

# UNCHARTED LEADERSHIP



20 CASE STUDIES  
TO HELP MINISTRY LEADERS  
ADAPT TO UNCERTAINTY

ANGIE WARD

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

ZONDERVAN REFLECTIVE

*Uncharted Leadership*

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# INTRODUCTION

| Problem         | Solution    |                 |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
|                 | CLEAR/KNOWN | UNCLEAR/UNKNOWN |
| CLEAR/KNOWN     | Technical   | Combination     |
| UNCLEAR/UNKNOWN |             | Adaptive        |

**Three Types of Challenges:** Technical, Adaptive, and a Combination of the Two

## CHAPTER

# 01

## OVER THE HILLSIDE

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Hillside Christian Church were larger?
  - b) The church were located in a large city instead of a small community?
  - c) D. J. were the permanent pastor, not an interim?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What is the role of a church’s constitution and bylaws? Are there ever extenuating circumstances when an organization’s constitution or bylaws should not be followed? If so, what might be examples?

- b) What is the responsibility of a church to offer a realistic living wage for the area in which it is located?
- c) What should be the limits regarding members holding multiple roles in the church?
- d) What can a leader do if conflicting parties are not willing to work toward a solution?
- e) Is there ever a time when the perceived needs of an organization override the law?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Hammar, Richard R. *Church Governance: What Leaders Must Know to Conduct Legally Sound Church Business*. Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today International, 2019.

Herrington, Jim, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr. *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000.

Vaters, Karl. *Small Church Essentials: Field-Tested Principles for Leading a Healthy Congregation of under 250*. Chicago: Moody, 2018.

Woolverton, David E. *Mission Rift: Leading through Church Conflict*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2021.

## CHAPTER

# 02

## GROWING PAINS

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?
8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?



9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) All of the churches in the network were located in similar cultural, ethnic, and sociopolitical contexts?
  - b) The churches were more similar to each other in size?
  - c) Oscar were not the son-in-law of one of the founding pastors?
  - d) The churches were more spread out, so that none were within driving distance of another?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) In any type of multicongregational system, where is the balance between autonomy and unity? What are the potential strengths and weaknesses of moving to either end of the spectrum?

- b) Why and how must leadership structures change as an organization grows? How do you know when the structure needs to change? What principles and practices should guide the creation or change of these structures?
- c) What facilitates or hinders trust in an organization's leadership? What can be done to regain trust when it has eroded?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

- Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
- Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
- Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Anderson, Robert J., and William A. Adams. *Scaling Leadership: Building Organizational Capability and Capacity to Create Outcomes That Matter Most*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2019.

House, Brad, and Gregg Allison. *MultiChurch: Exploring the Future of Multisite*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017.

Quinn, Robert E. *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.

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## CHAPTER

# 03

## SUCCESSION STORY

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What are biblical and theological principles that should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What are your own assumptions and values that guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Howard’s sons were not on Camp JOY’s staff, or only one of them was?
  - b) Walter supported Howard instead of Rick?
  - c) Howard and Walter did not have decades of shared ministry?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What are the ingredients of a successful leadership succession plan?

- b) What is the role of the board in cases of staff conflict?  
What about if there is open insubordination toward a designated leader?
- c) What are best and wise practices for a leader in relation to his or her organization and its new leadership upon retirement?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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- Bolman, Lee G., and Terrence E. Deal. *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*. 7th ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2021.
- Hanberg, Erik. *The Little Book of Boards: A Board Member's Handbook for Small (and Very Small) Nonprofits*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2015.
- Rothwell, William J. *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent from Within*. 5th ed. New York: AMACOM, 2015.
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## CHAPTER

# 04

## HIGH OFFICE

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?



8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Joel Madden were not affiliated with the “favored” political party within the church?
  - b) Joel had disclosed the affair on his own?
  - c) Joel’s affair were revealed outside of an election cycle?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What should be the relationship between a church and political parties? What about between a pastor or ministry leader and a political or other prominent figure?
  - b) Should a church ever call attention to, celebrate, or boast about its famous members such as politicians, entertainers, or athletes?

- c) Should church discipline be conducted any differently for a member who is a public figure? What if the figure is especially popular within the congregation?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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- Black, Amy E., gen. ed. *Five Views on the Church and Politics*. Counterpoints: Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2015.
- Ward, Angie, gen. ed. *Kingdom and Country: Following Jesus in the Land That You Love*. Kingdom Conversations. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2022.
- Whitehead, Andrew L. *Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States*. Oxford, UK: Oxford Univ. Press, 2020.
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## CHAPTER

# 05

## IS IT ME?

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Amanda were a man?
  - b) Amanda had been hired by and directly reported to the board instead of to Elliott?
  - c) Amanda were younger or less experienced?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) How does one determine whether a leader’s behavior just needs a bit of extra grace or is dangerously unhealthy and detrimental to a team or an organization?

- b) How should a leader who is in a position under an unhealthy authority figure make concerns known, given the power dynamics at play?
- c) How does a leader know when a situation or environment has become too toxic to stay in it? What, if anything, does the leader “owe” the organization?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you’ve read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Cloud, Henry. *Necessary Endings: The Employees, Businesses, and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give up in Order to Move Forward*. New York: HarperCollins, 2011.

DeGroat, Chuck. *When Narcissism Comes to Church: Healing Your Community from Emotional and Spiritual Abuse*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2022.

Van der Kolk, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. New York: Penguin, 2014.

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- \_\_\_\_\_ First Evangelical Church was founded in November 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approximately two hundred of the church's current attenders have been with the church for more than twenty years.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The lay support and prayer group for missionaries is comprised primarily of members who have been with the church for more than twenty years.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The church's original missions plan was to find people who were interested in missions, get them on the field overseas, and keep them there.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In September 2016, a task force unanimously recommended to the elders that the new policy for selection and support of missionaries should be applied to current missionaries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In December 2018, the four selected missionary families received notice via letter that their financial support would be terminated at the end of fiscal year 2019 (June 30).



- \_\_\_\_\_ There is intense mistrust from the lay support and prayer group toward the Cross-Cultural Missions Committee and toward the elders of the church.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In September 2017, current missionaries were contacted and informed of the evaluation process and criteria.
- \_\_\_\_\_ First Evangelical Church was founded in a university community that is pervaded by suspicion of formal authority.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A member of the lay support and prayer group: “You can’t just stop supporting our missionaries! That would be like a divorce!”
- \_\_\_\_\_ In June 2016, a task force was formed to determine whether the new policy for selection and support of missionaries should be applied to current missionaries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A deacon at First Evangelical Church: “The church is obligated to good stewardship of its financial resources.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ In October 2017, Glenn Thompson stepped down from his position as volunteer pastor of cross-cultural missions. He was replaced by his handpicked and groomed successor, Kristi Young, who had attended the church since her freshman year of college.
- \_\_\_\_\_ As First Evangelical Church has changed (up to 75 percent turnover over many years), the missions ministry has moved away from being a set of relationships that are embraced by the whole church. Instead, it has become based on personal relationships with a small group of members who

have been a part of the community since the early days of the church.

\_\_\_\_\_ The church constitution states that both the agenda for the annual congregational meeting and the budget can be modified from the floor at the meeting.

\_\_\_\_\_ In 2012, Glenn Thompson, a former elder, became the volunteer pastor of cross-cultural missions, and chair of the Cross-Cultural Missions Committee.

\_\_\_\_\_ The church started with thirty members. It now has weekly attendance of more than 1,200 adults.

\_\_\_\_\_ In 2016, the pastor who succeeded the founding pastor was granted a change in title from Teaching Pastor to Lead Pastor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Throughout the evaluation process, the Cross-Cultural Missions Committee communicated privately with the church's missionaries, citing confidentiality. The committee was subsequently charged of secrecy by the lay support group.

\_\_\_\_\_ In April 2015, the Cross-Cultural Missions Committee, under the charge of the elders, drafted a document outlining the criteria for selection and ongoing support of cross-cultural missionaries for First Evangelical Church.

\_\_\_\_\_ In November 2018, the elders approved the task force's recommendation regarding the termination of support for four missionary families.

\_\_\_\_\_ In June 2019, there was a congregational meeting to vote on the proposed termination of support.

\_\_\_\_\_ In June 2018, the deacons at First Evangelical Church, facing a major budget shortfall, voted to

make large cuts in the church's program budget and staff benefits, rather than lay off any staff.

\_\_\_\_\_ Of the church's current missionaries, none relies on the church for more than 20 percent of their annual support.

\_\_\_\_\_ At the 2017 annual congregational meeting, the elders presented their recommendation for consolidated pastoral leadership in the form of a title change for the functional lead pastor. It was questioned from the floor and never made it to a vote.

\_\_\_\_\_ The task force to evaluate current missionaries is chaired by William Turner, a former missionary and current elder who did not seek involvement on the committee but was asked for input because of his experience.

\_\_\_\_\_ In January 2011, the church's children's pastor was terminated for inappropriate emotional and physical conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_ The new criteria for selecting and supporting cross-cultural missionaries says that missionaries should be working with nationals to raise indigenous leadership and must be willing to account for funds provided by the church.

\_\_\_\_\_ There are several groups with an interest in this case: the elders; the minister for cross-cultural missions; the Cross-Cultural Missions Committee, chaired by William Turner; and the lay support and prayer group.

\_\_\_\_\_ In September 2017, a new task force was formed to evaluate current missionaries under the new criteria.

- \_\_\_\_\_ For the first thirty-five years of its existence, First Evangelical Church did not have a senior or lead pastor. The church's founding pastor was the teaching pastor, and decisions were made by the congregation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Glenn Thompson is a tall, articulate Caucasian male in his midfifties. Kristi Young is a short, casual Asian female in her midtwenties.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In December 2018, the church's lead pastor resigned, citing God's direction to step down. The meeting to process this announcement with the congregation was led by the elders and met with acrimony by a vocal minority in the congregation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In October 2009, the church's founding pastor stepped down after a prior extramarital affair was exposed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In January 2019, a church town-hall meeting was held, at which it was announced that the policy change was actually a recommendation and not a final decision.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What is the rough order and timeline of events in this case?
2. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
3. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
4. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?

5. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
6. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
7. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
8. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?
9. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
10. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
11. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
12. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
13. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
14. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
15. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
16. Might this case be different if:
  - a) First Evangelical Church had not experienced the departure of several ministry leaders because of inappropriate behavior?

- b) The church were ten years old instead of more than forty?
- c) The church had attendance of three hundred instead of 1,200?

17. Issues to consider:

- a) What, in your view, is the best balance of power between leadership and a congregation?
- b) What are the challenges of stereotypes regarding how a leader should look and act in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, height, mannerisms, and more?
- c) How can missional and operational values be communicated to newcomers, and to new leaders, as a church grows?
- d) What can be done to build or rebuild trust of leaders within an organization?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Allison, Gregg R. "Part Four: The Government of the Church." In *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012.

Lewis, Tracy. *How to Write Articles, Constitutions, and Bylaws for Churches*. Independently published, 2019.

Johnson, Andy. *Missions: How the Local Church Goes Global*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017.

## CHAPTER

# 07

## MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?



8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Neither church had felt they were lacking something in seeking a merger?
  - b) Either church were part of a denomination?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What are the most important questions and issues that should be considered when two churches are exploring a merger?
  - b) What is involved in merging organizational cultures?
  - c) How would you measure success in a merger of two organizations?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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- Kendrick, Klint C. *The HR Practitioner's Guide to Cultural Integration in Mergers and Acquisitions: Overcoming Culture Clash to Drive M&A Deal Value*. Mergers and Acquisitions Roundtable, 2022.
- Schein, Edgar H. *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. 5th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2016.
- Tomberlin, Jim, and Warren Bird. *Better Together: Making Church Mergers Work*. Expanded and updated. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2020.
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## CHAPTER

# 08

## TRUST AND TRUTH

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Phil had not been addressed previously regarding his interactions with the children in his ministry?
  - b) The two mothers and girls involved were both from within the church, or from outside the church?
  - c) Grace Church had not just weathered a moral scandal with the affair and resignation of its former pastor?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What is an organization’s responsibility toward someone who makes allegations of inappropriate physical or sexual contact by a staff member? What is its responsibility toward the accused?

- b) What is the organization's obligation regarding truth-telling inside and outside the organization? What principles should guide what information is released, to whom, and when?
- c) What safeguards, such as policies and procedures, should be put in place within an organization to facilitate spiritual, emotional, and physical safety for all participants?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Covey, Stephen M. R. *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

MacDonald, Gordon. *Rebuilding Your Broken World*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004.

McKnight, Scot, and Laura Barringer. *A Church Called TOV: Forming a Goodness Culture That Resists Abuses of Power and Promotes Healing*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2020.

## CHAPTER

# 09

## SHOULD WE STAY OR SHOULD WE GO?

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?



8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) CCC had a noncongregational form of government?
  - b) The area were undergoing regentrification with an influx of wealth instead of a loss of it?
  - c) Ron had been at the church longer or if he was older?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) Does church unity need to take precedence over the Great Commission? If so, when and what does that look like?

- b) What is the responsibility on the senior pastor and staff when lay leaders disagree with them about the direction of the church?
- c) What values might a church codify and communicate about its mission? What should remain open and flexible?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Bird, Michael, and Brian Rosner, eds. *Mending a Fractured Church: How to Seek Unity with Integrity*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015.

Hagley, Scott. *Eat What Is Set Before You: A Missiology of the Congregation in Context*. Skyforest, CA: Urban Loft Publishers, 2019.

Strong, Mark E. *Who Moved My Neighborhood? Leading Congregations through Gentrification and Economic Change*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2022.

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## CHAPTER

# 10

## SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT, PART 1

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Lighthouse Church had a senior pastor?
  - b) Ted Lewis had not experienced as much outward ministry success?
  - c) Lighthouse Church were part of a clear denominational structure?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What are the strengths and weaknesses of a shared or team model of church leadership?

- b) How much weight should interpersonal skills or emotional health be given versus ministry competence in an employee? Public self versus private self? External perception versus internal?
- c) Should factors such as those in question 16b be included in a job description? If they are part of a job description, how should performance in these areas be assessed?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Brand, Chad Owen, and R. Stanton Norm, eds. *Perspectives on Church Government: Five Views of Church Polity*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2004.

Cladis, George. *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Lencioni, Patrick. *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012.

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## CHAPTER

# 11

## SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT, PART 2

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?



8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Ted Lewis's ministry focused on adults instead of teenage girls?
  - b) Ted were not married?
  - c) Ted had conducted his activity on his personal computer and not during work hours?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) Where are the lines between confidentiality and transparency, truth and slander when communicating to a congregation and other constituents about a leader's indiscretions and sins?

- b) What is the difference between a decision or process that is punitive, and one that is redemptive?
- c) Which constituencies are most important when determining the course of action in a situation such as this?
- d) Does the information in part 2 of this case cause you to rethink any of your perspective on the situation described in part 1?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Church Law and Tax website, [www.churchlawandtax.com](http://www.churchlawandtax.com).

Henderson, Daniel. *Glorious Finish: Keeping Your Eye on the Prize of Eternity in a Time of Pastoral Failings*. Chicago: Moody, 2020.

McIntosh, Gary L., and Samuel D. Rima. *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership: How to Become an Effective Leader by Confronting Potential Failures*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.

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## CHAPTER

# 12

## HOW WIDE THE DIVIDES

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Selena had fewer cultural differences within her leadership context? For example, if she were older, white, Deaf, and/or male?
  - b) She had not experienced such a strong and clear sense of calling to ministry to the Deaf community?
  - c) You were reading it as a third-person objective account, instead of through Selena’s perspective?

16. Issues to consider:

- a) What are the biblical and theological values and principles that should guide discussion and actions regarding differences such as ethnicity, culture, gender, and age?
- b) How should a leader's personal calling and story fit into their role and to their relationship with an organization, and vice-versa?
- c) What principles and practices can leaders use to build unity among diverse groups?

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

- 1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
- 2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
- 3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Grenny, Joseph, Kerry Patterson, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler, and Emily Gregory. *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High*. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2022.

Lingenfelter, Sherwood. *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

Shaw, Haydn. *Sticking Points: How to Get Five Generations Working Together in the Twelve Places They Come Apart*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2020.

## CHAPTER

# 13

## LETTER VERSUS SPIRIT

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?



8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Santiago were a believer?
  - b) The couple did not have children?
  - c) Juliet wanted to serve as a volunteer, which did not depend on church membership?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What does it look like to maintain biblical integrity for a congregation while caring personally and pastorally for a congregant? What are the risks for prioritizing one concern over the other?
  - b) How would you define grace? What does it entail institutionally and interpersonally?

- c) What is your view of church membership? Who can become a member and what privileges and responsibilities come with it?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Baker, Mark D. *Centered-Set Church: Discipleship and Community without Judgmentalism*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2022.

Kimble, Jeremy M. *Forty Questions about Church Membership and Discipline*. Forty Questions. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2017.

Leeman, Jonathan. *Church Membership: How the World Knows Who Represents Jesus*. 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012.

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## CHAPTER

# 14

## COMPASSION, INTERNATIONAL

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Rajan communicated some willingness to care for his wife and children or had a record of responsible and honest behavior?
  - b) Indira and her children would not be illegal immigrants if they stayed in the US?
  - c) Indira did not claim to be a Christian?
  - d) Indira did not have young children?

16. Issues to consider:

- a) What are the limits to a church or ministry helping an individual or a family in need? What and who determines those limits?
- b) What is the responsibility of a church toward immigrants and refugees vis-a-vis local, state, or national government regulations?
- c) How much weight should precedent—either following it or setting it—be given in decisions regarding care, recognition, financial support, and/or even reappropriation of designated funds?

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

- 1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
- 2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
- 3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Annan, Kent. *You Welcomed Me: Loving Refugees and Immigrants because God First Loved Us*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018.

Hoover, Sharon R. *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018.

Mandes, Alejandro. *Embracing the New Samaria: Opening Our Eyes to Our Multiethnic Future*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2021.

## CHAPTER

# 15

## CONFLICTING CONCLUSIONS

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?
8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?



9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Terry Slayton had been part of the Findlay campus process in some role from the very beginning?
  - b) Any one of the entities involved (LTS, ECoC, Home Missions Council, Findlay Campus, Inc.) had full authority over the project?
  - c) The Findlay site still showed financial promise?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) Where and how does faith express itself in an organization as it pertains to finances? Where is the line between stepping out in faith and taking a dangerous risk?
  - b) How should an organization deal with oppositional views within leadership about a major decision?

- c) What is the conversation stopper in your organization or tribe—the phrase or concept that immediately shuts down charitable discussion?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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- Christensen, Clayton M. *The Innovator's Dilemma: When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail*. Management of Innovation and Change. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2015.
- Duck, Jeanie Daniel. *The Change Monster: The Human Forces That Fuel or Foil Corporate Transformation and Change*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001.
- Parker, Marsha. *Shared Governance for Beginners: Six Competencies for a Quick Start*. Shared Governance Practitioner. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2016.
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## CHAPTER

# 16

## ALL FOR ONE?

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Caitlyn were older?
  - b) Caitlyn were a man?
  - c) Emily’s mother, Barb, were a Christian?
  - d) The trip were only service oriented with no leadership responsibilities given to the students?
  - e) The trip were to take place within the United States and not to a foreign country?

16. Issues to consider:

- a) How does a leader choose between the needs of the individual and the needs of a group?
- b) What are the best practices for training and mentoring a young or an inexperienced ministry leader?
- c) What (if any) standards of spiritual and emotional maturity should be used when selecting people for volunteer ministry or service? How might these be evaluated?

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

- 1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
- 2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
- 3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Ellis, Lynne, and Doug Fields. *Mission Trips from Start to Finish: How to Organize and Lead Impactful Mission Trips*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2008.

Ortlund, Dane. *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020.

Shelley, Marshall. *Ministering to Problem People in Your Church: What to Do with Well-Intentioned Dragons*. Minneapolis: Bethany, 2013.

## CHAPTER

# 17

## FUTURE TENSE

### INITIAL QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
3. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
4. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
5. What would be your recommended course of action at this point?



## **CONTINUED INITIAL QUESTIONS**

1. With this additional information, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Would you change your initial assessment of the nature of challenges in this case? (Which are technical, which are adaptive, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?)
3. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
4. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
5. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
6. What would be your recommended course of action at this point?

## **QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION**

1. With all available information now presented, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. Review again your assessment of the type and nature of the challenges in this case.

5. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?
6. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
7. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
8. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
9. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
10. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
11. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
12. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
13. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Ian planned to stay in his role as executive director instead of retiring?
  - b) TAM were able to meet its budget?
  - c) TAM planned to stay in its home state?
14. Issues to consider:
  - a) Who is responsible for setting and communicating organizational direction? Should it be the executive director, the board, or the staff, or some combination?

What are the advantages and disadvantages to any of these options?

- b) When is a posture of keeping the peace healthy, and when is it detrimental? What do healthy disagreement and conflict look like?
- c) What are the criteria to determine whether an organization needs to stay the same, make changes, or disband?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Bridges, William. *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*. 25th anniv. ed. Boston: Da Capo Press, 2017.

Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. “ECFA’s Integrity Standards for Nonprofits,” [www.ecfa.org/Standards.aspx](http://www.ecfa.org/Standards.aspx).

Kotter, John P. *Leading Change*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012.

## CHAPTER

# 18

## WHO STOLE MY CHURCH?

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Oak Creek Church were nondenominational or a member of a charismatic denomination?
  - b) The church were not experiencing revival under Brady’s leadership?
  - c) Brady had not been the unanimous choice by the elders to replace Jerry Vanderberg?
  - d) Brady’s personality were more similar to Jerry’s?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) What can be done if an organization’s senior leader seems to “go rogue”? Who determines the boundaries?

- b) What is the best way to distinguish fact from fiction in a conflict when each person has their own perspective?
- c) What principles should guide who should set vision and direction for an organization? Should it be a senior pastor/director, or the board? What are the advantages and disadvantages to each? Are there other models that should be considered?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

## Now What?

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

## Recommended Resources

Cymbala, Jim. *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire: What Happens When God's Spirit Invades the Hearts of His People*. Updated and expanded. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018.

Vanderbloemen, William, and Warren Bird. *Next: Pastoral Succession That Works*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014.

Van Yperen, Jim. *Making Peace: A Guide to Overcoming Church Conflict*. Chicago: Moody, 2002.



## CHAPTER

# 19

## UNDER DECONSTRUCTION

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Ryan were on staff but not the founder of the church?
  - b) Ryan had first expressed his doubts privately to church leaders, not publicly during a worship gathering?
  - c) The Table were larger or older?
16. Issues to consider:
  - a) How much space for faith questions and doubt is acceptable for the leader of a church or Christian ministry?
  - b) When a faith leader expresses a questioning of that faith, how should this be handled by the individual and by the leader’s organization, both privately and

publicly? Does the degree of doubt matter for how the situation should be handled?

- c) Who gets to decide the theological boundaries for an organization?

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

### **NOW WHAT?**

1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
2. Would you have acted similarly?
3. How could a different result have been achieved?
4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Campolo, Tony, and Bart Campolo. *Why I Left, Why I Stayed: Conversations on Christianity between an Evangelical Father and His Humanist Son*. New York: HarperOne, 2018.

Hagberg, Janet O., and Robert A. Guelich: *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith*. 2nd ed. Salem, WI: Sheffield Publishing Co., 2004.

Mesa, Ivan, ed. *Before You Lose Your Faith: Deconstructing Doubt in the Church*. Deerfield, IL: Gospel Coalition, 2021.

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## CHAPTER

# 20

## IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. With the information you've been given, how would you summarize the problem(s) in this case?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their roles in this situation?
3. What assumptions and values do you hear voiced by these characters?
4. What other information do you wish you had about this situation?
5. What seem to be the technical challenges involved in this case?
6. What are the adaptive challenges, and what type of adaptive challenges are they?
7. What risks and opportunities do you see in this case?

8. What biblical and theological principles should be considered in this case?
9. What are your suggested next steps for the parties involved?
10. What longer-term considerations might impact short-term decisions?
11. What work should be given “back to the people” here? To whom, and how?
12. What assumptions and values guide your recommended course of action?
13. What responses did you notice within yourself as you read this case?
14. Do you think anything could have been done differently, either individually or organizationally, to avoid this situation? If so, what?
15. Might this case be different if:
  - a) Jared had not served at the church for so long or so faithfully?
  - b) Jared served in a different position at the church instead of senior pastor?
  - c) There were a potential end date to Melissa’s health issues, even if two to three years out?
  - d) Giving had not stalled, or if it had increased?

16. Issues to consider:

- a) What does an employee owe to its employer? What does an employer owe its employee? Is this different in churches and Christian ministries than in secular organizations?
- b) What does it look like to care well for a member of the congregation who is sick or hurting?

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

- 1. Has your initial diagnosis of this situation changed? If so, how and why?
- 2. Which character(s) do you find yourself empathizing with?
- 3. Do you need to revise or address any of your assumptions?

**NOW WHAT?**

- 1. How do you feel now that you've read the entire case and know how it ended?
- 2. Would you have acted similarly?
- 3. How could a different result have been achieved?
- 4. What actions can you, your fellow leaders, and your organization take to prepare for—and perhaps avoid, mitigate, or replicate—this particular situation or outcome?

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## Recommended Resources

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Dyer, Dena. “How Can the Church Better Serve Those Suffering from Chronic Illness?” *The Better Samaritan* (blog), August 5, 2021, [www.christianitytoday.com/better-samaritan/2021/august/how-can-church-better-serve-those-suffering-from-chronic-il.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/better-samaritan/2021/august/how-can-church-better-serve-those-suffering-from-chronic-il.html).

Clergy Health Initiative at Duke Divinity School, <https://divinity.duke.edu/initiatives/clergy-health-initiative>.

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