

A LEADER GUIDE

FOR

CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP

IN ANXIOUS TIMES

BY SALLIE C. VERNER

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

Each participant needs a copy of the book, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times* by Peter L. Steinke (available from The Alban Institute at alban.org, or from Seraphim Communications at seracomm.com).

The video, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Conversations and Reflections with Dr. Peter Steinke*, is an integral part of the study. Be sure the method of projection fits the size of the group. Always check the equipment before the group arrives.

Adults differ widely in their preferred learning styles. Therefore, the lessons offer a variety of ways to present the materials. Resist the temptation to teach only in your preferred style.

Examples illustrating certain concepts are meant to be suggestive. As you get to know your group, you may want to supplement or replace these with examples of your own which fit the context of your group better.

After reviewing each chapter, you may choose to explore only certain ones. It is important to summarize chapters 1-3 if you do not use them as a part of your study since they contain information that is enlarged in the later chapters.

With a group that is meeting regularly or for a specified period of time, such as Friday night and all day Saturday, the leader may ask for or select one or more people to prepare a one-hour session. You will need to provide copies of the guide to those individuals ahead of the learning event.

Take a playful approach! Play is a primary way in which humans bond with each other.

THE LEADER'S PRESENCE

CHAPTER 1

ANXIOUS SOULS

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. be able to define anxiety
2. have reflected on their own response to anxiety
3. be able to state the difference between acute and chronic anxiety

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- Marker board/Markers or Newsprint/Markers
- Pencils

THE PLAN:

In Anxious Times

1. Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4. Ask them to complete this sentence: When I was asked (elected, appointed) to serve as a leader in my congregation, my first thought was.....
2. Refer participants to the list of unexplained circumstances on pages 5 and 6 of the text. Ask them to mark those which they have experienced in their church.
3. Using the next list of tensions and traumas on pages 6 and 7, ask them to again mark those which have been a part of their experience of the church.
4. Ask the participants to rate the “unexplained circumstances” and “tensions and traumas” they identified, using the rating code below.
1= No Harm to the System 2= No Lasting Harm to the System 3= Great Harm to the System
5. Depending on time and the size of the group, you might ask for some sharing of this activity or

use it as a building block for the discussions which follow.

The Effects of Anxiety

The Repressive Effects

1. Refer participants to the list of ways human functioning is repressed by anxiety. (pages 8 and 9)
Ask participants to share examples they have observed or experienced for each of the behaviors described. (If the group is large, ask them to talk in pairs.)

OR

1. Using the vignette on pages 9 and 10, ask participants to speculate about the behaviors which would have been evident in the situation described. Ask participants to also speculate about how they would have responded if they were a leader in the Broadway Church.

The Infectious Effects

1. At the top of a newsprint chart or marker board, write Acute on one side and Chronic on the other side. Below each of the headings, write words which describe acute and chronic anxiety. (See the text on page 10 for descriptive words.)
2. Read (or tell) the Biblical stories cited in the text on pages 10 and 11. Ask the participants to identify behaviors of the characters which are examples of acute or chronic anxiety. Are there other Biblical characters who come to mind as examples of people who exhibited acute or chronic anxiety?

The Reactive Effect

1. Ask participants to mark one sentence in this section which stands out for them (or which caught their attention or was a new thought or reinforced a previous learning). Ask three of the participants to share with the group the sentence they chose and why they chose it. Invite other participants into the conversation about the sentences cited.

THE VIDEO:

1. Show the video. (Remember to check equipment before the session begins!)
2. Ask the participants to share additional insights and/or ideas they heard expressed in the video.

SUMMARY:

The session began by asking the participants to recall their first thoughts when they were chosen to serve as a leader in the congregation. Reflecting on what they have learned about Anxious Souls in this session, what might they consider, when asked to serve as a leader in these anxious times?

THE LEADER'S PRESENCE

CHAPTER 2

THE BALANCING ACT

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. be able to give examples of Newtonian and Quantum thinking
2. be able to state three defining characteristics of self-differentiation
3. have practiced the balancing act

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- Marker board/Markers or Newsprint/Markers
- Highlighters or Pencils

THE PLAN:

THE VIDEO

1. Introduce the video using the information on page 19 of the text.
2. Refer the participants to page 30 of the text (5 behaviors of a differentiated leader). These characteristics of a differentiated leader will be discussed in the video. Ask the participants to make notes of ideas expressed in the video which relate to these five characteristics.
3. Show the video. (Remember to check equipment before the session begins!)
4. Ask the participants to share their insights and questions raised by the video discussion.

Beyond Billiard Balls

Quantum Thinking

1. On the marker board or newsprint, write Newtonian on one side and Quantum on the other. Ask participants to provide examples of each way of thinking. List them under the columns on the chart.
2. Point the participants to the last three sentences of the first complete paragraph on page 23

which begins, “The genius of life, therefore, is...”

Emotional Processes

1. Give each participant a highlighter marker or pencil. Ask them to read this section of the text (pages 23 and 24) marking the sentences which they find the most helpful for understanding the difference between feelings and emotional forces. As a way of initiating a discussion of emotional processes, ask them to share their work.

The Balancing Act

1. Divide the participants into two groups. Assign one group the task of defining emotional fusion and the other group the task of defining emotional cutoff (pages 26 and 27).
2. In “A Personal Note” (page 28), Dr. Steinke describes two situations in which it is important for the leader to balance the see-saw. In the following process the participants will role play the two situations described. Divide the participants into pairs. In the first role play, the person who can balance the longest on one foot will be the leader. In the second role play, the other person will be the leader. Set the following stage for the conversation in which the leader will practice the balancing act. In both conversations the “other” person approaches the leader and opens the discussion.

1. On Wednesday evening as you (the other person) are leaving choir practice, you take advantage of the opportunity to approach another choir member (the leader), who serves on the congregation board, to express your frustration with the choir director. From the beginning of the conversation you make your position clear that the choir director needs to be disciplined or removed from their position on the church staff.

After eight to ten minutes, ask the participants to switch roles for the next conversation.

2. During a meeting of the governing board of the church, the leaders were informed that the church secretary had embezzled almost \$10,000 over the past 18 months. Some members of the board feel that the best approach is to keep the information within the board. A minority believe that keeping the information a secret will hurt the church. In the parking lot after a meeting, you (the other person) try to convince a fellow member of the board (the leader) to go along with keeping the secret.

After eight to the minutes, call the total group back to order for discussion of the exercise. In the leader role, were they able to maintain emotional objectivity? What helped them to be differentiated yet connected? At what points did they experience fusion and/or cutoff?

CLOSING:

Refer back to the information on page 19 of the text. Affirm the participants’ willingness to think clearly, act on principle, define themselves, etc.

THE LEADER'S PRESENCE

CHAPTER 3

THE NON-ANXIOUS PRESENCE

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. be able to define non-anxious presence
2. be able to distinguish between anxious and non-anxious responses
3. be able to tell at least one Bible story in which Jesus exhibits non-anxious behavior

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- 3x5 index cards
- Pencils
- Bibles
- Copies of case study sequence of events diagram for each participant

THE PLAN:

THE VIDEO

1. Give the participants a 3x5 index card. Ask them to draw a single domino, standing upright, in the middle of the card. During this session, the participants are to write a word or phrase they believe will help them regulate their own anxiety. The reminders on the cards will not be shared.
2. Show the video.

Presence and Poise

A Way of Being

Quick or Deliberate Action

1. Read the Biblical stories listed below.

2. After each reading ask the group to answer the following questions:

- Describe the anxious situation into which Jesus is thrust.
- If Jesus had responded anxiously, he might have.....
- How was Jesus' actual response an example of a non-anxious presence? See page 35 (first paragraph) and page 43 (bulleted list) for non-anxious responses.

John 7:53 - 8:11 Woman Taken into Adultery

Luke 6:6-11 A Synagogue Healing on the Sabbath

Mark 12:13-17 A Question of Taxes

John 18:1-11 Jesus Asks a Question

Stories of Self-Managing Leaders

1. Review the case study of St. Paul's Church on pages 38-41 of the text.

2. Using the St. Paul's Church sequence-of-events diagram, engage the participants in a conversation about anxious and non-anxious responses which drive the story.

LEADER'S NOTEBOOK

On page 44 of the text, Dr. Steinke describes five practices to work on self-management. Ask the participants to practice being a non-anxious presence during the coming week. Ask them to consciously work on their capacity to regulate their own anxiety and reactivity.

THE LEADER'S FUNCTIONING

CHAPTER 4

HOLY TISSUE

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. have identified one of their personal “German Shepherds”
2. be able to describe at least two functions of the pre-frontal cortex
3. have participated in a discussion in which the participants consider the theology and the consequences of confronting and not confronting destructive behavior in the church

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The sessions is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- Marker board/Markers or Newsprint/Markers
- Five sentences under Losing Proportion/Mindset printed on paper strips

THE PLAN:

Instinctive Living

The Alarm System

1. Using the information on pages 51 and 52, introduce the concept of the survival mechanism in the brain. (If the participants are unfamiliar with the way the brain works, the leader may choose to begin this session by showing a portion of the video, *The Balancing Act. The Human Brain* chapter is an excellent introduction. The video is available from Seraphim Communications, Inc. seracomm.com.)
2. Dr. Steinke’s early encounter with a German Shepherd resulted in a permanently exaggerated fear response to this particular stimulus. Ask the participants to identify their own exaggerated fear responses to particular stimuli, and, if they can, to identify the experience behind these responses. Invite them to share their “German Shepherd” stories with the group.

Losing Proportion

Mindset

1. The following sentences are from the section titled *Losing Proportion* on pages 53 and 54 of the text. Write each one on a strip of paper. Ask five participants to read the sentences slowly and carefully to the group.
 - When we are flooded with anxiety, we can neither hear what is said without distortion nor respond with clarity.
 - Fixated on what is endangering us, we forfeit our imaginative capacities.
 - We act with a small and sometimes unproductive repertoire of behaviors.
 - When the amygdala is in control, our perception warps measurably.
 - Perception is lopsided or truncated.
2. Refer the participants to the list of thirteen triggers of anxiety for congregations on pages 15 – 17 at the end of the first chapter. After reading through the list, ask participants to recall situations in which they were a leader or an observer of a congregation stuck in a mindset triggered by anxiety. Ask participants to share examples of the behaviors listed in the five bullets above.

How and How Long

The Human Part

Beyond Survival

THE VIDEO

1. Show the video.
2. Review the six unique ways the prefrontal cortex enables humans to function on pages 58, 59, and 60.
3. In the video Dr. Steinke and his guests raise the issue of the meaning of Christian love within the context of a congregation.
 - What is a loving response to a person who is reactive?
 - How does a leader reflect the image of God in a situation that has been hijacked by destructive behavior?
 - Invite the participants to respond to issues raised in the video and to continue the conversation begun in the video.
4. Close the session with words from Dr. Steinke: “Healthy functioning of the left prefrontal cortex is the best hope for a sane and safe world, as well as for healthy congregations. It is the organ that enables each of us to be a responsible and responsive person, to be self-aware and thoughtful of others, indeed a reflection of the image of God. (page 61)

THE LEADER'S FUNCTIONING

CHAPTER 5

INFLUENCING THE EMOTIONAL FIELD

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. be able to define an emotional field
2. be able to state the four circumstances and influences a leader faces in the life of a congregation
3. will have participated in a conversation about change

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- Eight index cards with one role written on each card
- Paper
- Pencils
- Five 5x7 index cards
- Make a puzzle by copying the squares below on the five cards. Cut on the lines and mix up the pieces.

THE PLAN:

Emotional Field

1. Begin the session by reminding the participants that Dr. Steinke states that, "In an emotional field, people function as they do because of the presence of one another." (page 67)
2. Identify seven or eight participants to "play" with the concept quoted above. They are the members of a search committee elected to call an associate pastor. On slips of paper write an identity for each participant and distribute to them. Ask them not to share their identities, but to act them out during the game. Give them a few minutes to think about the character they will be playing. (Use the list below, or make up your own.)

1. the chair of the committee, lifelong member of the church

2. a 15 year old with an attitude
3. a stay-at-home father of 2 young preschool age children
4. a CEO of a large corporation
5. a grandmother/father
6. a 28 year old college graduate who is stuck in a phone marketing job
7. a 45 year old who teaches auto mechanics at the local community college

Ask the game participants to gather around a table.

The chair of the committee will begin the meeting. Give him/her the following written instructions:

You are to call the meeting to order. Tell the other committee members that you were given instructions about the process the committee will use. Because the committee will work together for a significant amount of time, the first step is to practice working together. Their task is to put together a puzzle within ten minutes. As chair, you will place the pieces of the puzzle on the table and will serve as the time keeper for the group.

Ask everyone else to sit outside the circle. Give them each a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask them to observe the behaviors, tones, facial expressions, etc. of the participants on the search committee. They are to note ways the players function because of the presence of other players.

Give the mixed-up puzzle pieces to the “committee chair” and ask him/her to begin the meeting.

3. When the game has ended, ask the observers to share their observations. If you need conversation stimulants, use some of the sentences on pages 67, 68, and 69. For example, describe ways the leader affected the whole more than the other participants. How did a participant’s life outside the church affect their role in the group? Invite the game players to add comments from their perspective. To close the discussion, ask the participants to share insights from this experience.

Influence

THE VIDEO

1. Refer the participants to the diagram on page 68. Ask each participant to choose two of the four influences as their particular focus for viewing the video. During the video the participants will focus on what they hear and understand about the two influences they have chosen. Show the video.
2. Use the examples and information on pages 68-78 and the notes and thoughts the participants gained from the video to discuss each of the four influences. Ask participants to share their stories of successes and challenges as a leader in each of the four critical times in the life of a congregation. Do not rush through the sections; explore the ideas presented in the written

material and video.

THE LEADER'S NOTEBOOK

Choose four of the bulleted concepts on pages 79 and 80 that you think your group will find particularly intriguing. Assign one concept to each of the four corners of the room. Ask the participants to choose the concept about which they would like to have a conversation and to go to the corresponding corner. Allow about ten minutes for conversation.

To close the session, ask several people to complete the following sentence: "I believe that change....."

THE LEADER'S FUNCTIONING

CHAPTER 6

THE ESSENTIAL EDGE

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. have identified at least three examples of boundaries in their personal lives and in the church
2. have participated in a discussion focused on identifying common boundary violations in the church
3. will have considered their role as a leader in establishing and maintaining the essential edge

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- Paper and Pencils
- Marker board and markers or newsprint and markers
- “I” Statements printed on paper for each participant OR
- Long piece of butcher paper with Immune Capacity statement printed on it, masking tape, markers

THE PLAN:

The Essential Edge Introduction

1. Introduce the concept of boundaries using the material on pages 81 and 82.
2. From your own experience, share some examples of experiences when your boundaries have been pushed. (Have you been in a public space where you “overheard” someone talking on a cell phone describe a personal relationship? When you’ve been the chair of a committee, has someone tried to take your role? Has someone ever been sitting in your seat at a sporting event?) Invite the participants to share examples of their boundaries being pushed or crossed.

THE VIDEO

1. Ask participants to draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. Ask the participants to

write the words “more later” on one side of the paper and “examples” on the other. As they watch the video, ask participants to make notes about ideas they want to discuss on the more later side and examples of boundary violations they hear mentioned by the presenters on the other side.

2. Show the video.

Cells and Souls

Uninvited Guests

1. To guide the discussion, ask participants to tell you what they have written on the “more later” side of their paper. List the ideas on newsprint or a marker board. Put hash marks by those ideas which are duplicated. Ask them to look through pages 83, 84, and 85 of the text. List additional ideas they want to discuss further.
2. Beginning with the idea that has the most hash marks, ask participants to comment and/or raise questions about the concept. Guide the discussion by moving through the ideas from those with the most hash marks to those with the least. The list is a tool to help cover the range of ideas in the material, not a to-do list which must be completed. Conclude the discussion when it seems to you that the material has been fully covered.

Note: Prior to the session, make your own list of ideas. Have in mind concepts you feel should be discussed. If they are omitted, include them in the list. Suggestions for the list:

- Reactive people function in a manner similar to a virus.
- Small boundary violations add and multiply
- It’s harder in the church to maintain boundaries
- Tolerance vs. forgiveness, confrontive vs. loving behavior

Common Violations

1. Ask participants to turn to page 86 in the text, the list of boundary offenses.
2. Divide the participants into groups of three. Ask the participants to refer to their “examples” lists from the video and to draw on their own experiences to connect boundary violation examples to the boundary offenses.
3. Invite them to share surprises and insights.

A Story of Broken Borders

Providing Immunity

1. Introduce this part of the session with quotes from the text and video which relate to the role of leaders in protecting the essential edge. Suggestions:
 - “Ideally leaders provide an immune response.” (p. 90)
 - “Dealing with people who function in a me-only manner is time consuming and

- energy draining.” (p. 92)
- “Leaders must encourage boundary respect.” (p. 94)
- “It takes some courage to say to people your behavior is out of line.” (video)
- “The immune capacity must come from the leaders.” (video)
- “Leadership requires courage to speak the truth and not always be popular for it.” (video)
- “Leaders are called to be stewards, to manage the community.” (video)

2. Jesus defined himself with I statements. Ask the participants (leaders!) to work privately to complete the following sentences

As a leader in the church, I am_____.

As a leader in the church, I find_____.

As a leader in the church, I need_____.

As a leader in the church, I want_____.

After completing the sentences, ask the participants to keep this paper for further personal reflection when they are confronted with boundary issues.

OR

2. Hang a long piece of butcher paper on the wall. In large letters in the middle of the paper print:
The Immune Capacity Must Come From The Leaders. It Takes Courage To Be A Leader.

Give each participant a marker. Ask them to write on the paper the first response that came to them. To close the session, ask participants to read the responses in silence.

THE LEADER'S CHALLENGES

CHAPTER 7

WE VERSUS THEY

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. have gathered data on factors which contribute to the rise in conflict in our culture and the congregation
2. be able to describe at least two habits which are patterns of behavior in conflicted situations
3. have discussed actions leaders can take to move a congregation toward positive response to conflict

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- News magazines and newspapers, a piece of poster board, scissors, and stick paste
- Butcher paper, masking tape, markers
- Paper and pencils

THE PLAN:

The Gathering Storm

Dr. Steinke states that church conflict is a growth industry. (page 101) Two of the factors cited which contribute to church conflict are 1) the rise in conflict in our culture and 2) the rise in anxiety brought about by rapid change. As a way to set the context for this session and to emphasize the point, the first exercise will focus on these factors.

1. Divide the participants into two groups.

Group 1 will need news magazines and newspapers, a piece of poster board, scissors, and stick paste. Their assignment is to make a collage of headlines that reflect the presence of conflict in our culture.

Group 2 will need a long sheet of butcher paper. Before the session draw a line from one end of the sheet to the other. At the far right end of the line, write the current date. At the left end write

19____, to be completed with the birth year of the oldest participant in the group. Group 2 will make a time line of the changes that have happened in their lifetimes. Give them several markers; ask them to work together, writing in as many changes as they can remember. Encourage them to include not only historical and scientific changes, but also social changes (two- parent working families, rise in divorce, family mobility).

2. Give the two groups about 15 minutes to complete their work. Ask for a report from each group.
3. Conclude the opening exercise with Dr. Steinke's observation, "My experience tells me that about four out of ten congregations in any five-year period face a moderate to serious conflict." (page 101)

Conflict Habits

New Aggressiveness

1. Divide the participants into three groups. Ask each group to read one of the sections listed below and be prepared to review the material with the total group. Ask them to include an example from their own experience, if possible.
 1. Peace Mongering and False Attribution (pages 102 & 103)
 2. Neglect or Denial (pages 103-105)
 3. The New Aggressiveness (pages 105-107)
2. Give each group about ten minutes to prepare and about ten minutes to teach the information to the total group.

Different Outcomes

THE VIDEO

1. Show the video.
2. In the video Dr. Steinke says congregations are not in danger when they have conflict, the danger comes when the congregation does not deal with the conflict. Pages 109 – 112 list nine actions leaders can take to help a congregation turn a conflict toward the positive.
3. Each of the nine paragraphs begins with a short phrase. Move through all nine phrases inviting comments and questions for a discussion of this material. Where appropriate, refer to comments made by the presenters in the video.

THE LEADER'S NOTEBOOK

In this section Dr. Steinke shares twenty things he has learned through his experience with conflicted congregations. If time permits, ask the participants to share with the total group one learning which is a surprise and one learning which is not a surprise.

THE LEADER'S CHALLENGES

CHAPTER 8

ROCKING THE EMOTIONAL BOAT

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. have considered the value of rocking the boat as opposed to playing it safe
2. be able to state the difference in technical and adaptive problems

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- Marker board/Markers or Newsprint/Markers
- Pencils

THE PLAN:

**So as Not to Upset Anyone
Brave Souls**

THE VIDEO

1. Show the video
2. Print the following quote from page 121 of the text on the marker board or newsprint.
“...followers want comfort, stability, and solutions from their leaders, but that’s babysitting. Real leaders ask hard questions and knock people out of their comfort zones. Then they manage the resulting distress.”
3. Ask the participants to respond to this statement by completing these two sentence stems (written out on marker board or newsprint):
 - “Yes, but I wonder...”
 - “Yes, and furthermore...”

4. Turn to the case study which begins on page 122. Using input from the participants, briefly outline the sequence of events that led to the resignation of the pastor. Identify the points at which the boat was rocked. What factors (both in the church and internally in the leaders) enabled the leaders to rock the boat, stand firm, and stay the course?

Technical or Adaptive Problems

1. Refer participants to the bulleted lists on page 127. Designate one side of the meeting space as Technical Problem; the other side as Adaptive Problem. As you present each of the following problems, ask participants to decide which kind of problem it is and then stand on the Technical or Adaptive side. Ask them to state the issues involved and defend their position with the bulleted descriptions. In each of the problems presented, the participants are to assume the role of a leader on the executive board of the church. The problem has come to them to be solved.
 1. It is discovered that the bookkeeper has been embezzling money for several years. The bookkeeper has agreed to repay the funds. The finance committee wants to accept the offer and not file charges.
 2. The children's choir director has made a decision that the children's choir will perform popular, secular songs at the Family Christmas Eve service. Some parents believe it is a good decision; others believe a church choir should learn "church" songs.
 3. The preschool playground has become infested with ants. This is the third occurrence in the past five years.
 4. The church school classroom used by the Ellie Jones women's class is a large space which has been painted, decorated, and maintained by the class members for many years. A number of the women have died in recent years and the average attendance is 10. Across the hall the fifth grade class has outgrown their space. The Sunday School Superintendents have requested that the classes exchange spaces. Some members feel it is wrong to ask the Ellie Jones Class to give up their designated space.
 5. The youth pastor wants the church to buy a van to transport the youth on retreats. The senior pastor believes the expense and upkeep is not a good investment of church funds.
 6. The apartment building next door to the church has been renovated into luxury condominiums. The new residents have asked the church to refrain from ringing the steeple bell at the beginning of the worship services (8:30 and 11:00) on Sunday mornings.

Resistance to Adaptive Change

1. Divide the participants into groups of three. Ask them to review the information on the functioning of the brain as related to resisting adaptive change. (pages 131 & 132).
2. In their small groups, ask the participants to share times in their lives when they were resistant to adaptive change.

3. Ask them to respond to the author's A Personal Note. (pages 133 and 134)
4. If the hymn, *They Cast Their Nets in Galilee*, by William Alexander Percy, is familiar to the group, ask them to sing it together as a closing. If it is not familiar, read the words as a closing prayer. The hymn is printed in the Episcopal Hymnal (1982). The words can also be found online by Googling *They Cast Their Nets in Galilee*.

THE LEADER'S CHALLENGES

CHAPTER 9

TO CHALLENGE OR TO SURVIVE

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. be able to distinguish between challenge leadership and survival leadership
2. be able to state at least three ideas leaders need to remember in order to move forward

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The participants will have read the chapter before coming to the class/discussion.
2. The video will be included in the session as part of the learning plan. The leader will have viewed the video before the session begins. (Remember to check the equipment prior to each session.)
3. The session is designed for 1½ hours.

SUPPLIES:

- Two pieces of newsprint. One with “Moses” stick figure, other with “Aaron” stick figure
- Markers
- Masking Tape
- 8½x11 paper (enough for each participant to have a sheet)
- Pencils
- Marker board/markers or newsprint/markers
- Litany printed on marker board or newsprint (see *A Litany*)
- 4x6 special paper (see *A Private Reminder*)

THE PLAN:

Two Brothers

Major Differences

1. On a large piece of newsprint, draw a stick figure which is labeled Moses. On a second piece of newsprint, draw a stick figure which is labeled Aaron. Divide participants into two groups. Give “Moses” to one group and “Aaron” to the other. Both groups need Bibles and markers. Ask each group to use the information on pages 141 – 145 of the text, as well as the Biblical story, to fill out the portrait of their character. Words, colors, and drawings will complete the portrait.
2. Ask each group to share their work with the total group.

3. Give the participants an opportunity to comment and/or ask questions about what distinguishes Moses, the challenge leader, from Aaron, the survival leader.

The Pressure and the Pattern

Review with participants the information on pages 145-148 which describes the three patterns which form when congregations find themselves in a state of destabilization.

THE VIDEO

1. In the video the presenters will mention at least eight key ideas which they believe are important for leaders who are challenging a congregation to move forward. Ask participants to write the numbers 1-8 down the side of a piece of paper. Ask them to listen for eight ideas. Show the video.

Eight key ideas for the list:

- Trained key leadership
- Change will not happen without leaders
- Reaction is a part of the process
- Move slowly, showing patience
- A clear sense of mission is imperative
- Leaders have to take risks
- Leaders need to be prepared to take a few bullets
- Leaders stand beside and in front of people, not behind them

Challenge or Survival

1. Divide the participants into three groups. Assign one of the following narratives to each group. Ask each group to read its assigned narrative. With their lists in hand, ask each group to reflect on ways the leaders in their narratives behaved as challenge leaders.

1. Take Thoughtful Action (p. 148)
2. Risk Goodwill (p. 151)
3. Stay the Course (p. 153)

2. Ask each group to report on their work.

Managing Self

To close the study, choose the option below which best suits the personality of the group, or design your own closing.

Read aloud these words from Dr. Steinke:

“We are back once again to where we began—a capacity to self-manage: to think before we act; to observe others; to define ourselves by saying, ‘I think or I believe’; to resist cutting off from or

giving in to others; to focus on our own behavior.” (page 155)

“Moving forward in the process of differentiation, the leader offers the congregation the opportunity of working creatively with (instead of reacting to) change and challenge. There are no guarantees that reactive forces won’t derail or frustrate a leader’s efforts. Nevertheless, the leader’s functioning is not to be based on others’ functioning....

“You are called to lead.” (page 158)

OR

A Litany:

Write the repeated phrases on newsprint. Ask participants to complete the sentences where indicated. More than one response may be given to complete the sentence.

We live in Anxious Times.
As leaders we are called to be present by _____
Be with us Lord God.
We live in Anxious Times.
As leaders it is important to remember _____
Be with us Lord God.
We live in Anxious Times
As leaders faced with challenges, we need _____
Be with us Lord God.

OR

A Private Reminder:

Give each participant a special piece of paper (approximately 4x6 size, a piece of stationery or a card with the course name printed on it). Ask the participants to write three words which can serve as reminders to them of important learnings they gained from this study. When they are faced with the challenges of leadership, the words on the card will be a resource for strength and courage.