

**The Art of Transitional and Interim Ministry, Week II**  
**Monday, November 13, 2017, 8:45 a.m. – Friday, November 17, 12:00 p.m.**  
**Office of Continuing Education, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary**

Dear Week II Participant,

Welcome to the Art of Transitional and Interim Ministry, a program of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and the Transitional Ministry Education Consortium. We are delighted that you will be joining us for a time of learning, sharing, challenge, and exploration about ministry in times of transition and we look forward to meeting and getting to know you.

We will be your faculty for the whole week. Helen Blier, the Director of Continuing Education, and members of the Pittsburgh Seminary faculty will be joining us for presentations and conversations. We look forward to being with you through this week of shared learning.

As you may remember from Week I, this week is planned as education for the practice of interim and transitional ministry. Like Week I, ***it is a very full week***. We encourage all participants to ***clear your schedules of all other commitments. It is essential to the learning process for you and other members of the group that you be present at every class session. Failure to be present the entire time will limit the learning experience significantly—both for yourself and for our group process.*** We suggest that you arrange for someone else to cover emergencies in your congregation during this time. You will receive a tentative schedule for the week as we near the class date..

The assigned reading for Week II includes:

***Wonder (including “Julian” chapter)***, R. J. Palacio (Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2012)  
***A Door Set Open: Grounding Change in Mission and Hope***, Peter Steinke (Alban, 2010)  
***The Acts of the Apostles***

This reading will provide the basis of much of our Week II discussion of the Pastor as leader in transitional ministry.

The Pittsburgh site has required the following readings for Week I participants this past year:

***Transitional Ministry Today: Successful Strategies for Churches and Pastors***, edited by Norman B. Bendroth. Rowan & Littlefield;

***Creating a Healthier Church: Family Systems Theory, Leadership, and Congregational Life***, by Ronald W. Richardson, Fortress Press;

If you have not previously read these, we encourage you to do so as they are the background for our work together. All books listed above and below are available online. We encourage you to patronize your local bookstore or [www.heartsandmindsbooks.com](http://www.heartsandmindsbooks.com), an independent theological bookstore.

We also ask that you view the Pixar/Disney movie ***Zootopia***, with an eye to how it plays with our understandings of systems and the process tasks of the transitional/interim leader.

In addition to the above reading and viewing, please prepare the following four (4) assignments:

- I. Write a paper (no more than 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt. Arial Font) assessing your interim/transitional ministry setting from the perspective of systems theory. Include at least three major concepts (triangles, homeostasis, chronic anxiety, acute anxiety, etc.) of systems theory in your reflection. **Please send your Systems Paper to Jan Nolting Carter at [revjincarter@verizon.net](mailto:revjincarter@verizon.net) by Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup>.** Your paper will be reviewed and possibly returned to you for editing. Bring your paper with you and be prepared to verbally share it with Week II participants.
  
- II. Prepare one Leadership Learning Conversation (LLC) utilizing the attached format. You will find it **very helpful** to write this **after** you complete the Systems Paper, assignment #1. **Please send your LLC Report to Paul Rhebergen at [plrheberg@verizon.net](mailto:plrheberg@verizon.net), by Monday, October 16.** Your LLC will be reviewed, and possibly returned to you for editing. Please bring 8 copies of your edited LLC Report with you to Week II.
  
- III. Read and write a one page *reflection* (**this is NOT a book report!**) on **one** of the books listed below. Your reflection should give clear indication of how insights from this reading have or will impact your leadership style in your interim/transitional setting. Bring 16 copies of your reflection to share with the Week II group.
  - a) ***Strategic Leadership for Change*** by Kenneth J. McFayden (Alban, 2009)
  - b) ***Healthy Congregations*** by Peter Steinke (Alban, 1996)
  - c) ***Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change***, by David Cooperrider & Diana D. Whitney (Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 1<sup>st</sup> edition, October 10, 2005)
  - d) ***Leadership on the Line***, by Ronald Heifetz and Martin Linsky (Harvard Business Review Press, 2002)
  - e) ***Memories, Hopes, and Conversations*** by Mark Lau Branson (Roman and Littlefield, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2016)
  - f) ***A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*** by Edwin H. Friedman (Seabury Books, 1999, 2007)
  - g) ***The Way of Conflict: Elemental Wisdom for Resolving Disputes and Transcending Difference*** by Deidre Combs (New World Library, 2004)
  - h) ***Sailboat Church: Helping Your Church Think Its Mission and Practice*** by Joan Gray (Westminster John Knox Press, 2014)
  - i) ***Walk Out, Walk On*** by Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2012)
  - j) ***Changing the Conversation: A Third Way for Congregations Transforming Congregational Culture*** by Anthony Robinson (Eerdmans, 2008)
  - k) ***A Field Guide for the Missional Congregation: Embarking on a Journey of Transformation*** by Rick Rouse and Craig Van Gelder (Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2008)
  - l) ***God's Big Table: Nurturing Children in a Diverse World*** by Elizabeth Caldwell (Pilgrim Press, 2011)
  - m) ***Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory***, Todd Bolinger (IVP, 2015)
  - n) ***Real Good Church: How Our Church Came Back from the Dead and Yours Can Too*** by Molly Phinney Baskette (Pilgrim Press, 2014)

- IV. Reread Ch. 1.2 “Rethinking Theological Reflection on Transitional Ministry”, by David R. Sawyer, and Ch1.5 “Transitional Ministry as an Opportunity to Lead”, by Thompson and Thompson, in ***Transitional Ministry Today: Successful Strategies for Churches and Pastors***, ed. by Norman Bendroth

You will be receiving an invitation to DataAnywhere by mid-October. The faculty will place important documents in that file for you to read before you arrive, and will use it to provide presentation files.

In summary, you will have a total of six (6) assignments:

1. Read: ***Wonder, A Door Set Open***, and ***The Acts of the Apostles***.
2. View ***Zootopia***.
3. A Paper assessing your transitional-interim ministry setting using Systems Theory.
4. A Leadership Learning Conversation, bringing 8 copies.
5. A Reflection paper on one of the books listed above, bringing 16 copies.
6. Reread the two chapters from ***Transitional Ministry Today***.

**Onsite registration will open in the Knox Room, Long Hall at 8:45 a.m. Long Hall is a part of the seminary campus; meals are served in Kadel Dining Room for breakfast and lunch. Dinner is a grab ‘n go on most evenings. For those evenings when the class will go until 9:00 p.m., dinner will be provided as part of the registration fee. Snacks will be provided during the day, but all meals are available for purchase. You will have Tuesday and Wednesday evenings free. Lodging on the Seminary campus can be reserved by call 412.924.1397 or emailing [reception@pts.edu](mailto:reception@pts.edu). If you have any questions concerning registration, food, or logistics, contact Lori Arnold at the Office of Continuing Education by e-mail at [larnold@pts.edu](mailto:larnold@pts.edu) or by telephone at 412.924.1345.**

If you have any questions about the assignments, or the class, you can e-mail Paul at [plrheberg@verizon.net](mailto:plrheberg@verizon.net).

We are looking forward to seeing you on Monday, November 13, at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Blessings,

*Paul*

Paul Rhebergen

*Jan*

Jan Nolting Carter

## Leadership Learning Conversation

### Presenters' Preparation Instructions

The Leadership Learning Conversation is designed to help each Week 2 participant focus on their own leadership through a group conversation about a concrete experience in their ministry. Using a variety of perspectives, views and lenses, you and your colleagues in Week 2 will explore potential learning and insights to help you form an accountable action plan as you move forward as a leader in the named situation/issue. Reflection on a situation or issue that is still open and where you as a leader would like to learn additional possible responses will have the potential to make the group interaction a stronger learning opportunity for all.

The following outline is intended to help in your reflection process and to help your conversation group in Week 2 to process possible leadership actions with you. Careful and honest preparation of your presentation of an issue helps prevent incoherent or incomplete explanations of the problem. Additionally, your conversation partners will appreciate good use of their time. At the top of the appreciation list is the accurate identification of the problem. **Limit your total response to one typed page, single spaced, using an 11 pt. Arial font; please begin each section with the number and bold capital lettered words below (i.e. "1. THE ISSUE IS:"). Bring 8 copies of your issue presentation with you to be turned in when you arrive on October 17.**

#### **1. THE ISSUE IS:**

Be concise. In one or two sentences, get to the heart of the problem. Is it a concern, challenge, opportunity, or recurring problem that is becoming more troublesome?

#### **2. IT IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE:**

What's at stake? How does this affect ministry, mission, dollars, income, people, program, services, congregants, community, family, timing, the future, or other relevant factors? What is the future impact if the issue is not resolved?

#### **3. MY IDEAL OUTCOME IS:**

What specific results do I want?

#### **4. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Summarize with bulleted points; How, when, why, and where did the issue start? Who are the key players? Which forces are at work? What is the issues current status?

#### **5. WHAT I HAVE DONE UP TO THIS POINT:**

What have I done so far? What is my contribution to the issue/problem? What options am I considering?

#### **6. THE HELP I WANT FROM THE GROUP IS:**

What result do I want from the group? For example, alternative solutions, confidence regarding the right decision, identification of consequences, where to find more information, critique of the current plan, areas for further exploration.

Adapted from Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work and in Life, One Conversation at a Time by Susan Scott, Berkley, for use at MALT Transitional Ministry Education.

## **Leadership Learning Conversation Conversation Process**

The Leadership Learning Conversation is a significant part of the Week 2 educational experience. This is designed to help the participants reflect on an issue in such a way that the maximum learning can happen in a collegial environment. The focus is on what is learned, areas for further learning, and a commitment to integrate the learning in an accountable way.

Each participant will be part of a one hour conversation where you and a small group will share your issue and learning. The following framework will help guide the conversation

1. The Conversation Partner presenting an issue will read aloud their presentation preparation report. **(5 minutes)**
2. Once the conversation partner with the issue has presented it to the conversation group, other conversation partners may ask clarifying questions. These are clarifying questions, not analysis questions, or solution suggestions. **(5 minutes)**
3. Once the conversation partners are satisfied that the real issue has been identified and they have all of the relevant information, move to ideas for solutions. This may include discussion of other information to be explored, i.e., theological, systemic, cultural, leadership practices, etc. This is not a time to make conclusions or seek consensus, but to brainstorm possibilities. The presenter's role at this time is to take notes and listen. **(20 minutes)**
4. After the brainstorming discussion each conversation partner will be asked to formulate a one-sentence recommendation. After one minute or so for each to write down on the back of the presenter's LLC paper their recommendation, go around the table and have each conversation partner give his or her recommendation. The person with the issue may not respond, only listen. **(10 minutes)**
5. The conversation partner with the issue will be asked, "What did *you* hear?" with regards to the discussion and the recommendations. **(5 minutes)**
6. The conversation partner with the issue will then be asked "What actions are you committed to taking and when will you take them?" They will then commit to an accountable action. It is ok to respond, "I need time to digest these ideas. I will let you know what action I'll take by Thursday evening." It is important that a commitment is made before leaving this educational event. **(10 minutes)**
7. Follow up! When a group has worked hard to help a peer, it deserves to know what happened next. The conversation partner with the issue will be asked to commit to letting the other conversation partners and faculty know what has been done so far, the results, and the intended next steps. This can be done by e-mail at an appointed time in the near future. The issue presenter should let the group know when they will hear and one person should be appointed to follow up with a reminder if the group has not heard by the target date. **(5 minutes)**

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