

THE JOURNAL OF THE INTERIM MINISTRY NETWORK

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Interim Ministry Network

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Interim Ministry Network's (IMN)
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Mission
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Feature – Part II 20 Years of IMN
Wesley Baker, PC(USA)
Jill M. Hudson, PC(USA)

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Worship
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A Tribute to Edwin H. Friedman
Harold E. Dungan, DOC
Art Bell, PC(USA)

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Our mission is to support, encourage, and educate those involved in leadership of congregations and other church organizations during interim periods.

To accomplish this mission, the Interim Ministry Network provides for interim ministry specialists, consultants, lay and judicatory leaders:

education and information on the interim process
professional support systems
education and professional development
standards for the practice of interim ministry.

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INTERIM MINISTRY NETWORK



PREAMBLE

For millions of people, the church nurtures spiritual development and community. In our ever-evolving society, change affects religious bodies within and without. Change offers these bodies opportunities to focus on their health through self-evaluation and renewal. The body can move toward clarity of mission, greater cohesiveness, spiritual growth and positive acceptance of new leadership with the guidance of a person trained in intentional interim ministry.

MISSION

The Interim Ministry Network strengthens the spiritual and organizational health of the church-at-large by equipping and supporting those who lead during times of transition.

VISION

As a result of work of the Interim Ministry Network, church bodies are stronger because they have effectively managed transition and are better able to share with their members and society God's love that brings hope and joy in time of change.

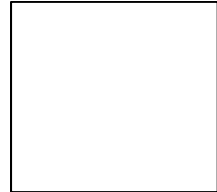
June 16, 2000

FEATURE

REFLECTIONS UPON A COMING OF AGE CELEBRATION The 20th Annual Conference of the Interim Ministry Network

Author: Wesley Baker

About the Author: Wesley with his wife Corinne became members of the IMN at the first conference. They have served 38 years of ministry with 22 different congregations. Wesley is dedicated to the development and growth of the “non-anxious” presence of interim ministry.



It was almost a fertility ritual, a coming of age celebration. At the twentieth year watermark, the Interim Ministry Network (IMN) became a fully processional, self-assured association. The conference, held at Chapman University in Orange, California, set new patterns and new directions in many ways. The beautiful campus and comfortable accommodations, and the commendable food, provided a worthy setting for what might even be called the IMN's puberty rite, its confirmation, its Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

The leadership was a parade of déjà vu, with early stalwarts such as Loren Mead, Jill Hudson, Howard Clinebell, Terry Foland, Speed Leas, Chuck Olsen, Roy Oswald, Peter Steinke, heading the all-star cast. Speaking to the theme "Answering God's Call to the In-Between Time", each of these proclaimers from over our score of years spoke not to the past but to the future, in terms of sober research and pastoral insight... Warren Schulz brought us to moments of exhilarated insight in his opening sermon.

As always in years before there was the happy reunion of old friends from all over the country, yoked together in a risky commitment of temporary employment for the sake of a church community struggling to keep abreast of modern technological and social issues. There were a handful of those who were founding members, present at every conference since 1980; fully a third attending this year were first-timers.

Probably the most serious moments took place in the three days before the conference opened. The Board of Directors assembled early to hear the report and counsel of professional consultants who had been retained to give guidance. Two years earlier, the Board had appointed

a search committee to find and nominate an executive director after the resignation of Ralph Colby. This committee had contacted several candidates who, after conversations, told the committee and the board that in the very vague job description there was an unclear picture of the identity, direction, and purpose of the IMN as a whole. None of the contacts produced a willing candidate. The Board, equipped with a special gift to make it possible, then engaged the team of Pat Lewis and Russ Cargo of Third Sector Services, who met with the board on several occasions and came to Orange for the three pre-convention days to report and dialogue.

The result of this meeting produced a very unusual and extraordinary event. In the plenary session during the conference, when the Board made its report through retiring chairman Susan De Simone, the elected leaders actually made a public and formal confession of their own sins of omission. They openly pointed out that they had learned how they had not lived up to the organization's expectations of them. Specifically, they acknowledged that basic guidance on the nature, purpose, and function of the IMN, which the board should have indicated, had never been clarified. That, said the consultants, was a principal reason for indecision in the employment of administrative staff. There had, over the years of the group's maturity, been confusion over the emphasis on training and education in relation to being a professional organization to strengthen the importance of transitional ministry.

With many hours of hard work and prayer, and helped by the best of professional guidance, the task of necessary clarification and its subsequent difficult decisions was hammered out. A bittersweet development was the completion of the service of Paul Svingen, whose strong devotion and gigantic contribution are basic to the heritage of us all. As the discussions made progress it became clear to Paul and to the Board that he preferred to stay connected to Minnesota and in the active practice of interim ministry and that the function of employed staff could be carried on in other hands.

So it was that we reluctantly bade farewell to Paul at the Monday night banquet at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. It was announced there that an anonymous gift had enabled the start of the "Paul Svingen Scholarship Fund," and the assembled members gave another \$5000. Donations from individuals, churches, and judicatories will be invited. The training and education aspects of the IMN were both the result and the

basic compassion of Paul's, and the scholarship will enable worthy applicants to strengthen their ministries.

If one were to seek a common theme among the workshops and plenaries, it would certainly be the new conditions of the twenty first century under which the church works to witness - Jill Hudson and Loren Mead both produced evidence that the present habits and modes of the church at large are insufficient to reach and embrace today's world. Neither spoke in chiding or negative terms, but with challenge and hope. Over and over, those of us in this opportune order of ministry could see that the new has the best opportunity of squeezing into the life of the church in the cracks of intervals in leadership. And that, as Pogo says, "is us."

And what shall we say of the stellar contributions? Howard Clinebell led us with brilliance and calmness into the thorn patch of communal grief and brokenness. Chuck Olsen once again led us through the transformational stages of discernment. Roy Oswald, discovering after the fact that he had presented the wrong subject, graciously offered to "do it right" in his and our free time. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka, to the accompaniment of some amazing drumbeats and choreography, lifted our spirits in Sunday morning worship. Speed Leas and Peter Steinke are still the unquestioned leaders helping us to face conflict and "unstick" churches. Tom Tipton's rich baritone lifted up hymns and spirituals in glorious tones. The panel of judicatory representatives was visibly more aware of the importance and potential of interim ministry than in the past. Whereas in earlier such presentations, some denominational leaders were still unconvinced of the relevance of our work, others showed interest but little involvement, this year was different. All acknowledged the place of the practice in speaking to the new world, even the Missouri Synod Lutheran representative.

In reflection, it does seem as though the maturing of the practice of Interim Ministry is a special gift to the whole church of Jesus Christ. I am in my 22nd year, having served 14 churches, and together with my wife Corinne we have the experience of 38 years and 22 different congregations. When I entered this service, interim pastors were considered either partial and ineffectual pulpit supply or losers who couldn't get calls. This attitude was reflected in the majority of judicatory leadership and committee chairs I knew. The very conditions of the itinerant interim are basically quite lonely, and I felt I was struggling to serve in an

unsupportive atmosphere.

Corinne and I joined the IMN early, attending the first convention in 1984. Immediately we felt we were among our own, and that our lives were not isolated. When we heard Dr. Ed Freeman speak, offering us the grand and valuable phrase, the "non-anxious presence" we knew that we were understood. Subsequent meetings have been continuously educational and inspiring times. Where else would we come in contact, across denominational lines, with names like Loren Mead, Terry Foland, Allan Gripe, Speed Leas? Where else could we go for challenge, affirmation, support, and even advocacy?

In these years, we have seen the development of what can be considered a new order of ministry. Even though the Methodist polity does not now accommodate the office of interim ministry, its very idea might just come from there. In the frontier days, when much depended on the right pastors serving in the right towns, the Methodist Conferences had members called "traveling elders." It was understood that in a time of a rapidly growing nation, no church was stationary, but rather an outpost of evangelical attack on a generally unchurched country. No pastor expected to settle down for a long stay, but stayed mobile and ready, so to speak, for a new appointment every year. Ministerial training emphasized pastoral and proclamation duties more than deep scholarship. Times of service in a local pastorate were limited; parsonages provided by congregations were furnished and ready for rapid turnover. Every pastor was a practitioner of Interim Ministry. And the Methodist church grew several times faster than its older cousins.

That was a paradigm for its time; much credit is due that faith community for its foresight. We are now struggling for ways to deal with changes in the public spiritual expectations as well as technological advances that could become either tools or stumbling blocks. Such is the source of excitement for me in this high calling. I well know in my own career and have seen it in other contexts that the influence of a faithfully executed interim pastorate has brought some congregations light years along in their effective development. The greater part of nurture that has upheld me came not as much through denomination or seminary or judicatory as through the educational and supportive program of the IMN.

This year was another very positive experience. The reports put into my hands had lists of local support groups all over the country; I remember when there was only one. The educational program promoted by the IMN reaches to sites in every corner of the country, with Phase I and Phase II available to all new entrants with minimum inconvenience. The workshop leadership was well informed of our calling, if not interim ministers themselves (not always so). The planning committee was extraordinarily sensitive to our aims and needs.

As the twentieth year goes by, and the twenty first century comes on, I foresee a growing importance to the church (and I mean the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church) of the practice of Interim Ministry. It is important that we refine our disciplines, sharpen our skills, and deepen our spiritual life.

On to Louisville!

FEATURE

“JUST DO IT!”

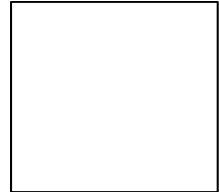
The 20th Annual Conference of the Interim Ministry Conference
Plenary Speech, June 19, 2000.

Author: Jill M. Hudson, PC(USA)

About the Author: Jill is an ordained Presbyterian minister currently serving as Executive Presbyter of the Whitewater Valley Presbytery of the PC(USA). Jill was the driving force behind the Interim Ministry Network's (IMN) educational program. She is the author of these Alban Institute publications: [Evaluating Ministry](#) (co-authored with Behrens and Harbaugh) and her own 1999 book, [Congregational Trauma: Caring, Coping, Learning](#).

I am delighted to be here this morning, although I wasn't sure I'd get out

of LAX alive. I still wear my Indiana Pacer hat with pride. It is almost impossible to believe that twenty years have passed since the organizing of this network at a yucky retreat center in my hometown of Indianapolis. Things have really changed. We've grown from a small movement in mainline Protestantism to key players in building healthy congregations. We've gone from a handful of risk-taking clergy (whom many believed were interims because they couldn't make it in the "real" church) to a well-educated, often certified or accredited group of professionals constantly on a learning curve. We have interims in this room who have served our specialized field for these twenty years. And yet, many of the things I used to believe about interim ministry I no longer believe today. Things change. We change. The world changes. I'm going to address issues this morning that are even more important to me than the developmental tasks or even systems thinking.



It's this changing world I want to talk with you about this morning. In conversation with Loren Mead we agreed that he would talk with you about the challenge for the future and I would talk about the world where that challenge occurs. My apology if our material overlaps at points.

Leonard Sweet often opens his presentations with the question, "Is this a great time, or what?" Here we are at the beginning of a new millennium. The world seems full of energy and excitement about what is to come - an era which may see human beings living on other planets, promises cures to cancer, and, in the more immediate - has produced a new SHAFT movie. I mean, IS THIS A GREAT TIME, OR WHAT? It is a great world, but, as the ad says, it's not my father's Oldsmobile either. Interims have always been on the edge of things. Today, I want to talk about the map of this new frontier we call the 21st Century and how we might help congregations thrive and grow in it.

We recently bought a new computer at our house and I understand that it's already out of date. You and I are living in a time of such rapid change that it is almost impossible to keep up with the "latest" of anything. The life history and "givens" of the world in which many of us grew up no longer has memory or relevance to the majority of individuals living today. For instance, young people who went directly from high school and have just finished their sophomore year of college were

born in 1980 (list drawn from multi-sources).

They have no meaningful memories of the Reagan era and many don't know he was shot.

They do not fear a nuclear war.

They have only known a unified Germany.

They are too young to remember the space shuttle explosion and think Tiannimen Square may be in New York.

Their lifetime has always included AIDS

They have never had a polio shot and may not know what one is. Atari predates them and many have never seen an eight-track tape.

There have always been Red M & Ms and the Blue ones are not new. The compact disc was introduced when they were one year old. A stamp has always cost about 32, OOPS, 33 cents.

They have always had an answering machine

They are dependent on a remote control to change channels
Jay Leno has always hosted the Tonight Show. Groceries have always been scanned.

And, this is the one most difficult for me ...

The Beach Boys are closer in age to their grandparents than their parents.

REMEMBER, the people who don't know these things are in college now.

And to make it even scarier, these young adults and those who follow them are coming to maturity in what we now call the post-modern world. You've probably heard this term used a lot recently. It simply refers to the very complex shift of paradigms in American life. One key for hope in the future is to understand this brave new world in which we find ourselves. In a short presentation, it would be impossible for me to address all the ways this shift impacts our ministry. I am going to focus this morning on our efforts to reach those who were born into this world and have never known another, members of Generation X and the generation, which follows them, the Millennial.

A friend of mine, a sixth grade teacher, reported the following from her classroom. In a discussion about the millennium and time, she asked her students if anyone knew what B.C. and A.D. stood for. After a few moments one of the brighter students raised his hand and said, "Before computer and after digital?" Friends, neither time nor the world is any longer defined by Jesus Christ. We have a tremendous challenge and a tremendous opportunity.

The Modern World encompasses the period that Loren Mead refers to as the Christendom model. This modern world with its enlightenment thinking offered much, which helped us in teaching the faith. Knowledge

was seen as good and objective. The human intellect was the way to truth. Logic and reason prevailed. Once a person knew and understood the Christian story, he or she would become a believer in it. The future was optimistic and progress was inevitable -- Christendom ruled, our churches grew -- The Traditional American Religious Dream.

The Post-Modern world probably began in the late 1930's but started manifesting itself more fully following World War II. Many Americans, however, did not begin noticing the differences until the 1960's, breaking full force into our awareness with the introduction of the Internet. The Post-Modern world is more like digital thinking. Knowledge is subjective, has existential value, can be manufactured and is interchangeable.

Truth constantly changes. Emotion and intuition are valued as ways of knowing. Our own reality, our own experience determines what is true for us, not something we've learned from a book or been taught by our parents. Information is circular and loopy not linear, the future unpredictable and progress is illusory -- The Traditional American Religious Nightmare.

A few illustrations of this will be familiar to you. How many of you saw the movie, *Forrest Gump*? Do you remember what made this film unique at the time? Right, it was the first movie to incorporate actual film footage of people long dead in an interactive format with living actors. It was a seamless film of the living and the dead. In a post-modern world you can no longer believe what you see with your eyes or hear with your ears. I bet most of you who own computers have a Pentium chip. Did you realize that you have more processing power in your home computer than all of the combined computers that put a man on the moon only thirty years ago? Those of us 50 and older will remember the way that Walter Cronkite closed his evening news. He would always say, "And That's the Way It Is." There was a kind of smugness, a concern for the truth and certainty that he presented it. Dan Rather closes his news each evening with the comment, "Well, that's part of our world tonight." This is an acknowledgment that we only have partial truths. There is tentativeness to living in such a world as ours.

This post-modernism spills over into our theology as well. Theology in a modern world had Martin Luther saying, "Here I Stand." A post-modern theology sounds more like, "There We Go." Modern theology was au-

onomous; the Christian story was the only story. The post-modern search for God views Christianity as walking beside other faith traditions not pushing against them. Those of us coming to faith in the modern world found that our belief in God often led to the experience of God. It is just the opposite in a post-modern world. Individuals must experience God's presence before believing in it. People select from a variety of religious systems, choosing their faith the same as they might select a new car or novel.

As servants of Christ we are called to be leaders in this post-modern reformation. Many of us have been trained to do ministry in a world that no longer exists. What's more, our congregations don't realize this. They don't understand why membership is declining, shifts in worship attendance, or - diminishing funding. Have you ever felt like you were working more hours but with less effect? I believe we don't need to work harder -- we need to work smarter!

According to Tim Celek and Dieter Zander in their wonderful book, "Inside the Soul of a New Generation", post-moderns are not resistant to the concept of God, just the church. They see the church as being separatist, segregated, institutional, irrelevant, judgmental, holier than thou, controlling and authoritarian. And folks, let's face it. To some degree they're right! But for many of them, these perceptions are second hand. Generation X is the first generation with very little exposure to any kind of church. It was in their early childhood that their boomer parents began the exodus from mainline denominations. Our job today is to present Generation X and the Millennials who follow with authentic Christianity, not the church as they learn about it from the images of secular culture.

It all begins with authenticity. Young adults today are not interested in the structure of the church (news which comes very hard to we organized Presbyterians, by the way). They are interested in the relationships and the community that can be experienced with those who love God. Leadership in a post-modern church must be first of all real transparent, not formal. They are not interested in "correct" theology or pat answers; instead they want to struggle through their issues of faith with those who have struggled themselves. In a recent Harris poll of more than 2,000 college freshmen the most admired traits were those of honesty and integrity followed by hard work and dedication. GenXers are looking for Christians who are genuine, not those who have everything

worked out. This leadership is not limited to church professionals. In fact, it is most effective when it comes from the laity. I firmly believe that it will not be we pastors who rebuild Christ's church, but it will be those members who put their faith into action as evangelists and unpaid servants. Those of us who are interim pastors need to pave the way for these fireball Christians. In our role as change agents, we need to lay the ground work for permission-giving environments which help new ideas get off the ground quickly instead of dying slow deaths in our antiquated decision making processes.

Mike Slaughter, the senior pastor at Ginghamburg United Methodist Church, tells a wonderful story. He and his family were traveling in a nearby Ohio town and saw a large van with "Ginghamburg Methodist Church Furniture Warehouse" printed on the side. "Look Carolyn," he said to his wife, there's another Ginghamburg Methodist Church. Can you believe that?" His son said from the back seat, "No dad, it says Tipp City, Ohio." Upon returning from the trip, Mike learned that a person in one of the church's many small groups had bemoaned the fact that she had a perfectly good refrigerator to give away and didn't know what to do with it. In discussing this it became clear that many people had furniture, rugs and other household goods that they too had stored in their basement. The idea of establishing a furniture warehouse similar to a clothing closet available for low-income families was born on the spot. The group rented a facility, collected furniture, got a second hand car dealer in the church to donate a truck and was open for business—all without the knowledge of the senior pastor. We of the Reformed Tradition have always believed in the priesthood of all believers. The Post-Modern World is a place for us to prove it.

This desire for relationship found in the younger generations will define how mission is best accomplished in the 21st Century church. People desire real, genuine encounters with the world. They want to engage in hands-on mission. Since contemporary American is now the greatest mission field in the world, there is ample challenge. The church must provide opportunities for individuals to serve the world directly. Many young adults are eager to serve Christ through their church much like the peace corp. We need to be ready to provide post-secondary and post-college age opportunities for youth to give one or two years of their life in some mission service. An idea the Mormons caught onto a long time ago!

I was recently at a conference where Bart Campolo spoke. Bart, the son of Tony Carnpolo, is president of "Mission Year," a national service program that recruits young Christian adults for teams, which live and work in inner city neighborhoods in partnership with strong, local churches. Each young adult gives one year of his or her life to serving Christ in this way. They spend 20 hours a week in volunteer service for a community organization or tutoring in a public school. The remainder of their time is spent in relating to their neighbors. Campolo really caught my attention when he attacked the traditional one-week mission trip for youth. He pointed out that what we teach through this well respected practice is that mission is a program, something we go "do" rather than a way of Christian life, which is based in relationship with the world around us. Young adults are eager to serve and live out their faith on a daily basis. We need to do much better at giving them the opportunity and support for doing so.

How many of you have served a congregation in a changing neighborhood? How many of you feel you were successful in helping a predominately Euro-American church become multicultural? Well, in our role as change agents we often find ourselves helping the church to face the realities around them. The hard cold facts about America include that by 2025 there will be no racial majority in this country, something that is already true here in the state of California. Although racism is still a very serious problem in our nation, we are raising up a new generation, which expects their schools, their businesses and their daily interactions to include people from many, many ethnic backgrounds. Interracial marriage probably connotes black/white images for most of us. Did you know, however, that marriages between those of Euro-American descent and those from Hispanic or Asian descent are on a marked upswing? These younger Americans are not going to be satisfied in all white congregations. They will want their church to reflect their world. Likewise, congregations who open their doors to new immigrant communities, where services are often in several languages will grow and thrive in the future. This multi-cultural phenomenon will continue to seriously challenge congregations who are unable to change with the needs of the world around them.

The most painful and yet exciting call to most of us is to reshape the church for these next generations. Some believe it simply can't be done and that the only way to reach GenXers and Millennials is to organize new congregations just for them. I remain open on this question seeing

good examples for both. Why is it so hard for the typical congregation to really meet the needs of younger adults? Most of it boils down to how we feel about worship. How many of you are dealing with conflict right now that centers on some struggle around changing worship?

Many of us here today grew up in the beauty of the liturgy. I suspect even among laid back, open-minded interims pastors some of us still enjoy putting on colorful vestments and robes. We love the rush of emotion as we sing the music of the reformation or hear a classical organ concert. Our transportation into that deep connection with God, which we experience in worship, comes through words spoken by the saints over the centuries. Most of us think Dishwalla is a town in Australia. We don't know Charlie Brown's parents and we think if God Were One of Us more people would come to church. Folks, most of us are out of it. We do not surf the web more than an hour a day, read WIRED magazine or go to Raves. Some of us are still trying to figure out taping with our VCR. And what is really sad is, we don't want to know. We're just too comfortable the way it is. We secretly believe that we can wait this one out. Let me illustrate why we can't ...

I have a seven-year-old grandson named Conner. He's a bright little boy but no more so than many of your children and grandchildren. This story happened several years ago when he was around three. My husband had left his sermon up on the computer and had gone to take a shower. When he stepped out there was Conner waiting for him. Granddaddy, he said, "I took down your game so I could play Spider Man."

My husband ran to the computer in a panic, only to discover that our grandson who can't read had correctly saved the sermon, inserted his spider man disk and had played several games with no hitches. His world is one of action, color and virtual reality - at three years old. If the congregations you serve think that when Conner and his generation grow up and have kids of their own they'll want to come back to our wonderful church with one dimensional worship and 16th century music, they're wrong. If you don't hear another thing I say today, please hear this. IT IS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN. Post modems feel life is too short for dull worship. They believe they can love and serve God without being bored and, perhaps without boring God either. Part of your job as an interim is to tackle this worship question.

So, what do we do? Do all congregations regardless of the size need to change worship style? Not necessarily, although some do. Most of us need to think about adding services rather than changing the ones we already offer. Let's take a moment and look at a few examples of what's already happening in a post-modern way...

When Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Minneapolis realized they were not positioned to minister effectively to generation X they started a satellite ministry with which you may already be familiar. Spirit Garage is now almost three years old and is packing them in at two Sunday services. I had an opportunity to worship at Spirit Garage last May. The bandleader led worship in a tee shirt that said, "Jam for the Lamb."

Pastor Pam Fickenscher, described on their web page as having received way too much education in Indiana, Germany and Tennessee, recently preached a sermon series with titles such as "Saved from Despair," "Saved from Isolation," "Saved from Worry" - all topics appealing to a generation often described as lost. But these jeans clad young adults are no longer lost to the church - they've found an accepting home at Spirit Garage.

Community of Life Church in Boise, Idaho is another successful model of reaching out to young adult families. Self-described as "casual, open-minded and forward thinking," the web page begins with "Well Hi There! We are an exciting new church in Boise that promises not to be your average church." Friends, most of us are attending the "average church" this ministry promises not to be. Among the programs offered are stay-at-home parent outings, small group study sessions and weekly community service opportunities.

I wish I could say that the most successful example of a post-modern church is Lutheran, or even Presbyterian. But, alas, it is United Methodist. In 1979 a young pastor and his wife were sent to Tipp City, Ohio twelve miles outside Dayton, to a small congregation of 90 members. The Ginghamburg Methodist Church had only installed indoor plumbing four years earlier. Twenty years later, this congregation sitting out in a field visible from I-75 and offers five worship services a weekend reaching nearly 5,000 people in attendance. It has a worldwide congregation through its Internet ministry with 200,000 web page hits a month. The church staff has only one ordained clergy person - the senior pastor. Laity, some paid and some commissioned as full time volun-

teers hold the remainder of its many positions. I would encourage you to check out the Ginghamburg web site with countless pages of useful information plus on-line sermons and videos of its worship service.

You'll find that this congregation has a significant impact on its community with many social outreaches. It is intentionally integrated with African American and Asian members of the staff reflecting the congregation's desire for diversity.

But what this church is best known for is its incredible high-tech worship. Worship at Ginghamburg is focused on reaching the unchurched. Each weekend, worship "celebration" focuses on a particular theme, which is re-enforced through visual imagery, music and the Word. If my time with you this morning peaks your interest, you may want to consider attending one of the Ginghamburg Change Conferences designed to assist congregations wishing to move into the most-modern world. It would be a great continuing education opportunity for you as an interim pastor and even better if you could take a team from your church with you.

What all these churches have in common is a love of Jesus Christ, a desire to make the gospel relevant to the culture and a fearless commitment to taking risks and facing failures. Music, image and technology tie them together. Two are what we might call "redevelopment" congregations, existing churches that had a dream. One is a new church development, the outreach of a parent congregation.

There are many, many more examples of congregations like these emerging across our country as ways of reaching out to new generations of potential Christians. Worship is alive, joyful, informal and relevant. The language is aimed at those who do not yet believe. Believers are nurtured into faith maturity through small groups. The order of worship may be printed, briefly on a half page, which includes the scripture text or projected onto video screens. There is usually a house band, sometimes paid professionals, more often from the emerging membership themselves. People stand up, a lot!, they clap. They bring their coffee cups into worship. It's a whole new day. The technology used in most of these congregations is available to you, even if you don't realize it. Most congregations you are serving have a junior high student who knows all you need to know to move into PowerPoint, web page creation and video worship.

Bill Easum says that any church can move into high tech worship, music and outreach for an investment of less than \$5,000. Now if you told your finance committees that they could increase the membership of your church by up to 30% in the first year for a \$5,000 investment they'd probably say, I don't believe you! " But with a little encouragement they'd say . . . "GO FOR IT!"

And yet, our modern minds and our modern values about what constitutes "worship" often win the day. My husband, a frequent lecturer on the post-modern world recently led a workshop for a large, socially active, upper class congregation in a metropolitan area. When he finished describing the worship service he attends every Sunday, complete with a six-piece rock and roll band, one member of the Session said, "If I had to worship like that, I'd just throw up!" Friends, the good news is that you don't have to worship like that. But if we want to see Christianity, in America, a vital force in the 21st Century you better provide opportunities for others to worship like that.

We cannot turn all our congregations into Ginghamburg, or Saddleback or a Spirit Garage, but we can be more of who God calls us to be. We can be St. Paul's Lutheran the place where teens volunteer for an after school-tutoring program. We can be Prince of Peace where the Laotians worship at 9:00 and the Haitian church at 1:00. We can help create environments where people don't complain when the speakers in the sanctuary take up so much space, before the traditional service you just cover them with colored cloths for the liturgical season. We can help congregations set aside 50% of their mission budget for new, emerging mission done by our members - who don't have to apply two years in advance to receive it. We can put the needs of those who do not know Christ ahead of the personal tastes of we who do.

Every congregation needs to do something to begin making the move from the modern world into the post-modern world with all its challenge and promise. Friends, you are strategically placed to help make this happen because of the openness to change that can occur during an interim period. You will likely not see the fruits of all your labors but you can till the vineyard for this change.

God is giving us a whole new world to reach. If we strengthen one another in our efforts we will prevail. Living our faith will be challenging in

the 21st Century but we have so many reasons to be hopeful In closing, I'd like to give you a piece of really good news to encourage you in your efforts. In the May 1998 issue of American Demographics there was an article entitled, "Freshman Get Wholesome." Nancy Ten Kate reported that almost nine out of ten college freshman believe in God and 45 % of them say that religion will become more important to them in the future.

Folks, as Nike says we need to take a deep breath and "JUST DO IT." Is it a great time, or what? Thank you letting me be part of your great time as we celebrate 20 years of ministry together.

INTERIM INSIGHTS

MARKS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH [This is an adapted reprint March/April 2000 Congregations, pp. 24-25 of the Alban News by permission of Terry Foland.]

Author: Terry A. Foland, DOC

About the Author: Terry is one of the cofounders of the IMN and served as its third president from 1984 - 1986. A former trainer/coordinator for the IMN Terry is now a senior consultant with the Alban institute and leads various educational events on conflict dynamics and leadership. Terry is an ordained clergyman of The Christian Church Disciples of Christ and served for several years as the Area Minister for the Northeast Mid-America Region of the DOC.

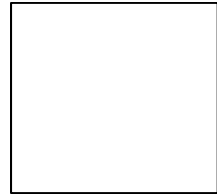
How do we [intentional interim pastors] know when a congregation is "healthy?" [When we arrive on the scene] will there be indicators or "marks"? While preparing a pilot project in congregational transformation, the senior consultants at the Alban Institute drew on our collective experience and identified what we believed to be several such indicators.

For the past five years as I've worked with 12 to 15 congregations each year in doing redevelopment and strategic thinking, I've continued to refine and develop that set of indicators.

Obviously, not all congregations that are healthy will look, act, or be alike. But there do seem to be at least 12 specific areas of congregational life in which church leaders can ask some challenging questions whose answers should provide some index to congregational health. They may also indicate some clues as to how healthy their congrega-

tion is and where there is need for careful strategic thinking and planning for improvement,

[The current sample of the identifying Marks 1-7 and 10-12 with their] questions relevant to those health indicators are as follows: (Note: for a full listing see the original article in the March-April 2000 Congregations publication of The Alban Institute.)



1. History and Heritage. How do we value our past? What have we incorporated into our story of being a congregation from our successes and crises--..and from our failures? How did we evolve into our current set of norms and values, which primarily set the boundaries and determine our way of being a faith community? Have we been enriched by or imprisoned by the events of our history? When there have been bad experiences, have we sufficient closure, so that we are not limited by our shame regarding those experiences, and our fear of repeat failures? How well do we value our past without letting it determine our present and future life together?

2. Christian Community. Who are we as a corporate "body of Christ?" What is our culture or ethos? What kind of climate do we provide for people when they come together? Is there an atmosphere of caring and support? Is this a place where people can feel they belong and where they are accepted, regardless of their current or past circumstances? Are all people welcome here? Do we present an openness that invites strangers into the community of gatherings?

3. Discernment. How do we seek to be open to God's call on us as a faith community? What distinguishes us from any other human organization? Do our efforts to worship help us discern God's word and call to us as faithful disciples? How well do we employ our spiritual disciplines of prayer, study of scripture, meditation, worship, and stewardship'.'

4. Shared Vision. What is our way of "being the gospel?" Do we regularly engage in efforts, to rethink our vision of how we fulfill our mission as a faith community? Do we regularly collect information from our setting and seek to understand the needs of people around us? Do we engage in prayer, meditation, and study of the scriptures to help us de-

velop our vision? How do we determine priorities for use of our limited resources?

5. **Making Disciples.** How well do we perform the continuing task of helping persons grow in their religious life? Do we help individuals discover and claim their particular gifts, skill, and talents? Do we help them

connect with the faith in ways that contribute to the mission and ministries of the faith? How well do we prepare our members to engage in conversion efforts with persons who are not part of a faith/belief community'?

6. **Ministries In the Community.** What will we accept as our rules and responsibilities to the people who inhabit our geographic space? What services do we provide as part of what we have discerned God is calling us to be and do? Does our vision include ways in which we both corporately and as individual members can be engaged in mission endeavors? How well do we make use of resources (facilities, wealth, time, and members) to respond to needs of those in our "defined mission area"?

7. **World View.** How big is our world going to be? How well do we raise awareness of the concerns/needs of the world and of our interdependence and responsibilities? (*Re: numbers 8 and 9, see note at end.)

10. **Stewardship.** How do we teach responsible use of resources both as individuals and as a community of faith? Do we provide help for members to understand how money and other financial resource are a gift from God?

11. **Leadership.** How well is the congregation doing in developing mutual support and ministry in partnership of the clergy and laity? How do we share authority and responsibilities? Do we provide intentional efforts to define relationships and roles? How do we work together in order to fulfill our vision of being a faith community?

12. **Connection to Denomination or Faith Family.** How do we both contribute to and receive support from the structures of our larger faith family? What does our connection to such a family contribute to our sense of identity and mission?

Careful evaluation of and dialogue about these questions, whose answers are indicators of congregational health can open the way to understanding where there is strength and where there may be weakness.

A congregation may be doing an excellent job of providing a place for people to come and feel they are loved, cared for, and supported, but might be lacking in providing mission opportunities for members to grow as they serve others. Or a congregation may be stuck in a mode of providing essential services of feeding the hungry and providing shelter to homeless people, but neglect helping members to grow in other spiritual dimensions. . . .

I welcome dialogue, feedback, and participation of readers as I continue to develop this "Health Inventory" evaluation tool. You may request a copy of the tool to use in your congregation in return for sending me your critique, ideas, and suggestion. I may be reached c/o the Alban Institute.

(*Note: this tool includes numbers 8 and 9 that are missing in this article.)

WORSHIP

“Remembering How to Be Born”

Text: John 3:1-9

The 20th Annual Conference of the Interim Ministry Network
Worship Service Sermon, June 18, 2000 at Chapman University,
Orange, California

Author: The Rev. Dr. Brenda M. Pelc-Faszczka

About the Author: Brenda is currently the Pastor of The First Church of Christ, Congregational (UCC), Suffield, Connecticut. She has served as an Intentional Interim Pastor for 14 years.

If you have ever traveled with a girl named Alice “Through the Looking Glass,” you may remember an exchange she has with the Queen of Hearts, on the subject of a thing that defies common sense:

“I can’t believe that,” says Alice.

“Can’t you?” says the Queen, in a pitying tone.

“Try again; draw a long breath and shut your eyes.”

“There’s no use trying,” Alice laughs. “One can’t believe impossible things.”

“I daresay you haven’t had much practice,” says the Queen.

“When I was younger, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.”

For some people, that could be the definition of faith right there. “Believing impossible things” (six or more) – things which, no matter how hard you believe them, remain impossible and untrue in the end,

like a nice story that you cannot ever really live. For other people, life and its graces are larger than that. For them, faith is precisely the learning, then the remembering, of the staggering height and depth of what is possible in the realm of God; the learning day by day that more things are true in heaven and earth than have been dreamt of by us so far. Jesus is one of those.

He makes his life and stakes it on the offering of possibilities that the rest of us either haven't noticed, or are afraid of. When you are around him, you can be sure he will offer you a different world to live in than the one you normally inhabit. He will draw it for you, and color it in, fill it with things that are unheard of and expect you to believe them.... and not only that, but to live inside them: "Last shall be first.

Least will be great. Leaders are servants. Blind ones will see. Dead ones will live. Children are the ones to watch. The domain of God is right under your feet. And, you yourself can be born more than once." All the while Jesus is holding these things out to you, he is confident that you will be able to take them, remember them and live them. The question, always, is whether you believe it of yourself.

When Nicodemus shows up to test out this Jesus and his strange world, it is because Jesus has done signs, and many are eager to believe what can be easily seen. "Surely you really are from God," Nicodemus says to Jesus, "because otherwise you could not be doing such marvelous things as we have seen." But Jesus is not fixed on the doing of signs that are readily seen with the eyes of the flesh. He is already after another kind of seeing, and right away starts to draw the circle of the possible wider for Nicodemus. "Unless you are born anew," he says, "unless you are re-born from above out of Spirit, as well as born the first time here on earth from water, you can't see the realm of God. It's not obvious to your everyday eyes." Nicodemus, of course, is patron saint of the literalists, who hears the word "born" and immediately thinks he has to climb back into a physical womb.

How can this be? Surely this is one of those impossible things that nobody really believes! Jesus, however, is way out ahead of him, already trying to help him with his next birth, to squeeze him from his world of constricted imagination out into a roomier one where the Spirit is loose. "Understand this," Jesus says to Nicodemus, "The Spirit from which

your next birth is coming is not under your control. You of the ruling class, accustomed to power, cannot make it manageable. You cannot reduce it until it fits in the palm of your hand. You cannot contain it or domesticate it. You cannot render it totally rational and understandable (not even through the Five Developmental Tasks).

You are not in charge of its timing. It blows where it will, and you cannot even tell where it is coming from, or just where it might take you. This is the nature of the Spirit that will give you your next birth, Nicodemus, and the one after that. And the one thing you can say about it is that the direction it will take you is not back...back into the womb, or back into safety, or back to where you were protected by the familiar. Oh no, not at all...it blows where it will, but always forward. To be born of this Spirit, you must trust these things . . . (and surrender your certainty that you already understand everything)." "Ah," replies Nicodemus, who is trying hard to get it, "how can this be?"

As far as I can tell, Nicodemus belongs to every church in the world. He is probably on the Search Committee. He could be in the pulpit. He could even be in the pulpit in the interim. (Who are we to say our own faith is always perfect?) He is the one who; when the world is thrown open by change, doesn't quite trust the going forward because he can't exactly see it.

He is the one who really is *trying* to be with Jesus -- seeks him out, even -- but who has trouble understanding what Jesus wants him to do, or hearing the direction in which Jesus wants him to live. What do you mean the Spirit blows where it will and we can never tell what's coming next? What kind of way is that to live? What good would your five-year plan ever be with such a God? Surely the Church Council needs more than that to go on! Surely the Search Committee needs more than a Spirit loose who will not fill out a profile! Can't you see Nicodemus standing there, hands wringing, as he pleads? "If we could only *go back* to the way things used to be in the church," he is begging, "with all the tried and true structures we've always counted on. You know, the ones that have been good enough for years. Never mind this throwing the future open, nobody likes it. We might even be able to find a pastor just like the Reverend who used to hold this church together . . ." "if we could just go back. . ."

But as Jesus already knows and Nicodemus will someday know, "back" is simply not God's direction (when is the last time you saw history go in

reverse?), and God has not seen fit to consult with us about that. The hardest thing for us seems to be the one thing we need the most for life: attaching ourselves to a one-way Spirit who just will not be stuck, who is forever the Mystery out ahead of us for the sake of re-making the world.

“The Mystery out ahead of us . . .” -- Jesus is at home with such a Spirit, being born of it himself, but almost everybody else seems to keep it at arm’s length. Much has been made of the fact that in this story, Nicodemus comes to Jesus not in broad daylight, but at night, under cover of darkness, as though he is not yet ready to be with the truth out in the open.

It is true that in this gospel, darkness and light bear heavy symbolic freight: “The true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world . . . the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” It is also true, however, that darkness of a sort can give rise to the divine mystery in us, in ways that the bright light of day cannot. Sooner or later, those of us who serve churches, trying to be midwives to their next birth, discover that part of our work is to help the community of faith dwell long enough in its darkness, despite our every collective resistance to doing it. Long enough to see the truths and sense the directions that only the shadows can say, long enough to intuit the things that cannot always be seen in the bright light where we keep ourselves so busy and distracted.

Richard Ward has reminded preachers* that there are two kinds of talk for human beings. There is “daytime talk,” that you might use as you scurry from task to task, in well-lit places with your eye on the clock: talk that is rational, analytical, information gathering.

And then there is “night-time talk,” the kind you might speak as you sit around a fire under the stars, where time is suspended, where lists are put away and stories come out: talk that is mysterious and mythical, filled with the language of dreams and imagination, full with impossible

truths that are just there for the believing. By that definition, Jesus talk is always nighttime talk.

It trades not in certainties but in possibilities. Because it is not ever afraid of the Mystery of God, it is not compelled to explain every last

thing. It is happy to evoke the hugeness of the Creator's grace, in the realm of God where everything is a parable; where, it turns out, all the logic of the well-lit world is stood on its head, until we can all finally see that Caesar is not really Lord after all. Jesus talk would rather whisper at a hint of the ever-moving One, than to list four good points for discussing her or him or it.

And when it comes to being born, Jesus talk is not straightforward talk about the physiology of what happens when the birth water breaks. It is speech that plays with the mystery of what happens when you are all grown up and the certainty breaks, and you are pushed out into life for the second or third or hundredth time; when the Spirit arrives with no warning and forms you into something you have not been yet, such that you could later say you have been born another time. So maybe Nicodemus should not be condemned too much for showing up at night to see Jesus. Maybe he is onto something. And maybe when he appears again later in this gospel to take the body of Jesus from cross to tomb, he is showing what he has learned about re-birth after all, about being brave enough to stand all the way in the presence of the dark, trusting what will yet come of it.

Sometimes the work of the community of faith feels like nothing but daytime talk, like the reinvention of the wheel a million times over. We seem to keep having to analyze and budget, consult and conclude, gather information and chart tasks, explain where we think we are, project where we might be next year. And that's all right; there's a certain amount of that that we will always need, by which we can use what has been learned. But standing with Jesus in the dark, there's no mistaking what he thinks we need more . . . a coming forth from Spirit that takes all the bravery we've got, a re-making in the freedom and roominess of God, where against all logic the future shows up now; where love and justice and we ourselves are carried forward by an unpredictable wind. In a world where we and all those we love and serve need to learn lots of things -- how to run computers, drive cars, tie shoes, ride bikes, conduct pastoral searches -- there is no substitute, none at all, for remembering how to be born. Because if Jesus can be trusted, we will be doing it more than once:

once by water, and a million times more by Spirit,
each time a gift and a grace and a way forward,
each time a new and impossible truth,

believed for the sake of the whole
world.

Amen.

* Richard Ward, Speaking from the Heart: Preaching with Passion, 1992, p. 38
(out of print).

A TRIBUTE TO EDWIN H. FRIEDMAN

Manuscript Summary

Author: Harold E. Dungan, DOC

About the author: An ordained Disciples of Christ minister who is a member of the Board of Directors of the Interim Ministry Network (IMN). He has served as Vice-President and continues to be a vital part of the growth and reshaping of the future of the IMN.

This is an introduction to: *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*. Author: Edwin H. Friedman. This is an edited manuscript by Edward W. Beal, M.D. and Margaret M. Treadwell, L.I.C.S.W., Editors. Bethesda, MD: The Edwin Friedman Estate, 6 Wynkoop Court, 1999.

At the time of his premature death in 1996 Edwin H. Friedman was working on this book on leadership. Although the author had just written his publisher that the manuscript still needed additions, cutting, re-organization, and polishing, his wife and colleagues decided to have it published anyway with some editing. They felt the book was an important contribution and would be "the crowning achievement of a remarkable mind and career (p.v)." As the editors say in their preface, "... the read was a thrill. To our knowledge, this work would be the only book in print to deal with leadership as a function of emotional systems (p.vi)." Fortunately Friedman had written a thorough introduction stating his intentions for the book. Although the manuscript does not completely realize the book as intended, especially in the last three chapters, it does show his mind at work and gives us a broad view of his thoughts on leadership.

In the first paragraphs of his introduction, Friedman sets the basic thesis of his book: there is a "failure of nerve" (p.1) in all levels of leadership throughout all the institutions of our society. We live in a "leadership-toxic climate" (p.2) that is a greater threat to our survival as a nation and even as a civilization than any external threat.

The anxiety-ridden, highly reactive atmosphere pervading our society today sabotages any leader who tries to "stand-tall." However it is a vicious cycle because clear, decisive, well-defined leadership, the very kind of leadership we are unable to achieve, can only dissipate this kind of emotional climate. To Friedman leadership in America is "stuck in the rut of trying harder and harder without obtaining significant new results (p.2)." This is true in every institution; even those that are trying to solve the problem, such as think tanks, universities, and consultants (and this reviewer would add the church).

Because this situation is so pervasive, this book is for all leaders: CEOs, educators, coaches, healers, generals, managers, and clergy. "It is for leaders who have questioned the widespread triumphing of data over maturity, technique over stamina, and empathy over personal responsibility (p.2)." The author would replace pathology with strength,

comfort with challenge, and togetherness with self-differentiation.

Friedman writes out of forty years of experience in which these ideas generally took shape as he taught and worked in a variety of fields including the helping professions, the military, management, business, and government. Included in that experience were twenty years as a pulpit rabbi. In all areas in which he worked, he found a deep similarity in structures; in the ways problems were formulated, in the range of approaches, and in the rationalizations of their failures. It was, indeed, the basic similarity in their thinking processes, despite their different sociological classifications, that first led me to consider the possibility that our constant failure to change families and institutions fundamentally has less to do with finding the right methods than with misleading emotional and conceptual factors that reside within society itself (p.5).



Friedman's book is divided into two parts. The first discusses the emotional processes in society that affect leaders of all types from parents to presidents, and how these processes not only deprive us of effective leadership but also lead us to misconceptions of the leadership problem itself. The second part of the book presents new ways of understanding leadership that take the emotional processes into account and stress the self-differentiation of the leader. "Ultimately, however," he says, "The purpose of the book is less to enlighten than to embolden (p.4)."

The author states that viewing leadership from the perspective of emotional processes, whether speaking of families or families of nations, can help get us out of our failed leadership rut. A society's emotional climate affects the models it imagines and holds onto, while it influences what information we consider important and the issues we deal with. Therefore, the author says, "tinkering with mechanics" or trying harder will not help.

The way out requires re-orientation of the way we think about relationships so as to focus on the leader's own presence and being, rather than on techniques that motivate others. He cites the Federalist Papers (1789), which argue for a strong executive in support of the new U.S. Constitution. The papers claim that democracy is in a greater danger

with a weak leader than a strong one (p.8).

Friedman presents leadership as an emotional process rather than a cognitive one. The effective leader is well differentiated. By this he means being clear about goals so that one is less likely to become lost in the maze of emotional processes of the family or institution. A real leader is someone who can maintain connection while being a modifying, non-anxious, and even a challenging presence.

Throughout his career, as he worked with different people and groups, the author came to realize that certain emotional processes at work everywhere were at the center of the problem of leadership in contemporary America. One of these emotional processes is that the most dependent members of an organization set the agendas because adaptation moves toward weakness rather than strength, "thus leveraging power to the recalcitrant, the passive-aggressive, and the most anxious members of an institution rather than toward the energetic, the visionary, the imaginative, and the most creatively motivated (p.10)."

Another emotional processes at work is that devaluing the individual self causes the leader to doubt his own capacity for decision-making and to rely on "expert" advice from elsewhere. This leads to "an almost panicky obsession with data and technique that has become a form of substance abuse, turning professionals into data-junkies and their information into data junkyards (p.11)" thus enabling decision makers to avoid or deny the very emotional processes that might be contributing to their institution's failures.

Finally, the author sees a broad misunderstanding about the relational nature of the destructive processes at work in families and institutions that leaders attempt to control through reasonableness, rather than by taking a stand that defines the limits of the destructive behavior of those who are undisciplined and lack self-control.

Leadership and systemic emotional processes are compared to a biological understanding of the relationship between brain and body. In this view the functioning of the 'head' can systemically influence all parts of a body simultaneously, and totally bypass linear, 'head-bone-connected-to-the-neck-bone' thinking. Most influential is the leader's presence and being, not his or her technique or know-how." Leaders in Friedman's view will be judged not by how much power they use "but

how well their presence has been able to preserve that society's integrity." From this perspective the five presidents preceding Lincoln failed as leaders, because they were primarily "glad-handing, conflict-avoiding, compromising commanders-in-chief" who avoided taking charge of the growing national crisis (pp.15-16)."

Emotional processes in institutions are often camouflaged with questions of technique or data that are more concrete and measurable than emotional dynamics, yet the latter have far more impact on institutions than the "data that society loves to measure. Perhaps data collection serves as a way of avoiding the emotional variables," he says (p.7).

In the book's Part One, "Going the Other Way," the author illustrates what he understands to be the major emotional and conceptual barriers to the development and expression of well-defined leadership in America's families and institutions today. He does this by comparing the emotional processes of medieval Europe before the Renaissance with those of contemporary American society. He shows how the "exact same kind of adventurous leadership that enabled the 'old world' to pull out of its doldrums 500 years ago is what is needed if the 'new world' is also to have a renaissance, now (p.20)."

Friedman sees three emotional barriers that restrict our imagination today as they did in the past:

- focusing on data rather than maturity
- valuing empathy over responsibility
- associating strong self with narcissism and autocracy, rather than with individuation and integrity (p.21).

The author views families and organizations in terms of universal emotional processes that are self-organizing and multigenerational. The relationships and structures within the family or work group are constantly changing, evolving--partly in response to their own needs and partly in response to changes in relationships around them. He focuses on similarities rather than differences in institutions and families--the natural processes that all life shares in common.

Friedman calls into question the following assumptions that:

- individuals are driven by their personality

- culture and gender are critical variables in the ways individuals function in relationships
- influence of the past is primarily the impact of the preceding generation rather than its overlapping into the present
- it is useful for leaders to think in either/or distinctions such as male/ female, leader/follower, this age/a previous time, mind/body, present/past, and so on, rather than in continuous, organic, systemic terms

Instead, he emphasizes new models that:

- institutions are emotional fields that generally affect the functioning of their members more than the members affect the field
- institutions are self-organizing structures that involve forces which cannot be reduced to individual model dynamics and which acquire their own level of inquiry
- what humans have in common with life on this planet may be more important for understanding human colonization than how we are different from other species
- much is learned about the connection between leaders and institutions from several new understandings of the human organism; for example, neuropsychology, psycho immunology, evolutionary theory (p.29).

In Part Two of the book, Friedman describes "Leadership Through Self-Differentiation." For the author, Chapter 6 (the first chapter in Part Two) is the keystone chapter of the book as it presents a model of leadership arising out of models he described in previous chapters. He cites inter-related characteristics of leaders such as Columbus, Magellan, da Gama and Sir Francis Drake as follows:

- clarity about one's beliefs
- self-definition in relationships
- toleration of solitariness
- preservation of connectedness
- stamina and persistence, and
- self-regulation in the face of sabotage (p.30).

The author points out that by continually working on one's own self-differentiation, the leader increases his or her ability to be objective and capacity to make decisions.

Chapter by chapter Friedman unfolds what he means by "leadership through self-differentiation." He develops and encourages an approach to leadership that focuses not on techniques for manipulating/motivating others, but on a leader's capacity to be aware of the nature of his or her own presence.

Friedman wants to show leaders how to not be victimized or held hostage by victims. It is an empowering model of leadership and relational systems "based on the natural systems thinking found in late 20th century biology and physics, rather than on psychological and other abstract social science models that, despite the accuracy of their data, tend to view life in the paradigm of 19th century mechanics (p.11)."

Friedman says that self-differentiation in a leader promotes it in a follower and this leads him to a concept of power based upon presence rather than coercion. It makes no sense to him that the leader will change in others and tries to motivate the unmotivated. The leader instead must work on her/his own will to self-differentiation. Important for a leader's presence are vision, persistence, stamina, self-regulation, self-definition, and connectedness.

For Friedman leadership through presence is affirmed in nature by such phenomena as the effects of enzymes, catalysts, and transformers, "all of which have no moving parts and all of which always preserve their integrity in any kind of transaction (p.31)." Leadership by presence also eliminates the idea that anyone can cure or fix another, be it a person or group, with formulas, techniques, or programs. "Therefore whether we are considering parenting, medicine, or management, the factors that leaders want to come forth from their followers must first be nurtured within."

Strong, effective leaders live with crises as a major part of their lives. The two types of crises are those that are (1) imposed upon the leader and are not of her/his own making; and (2) a result of the leader doing just what he or she should be doing.

The author devotes chapter nine to handling the first type of crisis. As

he says, "most crises cannot by their very nature be resolved (that is, fixed); they must simply be managed until they work their way through. ... This, of course, puts a premium on self-regulation and the management of anxiety instead of frantically seeking the right solution (p.31)."

He provides five principles for handling this type of crisis. For example, the second type of crisis Friedman terms sabotage. In his chapter on this subject (chapter ten) the author says, "the ideas presented in this chapter are based on the notion that the very efforts of the leader to function in all the self-differentiated ways described in the rest of the book can be expected to trigger a whole set of problems (p.31)." Of all the qualities of a leader, the ability to handle this kind of crisis is the mark of a truly successful leader. As Friedman says, "sabotage is not simply something to be overcome; it comes with the territory of leading."

All of what the author has said about self-differentiation and qualities of strength in a leader brings him to the kind of training leaders need so they can recognize and deal with emotional processes. Amazingly perhaps, the most effective training for this type of leader works on the issues of their families of origin. When a leader examines these emotional processes and relationships he or she becomes less reactive to and less avoiding of these emotional factors not only in his or her family of origin but also within the system where he or she works. This process is exactly the same for managers, clergy, therapists, physicians, or parents. When leaders avoid this commitment their success is short-lived. Leaders must be strong enough to grow and have the nerve to develop their own self-differentiation. A leader, therefore, is a person who is not afraid to risk following his or her own instincts to make critical decisions. To illustrate, he relates the following story.

A young woman, daughter of a liquor distributor, was working for an ad agency. She was working on a multi-million dollar project alone in the office after everyone else had gone home so that it could make the last plane out. When she saw the deadline would not be met, she called the airport, found out the cost of a private jet, and despite its extravagant cost, decided it was a small price to pay for assuring the contract.

The next morning when her immediate superiors came in, they were furious when they learned what she had done on her own. Although her father knew she was the most competent and responsible of his children, he had been hesitating to take

her into the business. Upon hearing what she had done at the ad agency, he immediately decided to bring her into the distributorship (p.20).

"Leaders must not only develop vision, persistence, and stamina, but also understand that the problems they encounter may stem from their own unresolved family issues, their organization's past sabotage in response to their effective leadership, or a combination of these factors (p.32)."

Training should focus on the systemic effects of the presence or self of the leader. By training leaders to be a well-differentiated presence, their very presence "could promote differentiation and support creative imagination throughout the system (p.16)."

Training should build a leader's capacity to avoid being regulated by an institution's emotional processes that are passed on from generation to generation. Proper training is "helping a leader to become better defined and to learn how to deal adroitly with the sabotage that almost invariably follows any success in this endeavor (p.17)."

For this reviewer Friedman speaks in depth to the interim minister as he speaks of a non-anxious presence in the midst of a highly anxious society/church, and of the effective leader as a self-differentiated person who is able to live with crises as a major part of life as an interim minister. Especially significant is his view that an effective leader's [interim minister's?] work will create crises (sabotage) when he or she is doing what she or he should be doing.

In the social climate of the church today the interim's task is often to cast a radical vision before the congregation can move ahead, and this will almost always create a strong reaction. Friedman says, "the ability to handle this kind of crisis is the mark of a truly successful leader," and I would add of a truly successful intentional interim minister. Especially relevant for the work of the interim minister are Friedman's comments on how his consulting changed as he gained experience with both families and work systems. Instead of working with the group, he began working primarily with the person who had the greatest capacity to be a leader as he defined it. This person was usually someone who was not defensive and who was able to take responsibility for himself or herself and for his or her own emotional well being and future. The integrity of the leader promotes the healthy integrity of the family or the

work system.

Intentional interim ministers are called to lead a congregation or institution through change, often-radical change. I emphasize lead, because the church has floundered for the past few decades for lack of effective self-differentiated leadership with vision and the courage to risk.

Friedman's call to embolden leaders to act can be taken as a call to the interim minister to boldly lead where others have feared to go (to paraphrase a familiar TV show). As 2 Timothy 2:1,6a says, "As for you, my son, [or interim minister], be strong through the grace that is ours in union with Christ Jesus. . . . [and] remember Jesus Christ."

In tribute to Edwin H. Friedman, there is a treasure trove of ideas in this book. As one person said, "It is my bible. I carry it wherever I go." That may be an overstatement, but the book is one that should be on every interim minister's books-to-read list.

A Manuscript Review

A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix.

Author: Edwin H. Friedman. This is an edited manuscript by Edward W. Beal, M.D. and Margaret M. Treadwell, L.I.C.S.W., Editors. Bethesda, MD: The Edwin Friedman Estate, 6 Wynkoop Court, 1999.

Author: Art Bell

About the Author: Art is a Certified PC(USA) Interim Specialist and member of the Interim Ministry Network.

As Intentional Interim Pastors, we're all concerned with maturity, our own and that of the congregations we serve. Immaturity leads to the dysfunctional behavior we witness as we work for growth and health in churches. From the thinking of the author of *Generation to Generation*, we are blessed with a volume, which might be sub-titled "A Primer on Promoting Maturity."

And in Rabbi Edwin Friedman's final work *A Failure of Nerve- Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* I found this writing to be like dynamite, blasting me out of the malaise I was in at the time. The church I was serving realized similar results. I found this new Friedman writing while I was distracted, confused and mostly despairing for my efforts in that troubled "interim-interim" situation. The explosion of insight and vision from this extraordinary gift resulted in a positive outcome no one could have expected. So my review of this manuscript is best entitled: "A Most Useful Tool for Interim Pastors, (or To Grow or Not to Grow, that is the Question)."

The church I was working with seemed to me to be much like the description offered in the Introduction to Friedman's volume: A regressive, counter-evolutionary trend in which the most dependent members of any organization set the agendas, where adaptation is con-

stantly toward weakness rather than strength, thus leveraging power to the recalcitrant . . .

Of course, this is in retrospect-after my exit from that situation. Still, the insight supported me in remembering (again) that the issues in the system were not my issues! The key event in the healing process opened leaders' eyes to the mis-information and un-health in the congregation's life. Shortly afterward, power was granted to the most mature members, whose desire was for improved health for the whole organization.

In this manuscript review, I would like to add comments to Harold Dungan's tribute to Friedman article featured early in this edition of *The Journal of the Interim Ministry Network*.

Friedman's first chapter closes (except for unfinished notes) with a table outlining the distinction between what he names "Old World Orientation" and "New Orientation." Each chapter's focus is presented and used to illustrate this contrast. This delineation is founded on Friedman's understanding that the 17th century European discovery of the "new world" is "an allegory of the human experience of getting unstuck."

These ensuing chapters present engaging reasoning, dramatic illustrations and clear narratives for each of these new orientations.

As we are accustomed to seeing, Friedman relates organizational unhealth to our wider society's dysfunction. Chapter four is sub-headed: "The Fallacy of Empathy." Here he writes of addressing some community leaders. After his presentation one of his listeners said he was offended by Friedman's remarks. Following Friedman's reply to him, another audience member is quoted: "You are still avoiding his feelings." To this protest the answer is: "He may have been 'hurt,' but he wasn't damaged . . . The previous questioner, in my view, is creating a diversion by introducing political rhetoric, and I don't intend to let him steal my agenda, nor will I take responsibility for his feelings or be tyrannized by his sensibilities." In just this way-using multiple examples-Friedman leads us to understand the concepts of the "New Orientation."

A Failure of Nerve expands Friedman's counter-culture emphasis upon emotional relationships and brings this clarity-that those relationships must be based on each person's mature assessment of her/his responsibility. He clearly states, for example, that stress does not result from

hard work, but from the individual's position in relational triangles. His expanded foundation brings added clarity to our work as Intentional Interim Pastors.

We are most effective when we define ourselves as highly differentiated actors in the system. And--he underscores our need for mature behavior, and our need to encourage mature behavior in our congregations.



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