authored or co-authored over twenty books for ministry leaders, including *Next: Pastoral Succession that Works*, *Viral Churches*, *The Multi-Site Church Roadtrip* and *Better Together: Making Church Mergers Work*. Warren is an ordained minister through the Christian and Missionary Alliance, having served as a church planter, associate pastor or lead pastor for fourteen years. Warren and his wife Michelle live just outside New York City, and have two grown children.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Rosalie Lloyd:**

The book Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership make one feel enjoy for your spare time. You may use to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting tension or having big problem along with your subject. If you can make looking at a book Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership for being your habit, you can get a lot more advantages, like add your current capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You may know everything if you like open and read a guide Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science guide or encyclopedia or other people. So , how do you think about this book?

#### **Nancy Jackson:**

Nowadays reading books are more than want or need but also work as a life style. This reading behavior give you lot of advantages. Advantages you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book which improve your knowledge and information. The info you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want drive more knowledge just go with knowledge books but if you want feel happy read one using theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. Often the Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership is kind of e-book which is giving the reader unforeseen experience.

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Reading can called thoughts hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book especially book entitled Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe mysterious for but surely might be your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a book then become one web form conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get just before. The Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership giving you a different experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful facts for your better life within this era. So now let us demonstrate the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished studying it, like winning a casino game. Do you want to try this extraordinary spending spare time activity?

**Joshua Stpierre:**

Is it you actually who having spare time after that spend it whole day by means of watching television programs or just lying down on the bed? Do you need something new? This Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership can be the response, oh how comes? A fresh book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your time by reading in this completely new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these books have than the others?

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