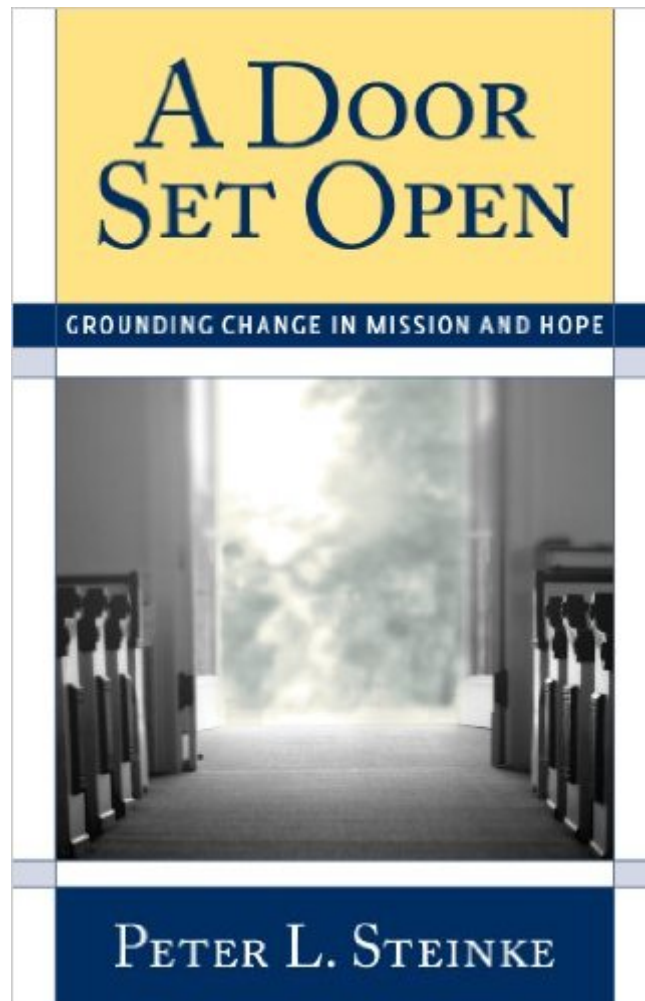


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A Door Set Open: Grounding Change In Mission And Hope



Synopsis

We resist change less when we associate it with mission and fortify it with hope. So argues longtime congregational consultant Peter Steinke in his fourth book, *A Door Set Open*, as he explores the relationship between the challenges of change and our own responses to new ideas and experiences. Steinke builds on a seldom-explored principle posited by the late Rabbi Edwin Friedman: the 'hostility of the environment' is proportionate to the 'response of the organism.' The key, Steinke says, is not the number or strength of the stressors in the system--anxiety, poor conditions, deteriorating values--but the response of the individual or organization to 'what is there.' Drawing on Bowen system theory and a theology of hope, as well as his experience working with more than two hundred congregations, Steinke makes the case that the church has entered an era of great opportunity. Theologian and sociologist Ernst Troeltsch said the church had closed down the office of eschatology. Steinke reopens it and draws our attention to God's future, to a vision of hope for the people of God. The door is set open for exploration and new creation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A review of "A Door set open: Grounding change in mission and hope" written by Peter Steinke, published by the Alban institute, 2010. Reviewed by Craig Cottongim In the Spring of 2010 Alban announced that "A door set open" would soon be released. Having read and reread Steinke's three previous books (referencing them and recommending them constantly in ministry) my level of expectation and anticipation for his fourth book grew extremely high. What most readers will want to know before considering the strengths or weaknesses of this new book is this: Does Steinke merely rehash old material from his previous three successful books, or, has he brought something new to the table? While this new book is hands-down a systems thinking/theory based book, he offers several new ideas and patterns which he has not mentioned in earlier books. His writing style and direction take on a familiar feel that most readers accustomed to Steinke's other books will quickly settle into, yet readers won't feel like they are just reading a stale, rewritten leftover from Steinke's overflow. It will come as no surprise to any of Peter Steinke's fans that his latest book follows in the footsteps of his other books, and therefore is heavily influenced by Ed Freidman and Murray Bowen. What might be a surprise is the pervasive level of influence N.T. Wright, the British Bishop, plays in Steinke's thinking. The title itself, "A Door set open" is borrowed from Wright's comments in his popular book, Simply Christian: Why Christianity makes sense. N.T. Wright is not alone in shaping Steinke's tone; Steinke quotes over a dozen theologians from at least three different continents to make his case for why we should still have hope.

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