

# Leadership & Change

Leadership means making decisions that inevitably lead to change!

# Leadership & Change

- Change is all around us, and willing or not - we are in the midst of substantial change.
- How do we help our churches move through change?  
What gifts are needed, what skills do we need to learn?  
What does change mean theologically and practically for the future of our local churches?

Think of a change that your church is facing.

We can all hold the UMC denominational changes in our heads

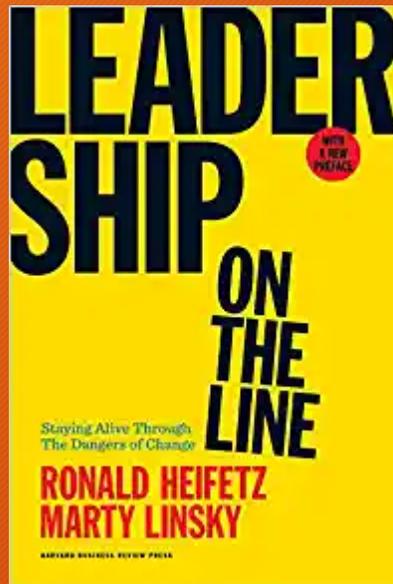
Pick another one you are thinking about – what change does  
your church most need to make?

## Starting with God – what does the Bible tell us about God & change?

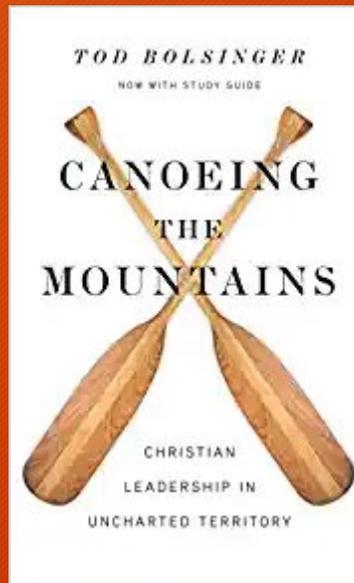
- Abraham – We are called to new lands, new opportunities, despite age, economics, or status
- Moses – We find change throughout our lives, regardless of circumstance.
- Jesus – Came to show us justice AND mercy, to change a stuck religious system.
- Paul – everything he'd been taught was turned upside down and reconfigured in light of the birth, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus.
- Revelation – There is ultimately a wholly new creation coming for us all; and it starts with today!

# Let's do a quick Doctorate in Church Leadership

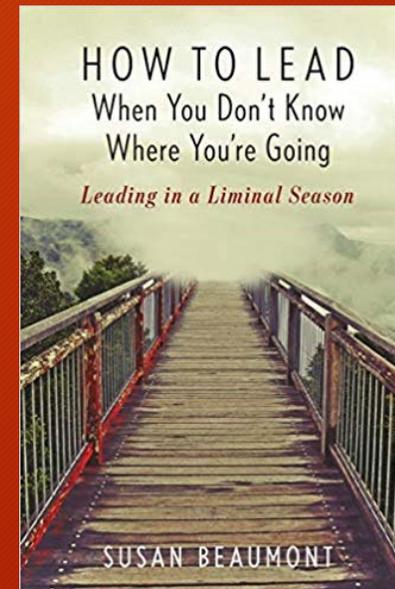
Ronald Heifetz



Tod Bolsinger



Susan Beaumont



## Heifetz –

- Get on the Balcony – take yourself out of the middle and look for patterns, look from a more neutral space. What are you looking for?
  - Check on technical vs. adaptive issues
  - Where are people in relationship to each other?
  - Listen for the song beneath the words
  - Read the behavior of authority figures for clues

# Heifetz –

- Think Politically –
  - Find allies
  - Stay close to those who oppose you
  - Own your own responsibilities, including the failures
  - Accept that there will be people left behind

# Heifetz –

- Orchestrate the Conflict
  - Create a holding environment, a network of relationships
  - Acknowledge the losses that come with change.
  - Model the behavior you want to see
  - Control the temperature, the tension of the work
  - Control the pacing of the work
  - Show them the future

# Heifetz –

- Give the Work Back to the people to whom it belongs
  - It's always easier to do yourself. BUT - then no one learns!
- Hold Steady
  - Take the heat
  - Let the Issues ripen
  - Keep attention focused on the REAL issue of change

# Question:

- Which of these resonates with you the most?  
How could you as a leader help do these better in your church?
  - On the Balcony
  - Think Politically
  - Orchestrate the Conflict
  - Give the Work Back
  - Hold Steady

# Todd Bolsinger

- Presbyterian Pastor and Seminary professor
- Canoeing the Mountain: We are leading into new territory – we were trained to row canoes, but we face mountains!

# Bolsinger-

- We need to listen to those at the margins – they have answers, because they have been in the mountains while we were canoeing! They have adapted where we struggle.
- Adaptive leadership is “letting go, learning as we go, and keeping going”
- We need to have honest conversations with trusted confidants to seek solutions creatively – allies and confidants.
  - Jesus sent people out in pairs, or groups – we should never do this work alone.

# Bolsinger -

- We need to face loss and help ourselves stay calm and connected to allies and to opposition.
- We need to help others learn to navigate their losses, because there WILL be losses.
- Be prepared for sabotage – and there will be sabotage if there is change.

“ Stay calm, Stay  
Connected, Stay the  
Course

”

Sarah's short and sweet Bolsinger summary –

# Question:

- In what ways are you preparing to Canoe Mountains? Could you:
- Listen more to the margins?
- Adapt a more 'learning' and 'experimental' stance?
- Build more alliances? Stay connected to opposition?
- Prepare for sabotage?

# Susan Beaumont –

- Laity, works mostly with larger churches and systems, and a top consultant.
- How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You Are Going:
  - Talks about being in “liminal” times; the ambiguity between what was, and what will be.
  - The pattern is separation, liminality, reorientation

# Beaumont –

- Leaders need to remain non-anxious, self-reflective, differentiated from personal issues. Knowing to unknowing, advocating to attending, striving to surrendering
- Soul-tending is necessary – deepening communal discernment, shaping institutional memory, clarifying organizational purpose, engaging emergence

# Beaumont –

- Group Discernment is vital – moving beyond personal to communal discernment
- Shaping Institutional Memory – telling the story of our past realistically, and so that it helps shape the future.
- A vision of “who do we want to be?” Choosing what is worth preserving, what can be released, what can be adapted.
- Engaging Emergence – reorientation will occur, coherence out of chaos. This is a leaderless activity, but leaders can nurture disruption, learning, innovation, risk-taking to support it as it emerges.

# Question:

- How have you as a leader experienced the liminal place of your church and/or of our denomination?
- What liminal strategies might work for you as a leader, and for your church?
  - Nonanxious leaders
  - Soul Tending
  - Group Discernment
  - Institutional Memory
  - Vision
  - Engaging Emerging themes

# Question:

- What themes have arisen throughout this literature and these experiences that resonate with you?
- What have you learned about being a leader in the midst of change?

# What a Leader does now...

- ❖ What will you take away and DO?
- ❖ How will you hold yourself accountable to action?

Questions?