



Learning and Transformation

RESOURCES FOR CONVERSATIONS
FROM THE TEXAS METHODIST FOUNDATION

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLERGY LEADERS: IS THERE ONLY ONE PATH TO GET US THERE?

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**LEADERSHIP TABLE THINK TANK OF UMC LEADERS
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THE CONTEXT

Much can be said, and very much has been written, about the cultural changes that have redefined the mission field in which clergy work and congregations live. Agility and purposefulness are now required of all organizations – a demand forced by a number of drivers such as new cultures of individualism and consumerism, a deep shift in thought and assumptions that is commonly framed as postmodernism, and a deep tension between localism and globalism fueled by technology. For the purpose of this paper, which is focused on leadership development of clergy, I propose to shorthand the implication of these significant changes as the shift from a convergent to a divergent environment.

The distinction between convergent and divergent environments is the work of Charles Handy.¹ He notes that a convergent setting is one in which the question is the same for everyone and the answer is the same for everyone. For a group of people who are all sitting in the same room, a convergent question is, How far is it to the nearest airport? The question is the same for everyone. The answer is the same for everyone. However, a divergent setting is one in which the question is the same for everyone but the answers are different. A divergent question is, Why do you want to go to the nearest airport? While the question is the same for everyone, the answers will be multiple and often competing.

I will argue that the UMC once appropriately called and prepared leaders for a convergent church in a convergent North American culture. There was a time in the relatively near past when the church was filled with convergent questions and equally convergent answers. I often joke that the definition of vital worship was once so congruent that one did not need to wear a watch to church but could tell the time by where they were in the liturgy. The question of vital worship was the same for everyone and the answer of a standardized United Methodist liturgy was equally the same for all. Questions of what now constitutes vital worship, or stewardship, mission, connectionalism, congregational identity and vision are appropriately all now highly divergent questions with not only different but often competing answers. In fact, divergent answers can now live side by side within the same congregation if the members/participants are sufficiently multigenerational or diverse in a host of other ways. Contexts have changed. Sensitivities have changed. Demographics and culture have changed. Convergent practices and convergent leaders no longer serve us effectively.

Where once the church prepared its leaders with shared answers and standardized practices for a congruent church, the task is now to recruit, train, certify, deploy, develop, hold accountable, and support divergent leaders in a divergent church that seeks to work in a cultural mission field now defined by its diversity and competing values. To manage the divergence of the settings of ministry, leaders need to develop a firm sense of self, a clearly defined spiritual center, a firm grounding in Wesleyan theology and the disciplines of the church, and a pastoral imaginationⁱⁱ that will serve to lead people to a discipleship with Christ amidst the multiple and competing demands of a postmodern, globalized world. The task of leadership has changed and the product of our leadership development system (i.e., leaders) to be delivered by our institutional structures now must be as divergent as the settings for ministry in the changed mission field. The test in leadership development now facing our denomination is whether we will be able to remain steady in purpose but flexible in strategy – a requirement of all living systems in a changing environment.ⁱⁱⁱ

THREE STREAMS OF LEADERSHIP RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

Over the past 70 years the research and literature about North American leadership generally followed three streams of exploration:^{iv}

1. Traits of leadership: This stream explored the personal traits of leaders to determine who would make a good leader. Personality traits, aptitudes, and attitudes were the primary focus. Hagiographies of people such as Jack Welsh or Lee Iacocca were a part of this stream as is a good bit of the literature written about Jesus as leader. Notably the search for the traits of leadership suggests that leadership is not learnable. As other traits, you either have it or you don't.

2. Skills of leadership: This stream of research and literature explored the behaviors, actions and practices of leaders. A recent example of the approach can be found in my book, *Journey in the Wilderness*, where a set of adaptive leadership skills is described.^v Different from the traits of leadership that are interior characteristics, skills can be learned and replicated. Skills can also be applied or set aside as needed.

3. Leadership as a transaction: The third stream of research and literature recognized the transactional nature of leadership in which the primary attribute of good leadership is the ability to be appropriate to the leadership needs of the system being led. Leadership happens in the transactional space between the leader and the system being led. The work in this area has helped us to understand that men and women, introverts and extroverts, visionaries and pragmatics can equally provide good leadership if what they offer is appropriate to the questions and conditions facing the organization. The work in this area has also helped us to understand that particular traits and skills are functional in some settings but not applicable to all.

This third stream of investigation has helped to highlight the diagnostic task of the leader – to be able to appropriately diagnose both the organization and its environment in order to provide appropriate leadership. Such truisms, as the task of a leader is to help the organization face honestly into its current reality and to help the organization shape a realistic future, come from this transactional stream. Beginning with the early work of the Alban Institute and the Hartford Seminary, leaders began a search for diagnostic tools and models for both the congregation and the community in which the congregation was located in support of this transactional leadership.^{vi}

For the purpose of this paper I would use the ideas of convergence / divergence, and the notion of different streams of leadership research and literature to argue that our basic assumptions about leadership development have changed since the time of my ordination. I was born into and ordained into a convergent United Methodist Church that was living in a convergent culture. People were expected to share both the same questions and the same answers. While there were regional differences in the practices of the Methodist Church there was an expected sameness in the way in which leaders were to be prepared for leadership and a sameness in which they were expected to practice their leadership. In such an environment and time of congruence it is sufficient to focus on the traits and skills of leadership (streams 1 & 2 above). However, in a time of cultural and congregational divergence, transactional and diagnostic forms of leadership (stream 3) take on a new importance. No longer preparing leaders for a church or a culture driven by uniformity, we are now seeking to prepare leaders for an array of types of congregations and ministry settings (some of which do not yet exist in great numbers) in a culture marked by its mosaic nature.

Much of the criticism of our current system of recruiting, training, certification and deployment of ordained leaders centers on the way in which a highly integrated system naturally produces a highly integrated product. Requiring a standardized path for the preparation and development of leaders quite naturally results in a standardized and modest range of traits, skills, and transactional sensitivity. A system produces what it is designed to produce.

The United Methodist Church, in its search for a way to find traction in a fast changing culture, now feels the limits of producing middle class leaders for a church that wants to stretch beyond the limits of a shrinking middle class, stretch beyond the limits of leaders more prepared to serve the model of congregation that is now disappearing rather than new forms being birthed, stretch beyond the ethnic and generational limits to which we have been confined in the past. We are caught in the bind of using a highly convergent leadership development system while hoping to produce a divergent pool of leaders able to introduce the Gospel and make disciples across multiple differences in the mission field.

THE AGILITY OF MOVING SLOWLY

The temptation at an adaptive moment in which it is clear that we must change, rather than improve, our denominational leadership development system is to move toward action and results too quickly. A favorite story comes from a friend whose son was studying to become a brain surgeon. When performing his first solo surgery the young surgeon's mentor, who was standing by his side in the operating room, cautioned the young surgeon at the beginning saying, "Remember, from the time you open the skull you only have three minutes to complete the surgery before the patient begins to develop physical stress. So, whatever you do, move slowly." The Call to Action in our denomination comes at a time when the church feels that it is facing crises that call for immediate action. However, the Call to Action also provides a pivotal moment in which the church is asked to face into its unsustainable reality, to be clear that vital congregations are a prerequisite to making disciples, and to risk challenging normative assumptions, structures, and programs that have supported our established forms of ministry in the past. The opportunity presented by this moment is great and leaders need to move slowly so as not to lose the gain that can come from this time.

FOUR CENTRAL QUESTIONS TO SHAPE THE CONVERSATION

I would suggest that there are at least four questions that can helpfully shape the context for considerations of future leadership in the UMC. Like many wilderness experiences in which deep thought is required at the same time that decisive leadership needs to provide some direction and movement, we do not have the luxury to form definitive answers to the following questions before needing to act. Moving slowly with discernment and deliberation does not mean stopping for a search for certainty. Nonetheless, I argue that questions such as these need to shape the context of our conversation and work.

Question #1: What kind of leadership does the UMC need in the next 10 to 20 years?

This is the output question. A system can very simply be thought of in three component parts: the input, the throughput, and the output. The input of a system is the resources (the nouns) that flow into the system as raw material. The throughput of a system is the activities (the verbs) that work with and on the resources to change them into the output that the system needs. The output is the difference (in product, service, or result) that the system is seeking to provide. Peter Drucker and Jim Collins are clear in their assessment that non-profit organizations, including churches and church systems, are not at all clear about the output that they are after.^{vii} In its simplest form the UMC now states clearly that it wants to make disciples and in order to make disciples it wants to produce vital congregations. However, both the nature of a disciple and the nature of a vital congregation is a divergent question with multiple answers driven more by the complex mission field than by the lack of clarity of congregational and denominational leaders. In terms of the recruitment and preparation of leaders we are not yet clear about what we seek to produce because the complex mission field has multiple rather than singular needs and demands.

Collins points out that when a system does not know what its output is to be, it measures its inputs and its throughputs – its resources and activities.^{viii} Denominational leaders argue with deep concern about whether we have enough and the right kind of candidates for our ministry (inputs) and whether we have the right recruitment, candidacy, educational/training, evaluation, certification, deployment, accountability, and support systems in place (throughputs). Such questions cannot be answered until there is clarity about the kind of leaders needed (outputs).

The challenge is that systems must be built backwards – from output back to resources. Until a system is clear about what it needs to produce there is no clarity about the resources and activities necessary to produce the needed results. For example, it is not sufficient for a restaurant owner to know that he or she is to produce a meal. Until there is clarity about whether the restaurant is to produce either a fine dining experience or a fast-food meal, the owner does not know whether to hire an experienced chef or a hamburger manager; does not know whether to look for the best quality ingredients that may slow down the cooking process but produce a memorable meal or to look for standardized ingredients that won't slow down the quick and steady production of burgers; does not know whether to provide a textured, quiet and comfortable ambiance to encourage customers to linger over their meal or to provide hard plastic furniture in bright garish colors with an overabundance of light and music that will encourage people to eat quickly and move on. Outputs determine the resources and activities needed.

The current conversations about the future leaders needed by the UMC must mature beyond general ideas of better, younger, healthier, more entrepreneurial or more spiritual. What is the outcome that we now need to produce in any given mission field, and what kind of leaders will we specifically need to recruit, develop, deploy and support in that particular mission field? Do we need leaders to serve or revitalize the current churches that make up the denomination, or leaders to help form and lead the kinds of congregations that will speak more plainly to a changed culture? Do we need leaders who can speak clearly to the middle class where Methodism currently has its strength, or leaders who can comfortably and authentically reach beyond the shrinking middle class to address others in need of a Christ that can be understood through a Wesleyan frame? Do we need leaders who work from the base of established Anglo models and assumptions, or leaders that can adapt and work from the multiple models and assumptions of a wide variety of ethnic, racial, and cultural streams? Do we need leaders who require full time professional clergy roles and compensation packages, or leaders that integrate ministry into a wider personal professional or employment setting? We can easily conclude that these are not either / or questions but both / and. We can easily say yes to all of the above options and more.

Nonetheless, if a system is to produce the product or service desired, it must begin with a clear definition or description of its specific output and then build backwards, actively seeking the appropriate candidates and putting in place the appropriate certification, training, and deployment that will provide the required outcome. A standardized system built with convergent assumptions and expectations cannot provide divergent results.

Question #2: How does one learn a profession?

A profession is a paid occupation that requires prolonged training and formal qualification. So, in asking the question of how one learns a profession we are not here raising the issue of call. The question is meant to invite us to think through the process of developing a person in the practice of ministry, not to explore the motivation or reason for that person to feel called to practice ministry. Mastering a profession requires a weaving together of information, experience, personal integration, risk, and a thirst for continued maturation. It also requires disorientation and challenge.

Hubert and Stuart Dryfus, writing about the development of professional social workers, offer a way to think about professional development using five stages as follows:^{ix}

■ Novice- Learning the “rules of the game”

Key for the novice stage is the relation of theory to practice in learning. For the novice stage, theory is a lot of “context free” information, both theory and rules of thumb, that can be understood at a basic level without experience in the area being learned.

■ **Advanced Beginner – Using Rules in Context**

The advanced beginner draws on accumulated facility in using a set of rules and also starts to attend to various situational factors. Competence develops out of the advanced beginner's experience of being overwhelmed. In order to control a multitude of variables, one chooses a plan that helps focus and organize one's performance. In addition – and this is a key difference – one begins to feel ultimate responsibility for the outcome of one's acts and deep emotional investment in the choice of a course of action.

■ **Competent to Proficient – The Intuitive Leap**

Proficiency describes a stage at which one acts intuitively "without thinking", drawing on 'know-how' that is the result of many similar experiences that now provide the mental backdrop for an immediate cause of action in this current situation ("holistic similarity recognition"). The difference between the proficient performer and the expert is that the former does not yet have enough experience with the outcomes of a wide variety of possible responses to react automatically. The proficient performer must still decide what to do.

Emotional involvement in decision making, and the pain or elation related to various outcomes, is essential to the development of the capacity for the transition to the stages beyond competent.

■ **Expertise**

Expertise emerges when the conscious decision becomes intuitive also. Experts do engage in deliberation when something quite important or novel is at stake, but this is not the calculative deliberation of the novice or competent beginner; rather it is a critical reflection on one's intuition. What distinguished expertise is fluid motion.

■ **Mastery**

Mastery posits that the highest expertise requires patterns of apprenticeship that allows one to train with various masters and to utilize multiple disciplines sequentially.

Consideration of the various stages of professional development and practice allows for a number of observations that may include the following:

The first observation is there is a stage of professional ministerial development where content is more important than context. There must be a stage where the practitioner simply learns the "rules of the game" – the disciplines of the practice of ministry, a sufficient amount of history to be able to locate oneself in the tradition and the theology which drives the purpose of the practice of the profession, the territory as well as the boundaries of the human questions that the practice of the profession can hope to address. The Dryfus brothers note that in the earliest stage of professional development theory is encountered as "context free" information. A person's experience in their own congregation prior to being called and the denominationally required seminary preparation can easily be seen as formative to this earliest stage of professional development. This may be an important consideration as we address the opportunity and the limits of professional preparation that can be done by the seminary.

Because the UMC feels a strong need for new forms of leadership, and because the seminary is the foundational place of preparation, questions have at times been raised and challenges leveled unfairly that seminaries are not doing their job. Indeed, the reality may be more that the general church is expecting too much of seminary preparation which has the primary task of helping candidates learn the fundamental "rules of the game" with only limited application to the context of ministry through field education requirements. My concern is that additional freighting of the seminary experience with expectations of full leadership training is both inappropriate and damaging to the seminary experience. At best, a basic seminary education can only point to some forms of leadership or development of some skills that will need to be developed in the field. It is helpful to consider seminary preparation in light of how other disciplines prepare their practitioners. Law schools prepare lawyers with the disciplines, the history, and the resources of the law but do not prepare graduates with the skills of running a law firm or providing leadership to a team in a law office. Medical schools prepare doctors with the disciplines, the history, and the resources of medicine but do not prepare graduates to run a medical practice. There is a difference in a physician's ability to know the symptoms that will lead to an appropriate diagnosis (the primary jurisdiction of the medical school) and the physician's developed skill in being able to locate and recognize those symptoms in the story or in the way in which the patient presents himself or herself to the physician (skills that must be learned in the field and that can only be pointed at through courses in narrative medicine in medical school).

The second observation is that there is a level of professional preparation where content must engage context, the result of which is being overwhelmed. Seminaries are able to only introduce students to this level of professional development through field education. While an important experience, field education continues to invite both the student and the people in the ministry setting to see the student as student, not as practitioner. Annual conference probationary programs for candidates for ministry offer better opportunities for people in preparation to begin to integrate content and context. The current experience and evidence of the Lilly Endowment, Inc. work on “Sustaining Pastoral Excellence” suggests that ongoing structured clergy peer groups may be one of the most promising paths for practitioners to continually engage content with context and to reflect on professional practice at the nexus of the two.^x Renewed attention to mentors and coaches provide other alternatives to sustaining the integration of content and context but perhaps have yet to fully mature as they seek to be helpful to professional development.

The third observation is that there is a point at which simply providing additional good information is of limited help. The continual “teaching” of new information cannot be a singular strategy of developing new forms or better practices of ministry. There is no end to curriculum or topics that are both interesting and important. However, standardized leadership programs and leadership curriculums past the stage of novice run the risks of being inappropriate to the setting and context of ministry of the practitioner or of continuing a standardized (convergent) form of professional development that constrains the practitioner to what is best known about congregations as they currently exist rather than exploring what congregations can be. In his research on the continued development of teachers (a profession that holds some striking parallels to the profession of clergy) Mike Schmoker is clear that in-service continuing education days are well appreciated by teachers since they provide a pleasing diversion to the routine and labor of the classroom but have demonstrated no correlation to an improved practice of teaching because they offer information without connection to the contextual practice of the teachers.^{xi}

Mark Rouch offered a historical survey of continuing education of clergy over the past 50 years in which he defined continuing education as “an individual’s personally designed learning program which begins when formal education ends and continues throughout a career and beyond.”^{xii} By defining continuing education as an individual’s personally designed learning program, I believe that Rouch is making the essential connection between the question that the practitioner holds and the learning the practitioner pursues. There is a necessary connection between the specific questions prompted by the experience of the practitioner in the unique mission field he or she faces and the learning, discernment, experiments, and risks that must be pursued. Continuing education must provide both the time and the context to allow the participant to connect the learning to his or her specific practice. Bob Reber notes that denominational and parachurch offerings of continuing education have over recent years become shorter and shorter with most programs limited to 48 hours or less.^{xiii} He notes that longer programs do not guarantee that participants learn more but the abbreviated educational designs do not suggest that the learning is closely connected to the individual experiences and the questions of participants nor do they allow time for integration of learning to practice.

Continued development of a practice requires a question to link content to context. Consider the following further insight from the development of teachers.^{xiv} If in a classroom an elementary teacher tells her class to get ready to watch the weekly educational television program designed for their age level and then goes to the TV, turns the program on with no further instructions, and sits at his or her desk while the students watch, the teacher will find the follow up conversation to be labored and hesitant. However, if the teacher announces that it is time for the weekly educational program, briefly describes the topic of the lesson and then gives the class two specific questions for them to answer as they watch, the follow up conversation will typically be more energized, creative, and focused. Good learning requires a good question as much as it does information that can provide an answer. Academic Doctor of Ministry programs often serve students well because both application and matriculation in the program require that the learning be driven by a disciplined question or questions that students will use to focus their inquiry. While a D.Min. program will serve a portion of clergy in their development, there is both experience and research, as noted earlier, to suggest that the most productive form of professional development, beyond the stage of Advanced Beginner, may be the use of clergy peer development groups since both the question to be explored and the content to be explored is controlled by the participants in an environment of both support and accountability.

The fourth observation is that beyond the level of Advanced Beginner, standardized programs and curriculums of leadership development are as likely to constrain leaders as they are to further develop them for appropriate leadership in a highly diverse mission field. As noted, a highly diverse mission field presents the UMC with a divergent setting for which to prepare clergy. The current system of clergy development continues to be convergent. To over depend upon the current system will be to constrain the church by preparing clergy with skills and roles that will best serve the current congregations which are either aging without the infusion of new generations or current congregations practicing forms of worship and community no longer inviting to a changed mosaic culture. In a moment in which a quickly changing culture requires agility, in which technology requires decentralization, and in which large shifts in demographics require changes at the levels of assumptions and norms, it is becoming increasingly clear that the best teachers of new skills and models are those who are themselves doing the work. In a time of deep change the knowledge needed to address the change is already held by the people who are in the field.^{xv} A common way for me to express this is that we are facing into a time in which no one can teach us what we need to learn. The most effective learning comes from practitioners who work with one another to learn what is most important and what works best. Of course, these peer learning groups of professionals which are generally identified as “communities of practice,”^{xvi} or in teaching are called “professional learning communities,”^{xvii} continue to draw upon the information and expertise of others both within the discipline of their profession or across boundaries with other professions. Nonetheless, the most effective learning is shaped by the questions of the on-the-field practitioners so that new practices and new information is tested for effectiveness through the practitioner’s experience.

It is important to realize that developing divergent new paths and practices in the learning of a profession commonly breaks the established rules or norms that have constrained the learning through an earlier and standardized established curriculum or practice.^{xviii} We are at a moment in which leaders will need to break the rules of previous teaching and expectation if they are to effectively address the changed mission field. Equally, the denomination may need to break its own rules and norms of recruitment, training, certification, deployment, accountability and support of clergy in order to address the opportunity of a divergent mission field.

Question #3: Do leaders of spiritual communities need to be educated or spirit led?

This third question of either education or having a personal conviction of being spirit led as the necessary preparation of clergy is both a contemporary dilemma and an historic argument. It is first important to recognize the prolonged and active argument that has been sustained over this question. Brooks Holifield locates this question in the earliest stages of congregational and denominational life in North America from the 1700s on and points to how different American denominations have taken different positions on the question.^{xix} The recent comprehensive biography of Francis Asbury offers insight into the way in which the American Methodist movement had to continually address this question.^{xx}

From its early history the Methodist movement, as well as later the Methodist denomination, leaned heavily toward an educated clergy as a necessity to call and to practice. From the earliest moment circuit riders were given required readings to study and while the readings were not broad they did require focused learning to assure that a Wesleyan theology was presented to the people on a circuit. Like other mainline denominations, the Methodists gave energy and resources to create colleges and universities in order, in part, to meet the needs of educated clergy.

The question of whether clergy need to be educated or spirit filled is, of course, a false dichotomy. The best answer is yes. However, the emphasis on educated clergy continues to hold sway in mainline traditions including the Methodists and has served these traditions particularly well during the earlier time of a convergent church in a convergent, middle class, culture which valued education. However, even the mainline traditions have seen more emphasis over the past few decades on the spiritual development and grounding of clergy which has been addressed in part through seminary curriculum, but also through the growth of the number of spiritual directors and spiritual retreats offered to clergy to ground and sustain their ministry. Nonetheless, mainline traditions still lead from the primacy of education as the door to entry into the profession of clergy. Since systems produce what they are designed to produce, higher education which carries middle and upper class values continues to produce middle class clergy who may then falter when expected to serve beyond their own values and norms.

There are large segments of both the North American and global community that the Methodist Church wants to address with the Wesleyan understanding of Christ that will not respond readily to middle class educated clergy. If the distinction between an educated and a spirit filled clergy is not a dichotomy, but rather a polarity of equal truths, then the mainline church, including the UMC, will find itself limited if it clings to only one path of preparation for its clergy. Mainline denominations are now being challenged to allow multiple paths of preparation for the practice of ministry, some that start with education and some that start from a spirit led practice to which education is appropriately offered along the way. Every path of preparation has its costs. A standardized path of preparation through higher education has its cost in loss of passion and purpose in the field and the constrained boundaries within the culture that can be addressed by an educated clergy. A path into ministry that is spirit led can often be passionate and have a high capacity to address communities whose values lie well outside the middle class but holds the related high cost of intentional supervision that keeps such ministry tethered to, if not tied to, Wesleyan theology and denominational connection. Part of the present challenge facing the UMC is not to choose between educated or spirit led clergy, but rather to make space for multiple paths of preparation and entry into ministry, each of which will serve different parts of a fully national and a global church, and each of which will require different costs.

Question #4: What is the best work to be done by each of the levels of the denominational system?

This fourth question will be addressed only briefly to note that past denominational assumptions have routinely led decision-making and program development to flow from the top down – from the denomination to the congregation. The move from top to bottom is both appropriate and congruent to a convergent culture that values sameness over diversity and individualism. More recently, as both the discipline of organizational change and the cultural shift to postmodernism have pointed out, change has come from the bottom up. Change has already happened at the congregational level and has, over the past few decades, been pushing both questions and challenges up into the denominational structure.

When thinking about responses to current challenges, it is important to consider where – in which level of a denominational system – does both the question and the appropriate response lie. In what form will global or national responses be of most help? In what settings will the response of annual conferences, districts, or of individual clergy pursuit of continued development be most effective? In a time when all parts of the denominational system are being questioned and are facing the perplexing question of their purpose, there is a risk for one part of the system to take on the role or responsibility of some other part of the system that is more appropriately poised to respond.

CONCLUSION

Leaders in the United Methodist denomination need a context in which to have broader conversations about the development of pastoral leadership needed in a changed mission field. In an adaptive time any good question about the preparation of pastoral leadership will lead quickly to other equally good and equally adaptive questions. Too many questions will bog us down. Too few questions will lead us to action too quickly. My hope is that this paper will help set the table of our conversation with a sufficient number of important questions to help us find a way forward without hiding important paths to follow.

- i Charles Handy, *Beyond Certainty: The Changing Worlds of Organizations* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 154.
- ii "Pastoral imagination" is an attribute described by Craig Dykstra of the Lilly Endowment, Inc., ("Initiatives in Religion," 2001, vol. 9 p.1) that denotes a person with sufficient training to be deeply grounded in the theology and the pastoral disciplines of their faith tradition but also adept at connecting the deep meanings of that theology and practice to people's contemporary experience. A rich example of such pastoral imagination is found in Richard Lischer's *Open Secrets: A Spiritual Journey through a Country Church* (New York: Doubleday, 2001).
- iii Arthur Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 55, 76.
- iv Ralph Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research* (New York: The Free Press, 1974).
- v Gil Rendle, *Journey in the Wilderness: New Life for Mainline Churches* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), p.93-105.
- vi Examples include: Jackson Carroll, Carl Dudley and William McKinney (eds.) *Handbook for Congregational Studies* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986); Nancy Ammerman, Jackson Carroll, Carl Dudley (eds.) *Studying Congregations* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998) and a host of single-issue books printed by the Alban Institute Press.
- vii Gil Rendle, *Back to Zero: The Search to Rediscover the Methodist Movement* (Abingdon Press, e-book released 8/11) Chapter 4.
- viii Jim Collins, *Good to Great in the Social Sector* (Boulder: Jim Collins, 2005). An additional resource that introduces the problem of metrics for the church is: Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009). McNeal points out that the dashboard of metrics used by the mainline church is "how many, how much, and how often" (all measures of resources and activities, inputs and throughputs). While McNeal offers a full range of outcomes better measured for effective ministry, many of them require tools or skills beyond the capacity or attention span of most congregations. More helpfully, Collins asserts that when a non-profit is not able to measure its output it has to be able to fully describe the difference it intends to make. Developing metrics and processes of formative evaluation is fast becoming the next challenge for congregations seeking to be effective in a mosaic mission field.
- ix Christian Scharen, "Learning Ministry Over Time: Embodying Practical Wisdom" found in *For Life Abundant: Theology, Theological Education and Christian Ministry*, Dorothy Bass and Craig Dykstra (eds.) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 268-86.
- x Penny Long Marler and Janet Maykus, "Is the Treatment the Cure? A Study of Participation in Pastoral Leader Peer Groups" (Austin Presbyterian Seminary, 2010).
- xi Mike Schmoker, *Results Now: How We Can Achieve Unprecedented Improvements in Teaching and Learning* (Alexandria: ASCD, 2006) 26-35.
- xii Mark Rouch, "From Yesterday to Today in Continuing Education," found in Robert Reber and Bruce Roberts (eds.) *A Lifelong Call to Learn* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000) p. 36.
- xiii Robert Reber, "Educating Out of the Future", found in Robert Reber and Bruce Roberts (eds.) *A Lifelong Call to Learn* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000) p.42.
- xiv Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Gap* (New York: Basic Books, 2008).
- xv Margaret Weatley, *Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future* (San Francisco: Berrett-Kohler Publishers, 2002). Weatley notes that every revolution that changed humanity started as a conversation between two people. Simple conversations among people who work from their own experience provide the necessary learning. She writes: "Once a simple process becomes a technique, it can only grow more complex and difficult, it never becomes simpler. It becomes the specialized knowledge of a few experts, and everyone else becomes dependent on them. We forget that we ever knew how to do things like conversation, planning, or thinking. Instead, we become meek students of difficult methods." (p. 20)
- xvi Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
- xvii Mike Schmoker, *Results Now*, 105-149.

- ^{xviii} Robert Quinn, *Deep change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996) 4. Quinn tells the following story: “A colleague once told me about a group of executives in a large state government who were interested in leadership training. They were particularly interested in teaching transformational leadership. They wanted to develop public administrators who would take initiative, who would make deep change in their organizations. Given the negative stereotype of public administrators as resistant bureaucrats, they wondered if there were any transformational leaders in any agency of their government. They decided to investigate and find out. Their analysis revealed a number of cases of people who had made dramatic transformations within their various organizations. Eventually, they decided to make a video about some of these transformational leaders. Teams went out to interview the leaders. They returned with bad news. The video could not be made. In every single case, the transformational leader had, at least once, broken a state law. To transform the ineffective organization into an effective one, required forms were not turned in, regulations were ignored and directives were violated.”
- ^{xix} Brooks Holifield, *God’s Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).
- ^{xx} John Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury & the Methodists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.)

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