

# Spiritual Leadership for Multicultural Transformation

Robert A. Chesnut

Copyright, 2012

# How's This for Welcoming Diversity?

- Ad by St. Pius X Catholic Church in Tulsa, welcoming the:
- *“...single, twice-divorced, under 30, gay, filthy rich, black and proud, poor as dirt, can’t sing, no habla Ingles ...*
- *... married with pets, older than God, more Catholic than the pope, workaholic, bad speller, screaming babies ...*
- *... three-times divorced, passive-aggressive, obsessive-compulsive, tourists, seekers, doubters, bleeding hearts . . . and you.”*
- What does it take for a church to get the point that it can embrace such a vision and then declare it to the world?

# Leadership that Helps Us Claim Our God-Given Vision/Mission

2012 Multicultural Conference

- So we know: Which Way is North?
- How does a Christian congregation know which way is North?
- From Scripture, Confessions, BOO. A small sampling of our divine directions: Gen. 12:1-3; Isa. 56:6-8; 66:18; Mt. 28:18-20; Acts. 2:17-18; 10:34-35; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 1:9-10; Rev. 7:9-10
- Many examples from the teaching and ministry of Jesus.
- But ... resistance is real! The multicultural vision is radical.  
**CHECK OUT THESE OPINIONS FROM A REAL CHURCH:**

- **Not all people of a different race, social background or sexual orientation are likely to define their spiritual aspirations in ways that we can meet.**
- **In general, our members are unwilling to consider or make significant changes in 'who we are' to improve the diversity of our congregation.**
- **We need to do a better job of meeting the needs of our existing congregation members.**
- **We need to become a friendly, warmer congregation in order to reach new people.**

**IS THERE AN INHERENT SELF-CENTERNESS, SELF-SATISFACTION IN THESE FIRST THREE POINTS? HOW DO GET BEYOND IT?**

# We Need Leadership that Nurtures Spiritual Trans[Formation] (Preach it/Teach it!)

- I. **We Are Called to Journey into God's Newness:**  
Gen. 12:1-2; Isa. 43:18-19; Phil. 3:12-14; Rev. 21:1a, 5.
- II. **We Are Called to Live as Stewards of the Gospel: Matthew 25:13-29.**
- III. **We Are Called to Die in Order to Live:**  
Mt. 16:24-25; Rom. 6:4-5; Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 5:17.
- IV. **We Are Called to Live Out God's Plan for Time and Eternity: Eph. 1:9-10; Rev. 7:9-10**

# Leadership that Lifts up the Promise of New Life through Vision:

- **So we know which way is north.**
- **So we have unity of purpose, direction, divine mission.**
- **So we have enthusiasm, energy, zeal, vigor, vitality.**
- **So we know we are called out of ourselves to something greater, challenging us to stretch and grow beyond our comfort zones.**



# We Need Leadership that Inspires:

- **Fire in the belly for the Biblical Vision—Deep conviction about our God-given mission/vision—Communicates it with contagious enthusiasm.**
- **Proactivity—Encourages can-do attitudes—We are co-creators with God of our own future—creative, imaginative, BRAINSTORMS.**
- **Entrepreneurial spirit. Parable of talents: To risk, venture, share, multiply all our gifts.**

# We Need Leadership that:

- **Keeps learning, growing. Pushes us beyond our stereotypes & biases. Drinks from strange wells. Befriends, learns from other cultures.**
- **Is Spirit-filled, Spirit-led. Nurtures the fruits of the Spirit. Is ready to be surprised.**
- **Has courage—to take risks, innovate, learn from mistakes, persist in the face of resistance, opposition and setbacks.**
- **Listens. Seeks first to understand, then ...**



# We Need Leadership that:

- **Draws others into the visioning/planning process. Listens, dreams, plans, BRAINSTORMS together.**
- **Rejoices in teamwork, celebrates the success of others. Cultivates win/win attitudes, synergy.**
- **Focuses on big picture, the system—to see how everything relates to everything else.**
- **Knows the difference between leadership and management. Practices both.**

# Write the Vision, Make It Plain:

2012 Multicultural Conference

- **Involve Everyone, BRAINSTORM.**
- **Ask Where God is Leading Your Church. Bible. BOO.**
- **Ask Where Your Church's Gifts and Passions Meet the World's Needs.**
- **Write the Vision. Officially Adopt it. Write it into your "constitution," your being.**
- **Make it sing! Sing it to yourselves and the world—often. Preach it, teach it, bulletin excerpts**

Multicultural Congregational Support | [www.pcusa.org/multicultural](http://www.pcusa.org/multicultural)



# Translate Vision into Plan:

- **Define Concrete Goals and Measurable Objectives.**
- **Assign Responsibilities.**
- **Keep It Before You, Not on the Shelf.**
- **Review, Evaluate, Revise. Keep it Alive.**

# A Covenant of Openness to Visions

- **WE PROMISE TO HELP CREATE A CLIMATE OF OPENNESS, TO RECEIVE THE VISIONS GOD WOULD REVEAL TO US.**
- **SO WE DECLARE OUR READINESS . . .**
- **TO LET GO: We are ready to risk our heritage, our tradition, and our survival, in order to discern the new directions in which God would lead us.**
- **TO LET GOD: We are ready to be surprised or dismayed, challenged or judged, changed to new ways or confirmed in ancient ways in any way God addresses us.**

# Openness to Visions, cont.

- **TO CONSIDER ALL OPTIONS:** We are ready to consider any change or sacrifice, any opportunity or cost—even relocation, union, or closure of our congregation—for the sake of our walk with Jesus.
- **TO SHARE ALL MINISTRIES:** We are ready to share equal responsibility for ministry so that all may have time to deepen spiritually and listen for the callings of God.

# Openness to Visions, cont.

- **TO STRETCH OUR IMAGINATIONS:** We are ready to listen to crazy ideas, consider the impossible, taste the distasteful, converse with strangers, and experiment with what is non-traditional, so that God can help us to grow and change.
- **TO LAUGH:** We are ready to tolerate odd personalities, go to extremes of diplomacy, and offer the maximum generosity. We are prepared to laugh at ourselves, and laugh with each other. We are eager to try, fail, learn, and try again.

**(With thanks to Thomas Bandy)**