

General Board of Discipleship of
The United Methodist Church
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THE GENERAL BOARD OF
DISCIPLESHIP
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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*This is a periodic newsletter to resource
FaithQuest congregational leaders.*

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NEW ADDRESS?

Help us keep you in the FaithQuest network. Send your new email or ground mail address to jnewell@gbod.org, Joan Newell, General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003, Nashville, TN 37203-0003.

Looking ahead ...

The FaithQuest website featuring new resources and lesson-by-lesson helps will launch later this summer. When you receive this newsletter, look for the new website at www.faithquest.net. (You will still be able to link to the FaithQuest site through www.gbod.org.)

A July consultation of Hispanic leaders has begun the North American launch of *CAMINO DE FE*, the Spanish-language FaithQuest. Watch for announcements in the next newsletter.

Share your experiences and discoveries as we build FaithQuest knowledge! We welcome email reflections, book reviews, and recommended website addresses that relate to FaithQuest.

You can order FaithQuest materials toll-free at 877/899-2780, Ext. 7674.

FQ
REVISED
leader notebook
available!

You asked for it, and now we've done it. The former leader's guide and supplemental notebook have been combined! The new leader notebook has added resources – music suggestions, a transcript of the video subtitles for Lesson 16, and teaching helps. You can replace your notebook pages for \$13: Call toll-free 877-899-2780, Ext. 7674 or email jnewell@gbod.org.

FQ
NEWS
& NOTES
FOR
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THEME:
LEADERSHIP
(add to Tab C in your
leader notebook)

Great Leaders Take Advice

Leaders in our churches usually have a two-pronged job: Keep the vision before the people and oversee the management of ministry. Either of these can be full-time work, but daily life does not separate neatly into categories. Both have to be done! Together these jobs can cause leaders to fall into the downward spiral of working long hours, experiencing stress, and eventually suffering burnout.

Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, visited him when Moses was only a couple of months into the wilderness journey. Jethro watched Moses for a day and could see Moses beginning the downward spiral toward burnout. Jethro said, "What you are doing is not good. You will surely wear yourself out, both you and these people with you. For the task is too heavy for you, you can not do it alone" (Exodus 18:17, 18, NRSV).

The wisdom of this passage is that Moses actually **listened** to Jethro! We have all received criticism. Our human tendency is to close our ears when someone says, "What you are doing is not good." We sink deeper into the dark hole of overwork, stress, and burnout, and it is hard to listen to advice. It becomes harder to turn problems into opportunities and harder to learn from our mistakes. We dis-

miss others rather than listen to them.

Try completing this sentence: The greatest barrier to change in our church is _____.

Now try putting your own name in the blank.

When does it fit? Do you need some time listening?



Betsy Heavner is Director of FaithQuest at the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, Nashville, TN. You can e-mail her at bheavner@gbod.org.

Lovett Weems's Thoughts on Leadership

Dr. Lovett H. Weems, Jr., president of Saint Paul School of Theology, was the speaker at the twenty-first Welborn-Payne Lectureship at First United Methodist Church, Lubbock, TX. Dr. Weems is the author of Church Leadership: Vision, Team, Culture, and Integrity; John Wesley's Message for Today, and Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit. Betsy interviewed him April 9, 2001 in Lubbock.

Betsy Heavner: What is leadership?

Lovett Weems: There are many different views of leadership, and we must be careful not to make only one view synonymous with leadership. Positions of authority give a person the opportunity to lead, but this is not leadership. All of us are leaders in different ways is the view of Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:14-21.

Changing circumstances mean different people may fulfill leadership responsibilities at different times. That means that sometimes the person in a posi-

tion of authority, such as lay leader, chair, or clergyperson, will step back and be a follower. At the beginning of the 20th century, Mary Parker Follett described this as "multiple leadership." Her insight about the complexity of leadership was way ahead of her time – in her time people believed great leaders were *born*. She introduced the idea that leadership skills can be *learned*.

BH: What is the most important skill for leaders to learn?

LW: Leaders need to create the bridge between vision and the

practical everyday activities of ministry. The skill that is needed for that bridgework is asking the right questions. There are visionaries and theorists who are excellent. There are people doing excellent work in the churches. But these two tasks often get separated so that churches develop vision statements that never get implemented. A true leader learns to ask the right questions. Questions can lead people to think about the meaning of the ministry activities they undertake. The right questions

Continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

Interview with
Lovett Weems

FaithQuest Updates

Church Administration

The Bookshelf

help people reflect on the deeper meaning of the choices that they consider each day. A leader looks at everything through the lens of vulnerability to see whatever happens as an untapped opportunity. Learning to ask the right questions is a lifelong work. **BH: You spoke about the role of leaders and followers. When does a person step forth and lead?** **LW:** I like to think of leadership as a calling. In our Wesleyan heritage, there is a tension to wrestle with, as we discern when to exercise our leadership. The first source of our calling is **God**. Any leadership must be rooted in what God calls us to do. In baptism, we are all called into ministry and God gives gifts for ministry. The second source of calling for Christian leadership is the **church**. The community of faith calls forth individuals to exercise leadership for the community. A particular leadership role, whether lay or ordained, is always carried out on behalf of the faith community. The third source of our calling is the **context**. When the context calls for teaching, particularly gifted individuals can lead. When the context calls for singing, particularly gifted individuals can lead. When the context calls for administration or preaching or praying or cleaning, certain gifted individuals can lead.

Let me illustrate what I mean by three sources of calling. This question guides me when I consider leadership: What is it that people have a right to expect of me so that, if I do not do it, no one else can or will? At Saint Paul, I have been called by the church to the leadership role of president. The church expects me as president to oversee functions such as public relations, fundraising, and administration. God has called me into ministry and gifted me with teaching and leading. The context of the role of president at Saint Paul is that, when oversight is needed, people have a right to expect me to step forward in leadership. **BH: What do leaders do?** **LW:** Leaders need to know the past (the heritage from whence we come), look at what is happening now (the current reality), look for clues in the world to see what God's already put there, discern and proclaim a vision. **BH: Saint Paul is developing a congregational leadership project. Tell us more about it.** **LW:** The project, funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., aims to increase the quality and capacity of clergy leadership for congregations. We are developing three dimensions of the project.

- **Dimension 1** is pre-seminary and emphasizes identifying, encouraging, and enlisting greater numbers of gifted candidates for ordained ministry.
 - **Dimension 2** is the seminary years and focuses on improving assessment and leadership education so that students are better prepared for ministry.
 - **Dimension 3** is post-seminary years and seeks to help recent graduates grow in effectiveness through feedback, training, and helpful supervision.
- Each of the dimensions is multifaceted, but here's one example of what we are doing. During seminary years, students are involved in internships in a congregation for the final two years. They are also taking classes and participating in a practicum group. The practicum group involves four other students and an active church leader who can help students integrate all they are learning in class and in the internship. Another example is the Saint Paul Institute, which is exploring partnerships for life-long learning opportunities.



Lovett Weems, Jr. is Professor of Church Leadership and President of Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO. He may be contacted by phone, 816-245-4848, or email, lovettw@spst.edu.

Free Newsletters for Church Leaders

Church Leadership newsletter is provided as a service of Saint Paul School of Theology. Each issue includes an article by Lovett H. Weems, Jr., a recommended leadership book and website, an interview with an author, and a "right question" for leaders. Online at www.spst.edu/leadership/toc.htm.

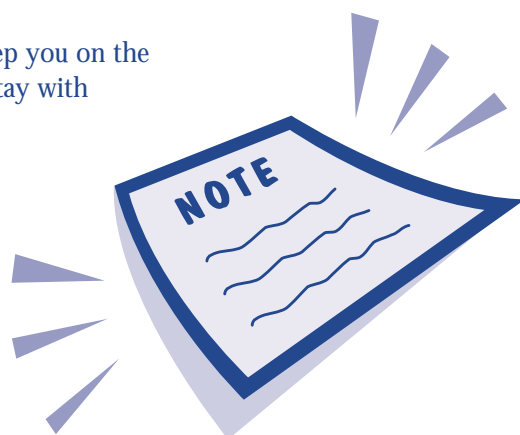
Following the thread of discussion on various listservs or email newsletters can keep you on the cutting edge of church leadership thinking. It can also cause tunnel vision if you stay with the same one! Here are some I'm following now.

- Listservs for several audiences: www.easumbandy.com
- Church champions from Leadership Network: www.leadnet.org
- Advice and notes for leading meetings (3M Meeting News): www.mmm.com/meetingnetwork

What e-letters are you reading?

What do you find most helpful?

Send me a note at bheavner@gbod.org.



Can Administration Be Ministry?

Some administrative work is essential for healthy functioning of any United Methodist church. There are financial, maintenance, legal, and personnel matters that must be dealt with! As FaithQuest churches understand the importance of becoming a faith forming community, some administrative groups have difficulty understanding their responsibility for the spiritual life of the congregation.

Here are three things to consider:

1. Ministry has to be worked through the "system" of the church. We have good ideas and good people. The roadblock is the "system," that is, the policy, procedures, or vestiges of parliamentary procedure we use. Often, administrative committees need to ask, "How does this decision we are considering impact making disciples?"
2. People carry out ministry, and sometimes people are the biggest barrier to change. Some leaders feel threatened by the idea of sharing leadership. We are not just talking about people who resist change, but also about people who are pushing change and who lose the ability to listen to anyone who makes another suggestion. In a faith-forming community, people keep their eye on where God is leading rather than on preserving a tradition or forcing any one way of proceeding.
3. Keep learning together by listening to God and using resources provided to guide your ministry of administration.

The trigger for this article by Betsy Heavner is the June 11 email newsletter of the Leadership Network called Church Champions, particularly the lead article on church boards by Russ Bredholt. The newsletter, edited by Dave Travis, is available at www.leadnet.org.

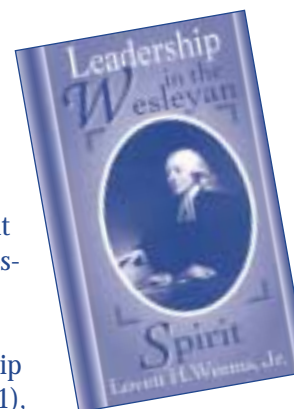
The Bookshelf

Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit

by Lovett H. Weems, Jr. (Abingdon, 1999)

True Wesleyan leadership involves walking the tight-rope between continuity and change. Weems contends that leadership in the Wesleyan spirit includes these practices:

- (1) multiple leadership (see interview on p. 1),
- (2) leadership from the center and the edge of society,
- (3) holding together and in tension seemingly incompatible commitments,
- (4) seeking unity in diversity. The passions of a Wesleyan leader are to know God, proclaim Christ, and seek justice. This is a good book for a leadership team to read and discuss.



Behavioral Covenants in Congregations: A Handbook for Honoring Differences

by Gilbert R. Rendle (Alban, 1999)

Working through disagreements and learning to respect our differences forms real community, the kind of true relationship we all seek with one another. Our Christian heritage offers disciplines and traditions to help us move through chaos and disruption, but our culture is increasingly known for incivility. Rendle reminds us of our heritage and helps us rediscover the discipline of covenant. This practical workbook gets to the heart of modern congregational life, showing us how to live together as a covenant community despite our differences.



Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2001-2004

(set of 26 booklets) (Abingdon, 2000)

Guidelines not only have a new look this quadrennium, they are written to support the new directions of FaithQuest congregations. Each booklet opens with a common article on the

four essential functions of leaders in any church position. All committees and groups are reminded of their responsibility for the spiritual life of the congregation. I suggest you start by reading the pastor or lay leader guideline, then read one related to your area of leadership. The church council should study their Guideline together and then assess their work against its suggestions.



Are you forming new FaithQuest study groups?

Call toll-free 877-899-2780, Ext. 7674 to order FaithQuest study materials.