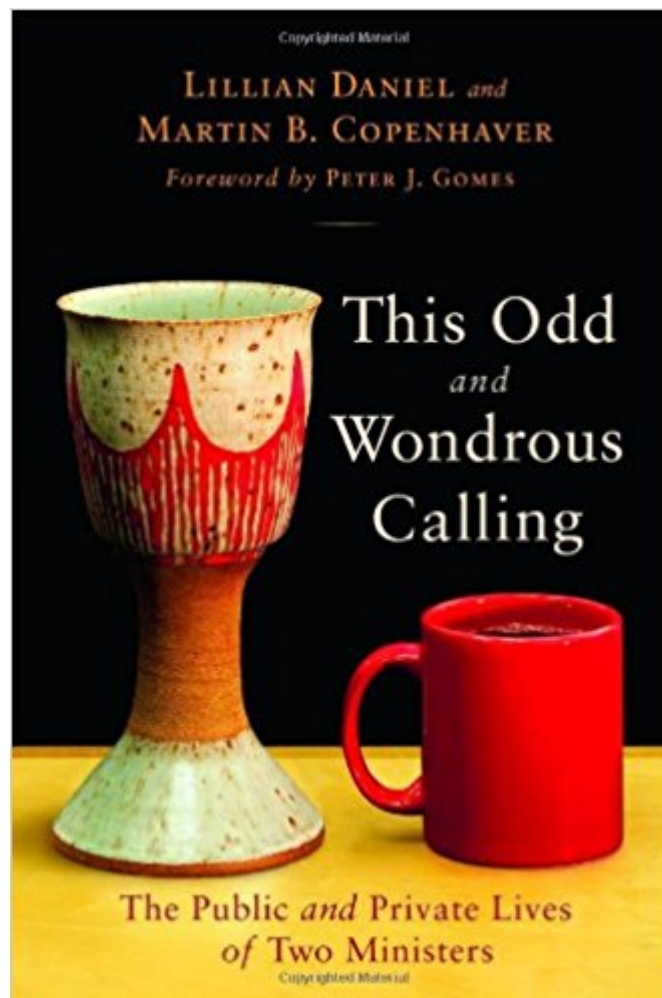




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# This Odd And Wondrous Calling: The Public And Private Lives Of Two Ministers



## Synopsis

This *Odd and Wondrous Calling* offers something different from most books available on ministry. Two people still pastoring reflect honestly here on both the joys and the challenges of their vocation. / Anecdotal and extremely readable, the book covers a diversity of subjects revealing the incredible variety of a pastor's day. The chapters move from comedy to pathos, story to theology, Scripture to contemporary culture. This *Odd and Wondrous Calling* is both serious and fun and is ideal for those who are considering the ministry or who want a better understanding of their own minister's life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Samuel T. Lloyd III Dean, Washington National Cathedral "One of the most human and most helpful books on ministry that I know. With moving, often humorous stories Lillian Daniel and Martin Copenhaver open windows onto the major and the mundane in the life of a minister — shaking hands at the door, navigating a clergy marriage, handling money, visiting the hospital. Here is ordained ministry in all its depths, its ordinariness, and its joys." Lauren F. Winner, author of *A Girl Meets God* and *Mudhouse Sabbath* "My dictionary doesn't have enough enthusiastic adjectives for this book, which I adore. . . Everyone who loves the church or struggles with the church or is just plain curious about the church will relish every page." Thomas G. Long Candler School of Theology, Emory University "Honest, wise, deeply personal, profoundly theological, and — what's more — delightfully written." M. Craig Barnes, author

of *The Pastor as Minor Poet* "This is not another 'how-to' book that reduces the mystery of pastoral ministry to simplistic formulas. . . The authors are often brutally honest about the church as well as themselves, but always compelling, and in the end so very hopeful about our calling." Anthony B. Robinson, author of *Changing the Conversation* "Here's a book about ministry from the inside, written by two practitioners of the craft. And not just any two practitioners, but two excellent ministers who are gifted writers. . . . This is the best kind of affirmation of the ministry – an honest one, richly grounded in the reality of the church." Peter J. Gomes (from the foreword) "This book gets better the more it is read; it does honor to the church and the ministry. . . We have in it both a classic and a class act." Byron Borger *Hearts and Minds Bookstore* "If you are a clergy person, you will love this. If you know pastors well, you'll get it. If you want to understand what ministers go through – their inner lives, their joys and frustrations, the strains on their marriages, their fears and foibles – this is a must-read."

Lillian Daniel is the senior minister of First Congregational Church, Glen Ellyn, Illinois, and a host of the Chicago-based television program "30 Good Minutes." She is also the author of *Tell It Like It Is: Reclaiming the Practice of Testimony*, and *When "Spiritual but Not Religious" Is Not Enough: Seeing God in Surprising Places, Even the Church*. Martin B. Copenhaver is senior pastor of Wellesley Congregational Church in Wellesley, Massachusetts. His other books include *Living Faith While Holding Doubts* and *To Begin at the Beginning*.

This is a very practical book. It gives any new or older minister in the ministry some things to think about. My favorite chapter is the one when Martin describes some of the answers he would like to give, but perhaps shouldn't. The answers are the result of questions because someone just found out Martin was a minister. I do, however, wish the two authors would have devoted a chapter purely to their bios. One paragraph devoted to their childhood, high school, college and first two years of full-time ministry for example. Yes, some of this was covered in other chapters, but the focus of the chapters was not their bio summary.

Being in pastoral ministry can be difficult and yet incredibly wonderful. It is as if the writers were in my head at different points in my life, and I was encouraged by their wisdom, wit and honesty. If you are in ministry, thinking of going into ministry, or married to a minister, this is a great book to read.

This is an engaging, truthful look at a personal call to ministry--what a minister does and why--and

why that calling is so wondrous and rewarding even as is often bewildering and strange. The chapters alternate between the two authors, each with an individual voice, both vivid story tellers who are also able to approach ministry not only with a sense of calling, but also with humility, wonder, and a good bit of humor. Spot on, I'd say!

Product was received as promised and matched the seller's description.

A relatively bizarre book. The two authors write of unique experiences they have had in the course of their ministries. If you are like me, you will relate to some stuff, find some stuff amusing, and some downright controversial. This would be a good book to discuss with fellow workers in professional/lay ministry.

What a great concept - sharing their lives openly. This book was interesting and funny. For those who put their clergy on a pedestal and out of reach. They are human and approachable, just like the rest of us.. They also have the same needs, short comings and feelings as the rest of us. Most were called by God to be his stewards and not only bare their own burdens, but ours. These two are AWESOME!!!

As a fellow clergy person, I found many of the essays within this text engaging and relatable. The authors have clear voices in how they write. I found the topics interesting, and certainly laughed to myself at familiar moments that I have experienced as well. This is a good read for those who want to learn more about what the life of a minister is like, or for those on a track to hearing their call.

It is extremely difficult to write a book delving so deeply into the stuff of parish ministry and living out our faith in ways as insightful and authentic as this book. But to do all of this while appealing equally to pastors and to laity is a singular achievement. I seldom see such a thing. This book is so readable and engaging, it is tough to put down. As a pastor, I vouch for the struggles and joys here attested to. It's a life of which most laypersons have surprisingly little awareness. This splendid book pulls back the veil around us in an honest, helpful way. Nothing in this glimpse is cheap. This is how things are, friends! As an author, I applaud the wide embrace of the readership, including all of the church of Jesus Christ. A book like this is long overdue. Why wasn't it written before? A thoughtful layperson in my church was touched by it and wrote the following: "What is more inscrutable--or more delectably interesting--than the pastor's inner life? In "This Odd and Wondrous Calling" Martin

Copenhaver and Lillian Daniel open their hearts and minds to candidly give us a look into the personal challenges and triumphs, both large and small, of being called to the ministry. It is a window that humanizes their struggles, joys and faith in a way that is inspiring to us all."

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