# TRANSITIONING AND TRANSFORMING A MINISTRY THROUGH EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT LEADERSHIP

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#### ABSTRACT

Transitioning and Transforming A Ministry Through Effective and Efficient Leadership Jason L. Robinson

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This study explores the depths of leadership both contextually and biblically while defining and outlining effective, efficient, and ethical methods of leadership that can be employed to uncover the hidden truths that impact ministry transition and transformation. In reviewing the literature on leadership, I encountered seven models: Authoritative, Authentic, Forerunner, Coaching, Coercive, Groupthink and Democratic. While all these models are innovative and informative, they did not specifically speak to leadership in a ministry context. These corporate models of leadership allow ministries to be sustained but spiritual models allow ministries to be transformed. Requiring me to investigate models that were predicated upon a spiritual encounter because leadership in ministry contexts is not a job but rather a calling.

In my context a more spiritual approach will be much more effective and for that reason, I chose a model that was predicated upon an encounter. Therefore, the research led me to the Seals and Parker Character Model, Walter Fluker's Ethical Model and Joshua's Leadership Model (as described in the Bible). Seals and Parker's Character Model, helps followers to change, to move from where they are to where they want to be by recognizing that the work of transformation belongs to God and that anyone in a leadership position is a steward not an owner. Producing changed which is facilitated by intentional development (teamwork) and love (connection). Fluker's Model rests upon the triangular interrelated dimensions of human existence: self, social and spiritual. Lastly, the Joshua's Model in my context addresses the need for leadership and ministry to cross-over into what has been both prophesized and promised. Consequently, this is predicated upon the ministry operating within the three distinct biblical leadership functions of: Servant, Steward and Shepherd.

This project culminated in the creation of the Robinson Model of leadership which differs from that of Seals and Parker Character model and Fluker's triangular model because it employs vision (the ability to imagine and implement what things could and should be according to divine direction) as the key component of the four phases: Discernment, Development, Direction, and Deployment.

# DEDICATION

# To God my Sustainer

To Rev. Joseph Jr. and Lizzie Mae my Spiritual Sources

To Jaya and Jay II my Seeds

To JaMuir my Soulmate

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#### INTRODUCTION

For the last eleven years I have served Brooks United Methodist Church (The Brook) in St. Leonard, Maryland which is situated in Calvert County approximately 45 minutes south of Washington D.C. The population of Calvert County is 79.1% white and 12.1% Black according to the American Community Survey database courtesy of the Census Bureau.<sup>1</sup> The Brook has been in existence for one hundred and seventy-four years and during that time this ministry has endured a renaming (seven times), a fire (two times), a church split, a resurgence, in the last four years the completion of a \$2.5 million dollar building project, a pandemic and the societal unrest over rising racial tensions.

The Brook is a four-hundred-member ministry, that is comprised of both a highly educated and under- educated membership. This multi-generational family/community congregation includes an extremely high population of married couples with a few pockets of single individuals. Most of the membership work in the government or for the military in the surrounding areas of the DMV (District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia). The ministry is also blessed with several local business owners. Until recently the Brook was a family generational church but over the last several years as the ministry has improved both its internal and external witness the ministry has begun to attract people of all creeds, colors, and communities.

The Brook however is an African American congregation located on the same block as Waters United Methodist Church, a predominantly white congregation. The two ministry

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> American Community Survey, <u>https://datausa.io/profile/geocalvert-county-md/</u>, (8/19/18).

contexts are separated by a graveyard and ironically, the racial relationships have transitioned from death to life. Whereas in the past there was no fellowship between the two ministries, over the last several years under my leadership and three different administrations at Waters the two ministries have embarked upon several successful community ministry projects. These projects have included worshipping together on Easter for sunrise service, feeding the homeless in our community and traveling to the District of Columbia to participate in a winter coat drive. We have also formed a joint ministry team called Heart F.E.L.T. Ministry to facilitate our future joint ministry endeavors, which include joint facilitation of Vacation Bible School, School children feeding program on the weekends and community dinners during the holidays.

During my journey as Senior Pastor of The Brook I have unearthed several problematic and puzzling factors, the core of which seems to be an inability to release feelings from the past that impede progress in the present. The church split led by the Pastor and the leadership team in May of 2000 produced tremendous impairment that still exists to this day. The spilt was not the result of theological differences but rather a Pastor and a leadership team continued discontent with the denominational (United Methodist) governing bodies restrictive/ruling nature over local ministries. This disgruntlement lead to a secretive vote and the founding of a new ministry named Healing and Deliverance Ministry.

The echoes of that experience still resonate and serve as an impediment to any conversations about transition and transformation. Undoubtedly every discussion of the church's future is overtaken by refrains from the past. Which I acknowledge are normal in light of the splitting of the ministry however as indicated through the interviews these experiences

have not been impediments to my leadership as the ministry has responded extremely well to my leading as depicted in the narrative ministry timeline in the appendix.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, as the ministry seeks to address the current needs of a budding congregation/community of faith, we are challenged like so many other mainline African American denominational ministries by the changing landscape of modern-day ministry. With an aging population, decaying buildings, enlarged campus worship center and non- existent millennial populations. This has led me to wrestle with a research question that is not only at the core of these challenges that exist in my ministry context but also, in many other ministry contexts that are attempting to evolve as the landscape of modern ministry shifts : what does effective and efficient leadership look like? And how could we implement this type of leadership in order to transition and transform a ministry context?

As I began to grapple with this research question, I traced the steps of my leadership journey in ministry back to my first ministry assignment as an Assistant Pastor in St. Louis, Missouri where talent (ones aptitude and skill) were the hallmarks of leadership. Leadership there was solely predicated upon what the individual could do; there was no team culture. My second ministry assignment was as the Senior Pastor to a Washington, D.C. site where leadership was based upon the relationships you cultivated because there were gatekeepers guarding against over-reaching leaders. Both situations taught me invaluable lessons (the importance of being yourself, the importance of vision, the importance of consistency and the importance of relationships). And as I matured and nurtured these new views and perspectives

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The narrative ministry timeline is in the appendix, number 1.

of what effective and efficient leadership looked-liked, I was appointed to my third ministry assignment as the Senior Pastor of Brooks United Methodist Church in St. Leonard, Maryland.

At the Brook, leadership is the engine that drives and steers the ministry context. Like other ministry contexts leadership must be forthcoming, powerful, spiritual, prophetic, visionary, and disciplined. Leadership is expected to operate with integrity, ingenuity, and intelligence. These expectations are based upon several spiritual assumptions within this ministry context: 1) that leaders are called of God, 2) that leaders are the chosen vessels of God and, 3) that leaders have heard and sought the voice of God.

Which connects with Seals and Parker's conceptional definition of leadership as a call to character and integrity before God, before yourself, before your family, before your team and before your public<sup>3</sup>. Along with Fluker's who views this as an adventure, as a quest for the unity of self and consciousness. That which is predicated upon the wisdom, habits and practices of traditions that have helped shape one's character<sup>4</sup>. These assumptions are rooted in the history of the church as it was blessed to have one leadership team for over 33 years. Those assumptions were cultivated and active during that tenure and serve as foundational underpinnings for the model of leadership.

For the Brook effective leadership inspires people and places a priority on developing disciples. Effective leadership is critical at The Brook and for other ministry contexts as well. Effective leadership can be defined as that which is practical in approach, constructive in design, functional in operation and fruitful in return. In 2020 and beyond as the landscape of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Eugene Seals and Matthew Parker, *Called to Lead* (Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois.1995), 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Walter Fluker. *Ethical Leadership* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota. 2009), 33.

ministry changes and as ministries shift from physical cathedrals to digital cathedrals, leadership must evolve to meet the ever-changing market where the mission field has changed but the mission (to equip, encourage, empower and "e"mpact disciples for Jesus Christ) has remained the same.

Leadership that is effective will bridge the gap between whether a ministry stays relevant or becomes irrelevant. In 2020 and beyond every leadership team must comb through its operating procedures (both written/unwritten). They must investigate whether they are operating at maximum capacity across all avenues of service: from Discipleship to Stewardship, from Hospitality to Visibility and from Technology to Accessibility. Every leadership team no matter the context should sit with and wrestle with this question, "What would our community miss if our ministry was to no longer exist"? The answer should prompt the leadership team to be more intentional in plotting its future course. Understanding, defining, activating, and articulating effective leadership is paramount as ministries move into 2020 and beyond.

With that in mind, this project explores the depths of leadership both contextually and biblically while defining and outlining effective, efficient, and ethical methods of leadership that can be employed to uncover the hidden truths that impact ministry transition and transformation. The research project intersects and interacts with the mission field by adopting a sociological approach to data collection and analysis. Central to this hermeneutic is coming to an understanding of what social events mean and represent to human participants.<sup>5</sup> I also

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Janet Wolff. *Hermeneutic Philosophy and The Sociology of Art* (Western Printing Services Ltd, Bristol, London, England.1975), 21.

employed the use of nine interviews to create a narrative historical timeline of leadership that charted The Brooks' transformative transitions.

There are a variety of leadership models available for innovative thinkers seeking to transition and transform their ministry contexts. In my review of the literature I have encountered seven models: Authoritative, Authentic, Forerunner, Coaching, Coercive, Groupthink and Democratic<sup>6</sup>. The Authoritative model is employed by Bill Gates, Richard and Vladimir Putin who provide leadership by focusing upon setting and achieving goals<sup>7</sup>. Once the goals are achieved the leader then takes a step back. The Authentic Model is embodied by Oprah Winfrey and Howard Schultz leaders who exhibit leadership through honesty and transparent displaying emotions in the moment<sup>8</sup>. John the Baptist was a Leader who utilized the Forerunner model where he employed a motivational brand of leadership that was/is predicated upon example setting<sup>9</sup>.

Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rodney T. Smothers and Steve Jobs displayed a Coaching Model of leadership that develops and grooms for the future.<sup>10</sup> There is no storage of Coercive models of leadership, interesting enough the ones shared are both former CEO's Hisao Tanaka and Martin Winterkorn who both demonstrated a leadership style that is grounded on compliance and productivity<sup>11</sup>. Whereas the Groupthink model builds upon the empowerment of those who are being led and there are several historical events associated with this leadership style,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Viscomi Chris, "7 New Types of Leadership Models for Innovative Thinkers," Aliste Marking, July 25, 2017http://alistemarking.com/blog/types-of-leadership-models/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> www.futureofworking.com .8/2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> <u>www.cleverism.com</u> .7/25/20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Jewish Study Bible. (Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 2014). 646.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> <u>www.edenproject.com</u> .8/2020 and <u>www.abingtonpress.com</u> . 3/2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> <u>www.study.com</u> .7/2/15.

the Bay of Pigs, Pearl Harbor, and the US invasion of Iraq<sup>12</sup>. And lastly, Rep. John Lewis, George Washington, and the CEO of Pepsi Indra Nooyi Nooyi are examples that use the Democratic model which blends the leadership models of Authentic, Authoritative and Groupthink to ensure that feedback is employed in decision making.<sup>13</sup>

While these models were innovative, informative, and business structured which is necessary in my current ministry climate, they do not specifically speak to leadership in a ministry context. In my opinion, corporate models of leadership allow ministries to be sustained but spiritual models allow ministries to be transformed. So, while I agree with the current literature that church leaders need to employ a combination of both the sacred/secular models of leadership. In my context a more spiritual approach will be much more effective and for that reason, I chose a model that was predicated upon an encounter because leadership in ministry contexts is not a job but rather a calling.

A calling to a higher purpose than self, requiring a transfiguring experience where leadership adopts an operational thesis that they Love God – Love People – Love Self and Love Service. To facilitate this, I used a combination of the following models of leadership, 1) Seals and Parker Character Model, which avows, integrity as a critical component of leadership, 2) Walter Fluker's Ethical Model which address, identity and purpose and, 3) Joshua's Leadership Model, which asserts, the importance of courage and obedience. These models served as the basis for the development of a new model that is currently being applied within my ministry context: The Robinson leadership model.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> www.sesp,northwestern.edu 5/2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> <u>www.online,stu,edu</u> .11/25/14.

The Robinson model is designed to transition (the process, the period of changing) and transform (the thorough and dramatic change in form) leadership into an efficient and effective instrument of visionary implementation. The model operates upon four key premises that seek to transition and transform leadership teams. There is an intentional approach applied to the ministry context that leads leadership through a systematic process of: Discernment (the ability to judge well), Development (the process for specified growth), Direction (the ability to manage movement), and Deployment (the ability to bring resources into effective action). The key learnings that can be gleaned from the implementation of The Robinson Models are 1) an awareness of self-identity.

The necessity of centering, confessing, confirming, and connecting one's self to visionary leadership. 2) an awareness of accountability. The prerequisite of establishing leadership to commit to a covenantal relationship with the community it seeks to transition and transform. 3) an awareness of approach. The requirement of leadership to intentional live, to purse a lifestyle of leadership that is predicted upon these five attributes a) Listening, b) Learning, c) Loving, d) Liberating and e) Launching. 4) an awareness of activation. The obligation of leadership to move from the theoretical to the practical. How to properly employ the resources and the revelations gained through the first three stages of The Robinson Model. Compelling leadership to operate from a prophetic visionary perspective that transitions and transforms the ministry context.

#### CHAPTER ONE

### CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Seals and Parker define leadership as a call to character and integrity before God, before yourself, before your family, before your team and before your public.<sup>14</sup> Leadership is a major component in the transformation process of a ministry context. Leaders help followers to change, to move from where they are to where they want to be by recognizing that the work of transformation belongs to God and that anyone in a leadership position is a steward not an owner. This model also recognizes that leadership is about partnership which places a priority on developing others. According to Seals and Parker leadership should be more concerned with being prophetically (biblically) correct than politically correct.<sup>15</sup> In our ministry contexts it is imperative that our leadership be saturated with ethical biblical interpretation and liberative application.<sup>16</sup> Not only what is legal, historical, traditional, or cultural but also what divine revelation requires.

Leadership is predicated upon being impartially driven, biblically sound, godly inspired and prophetically proficient. In the kingdom leadership requires one to rise above arrogance, anger, and fear of man to mediate the will of God without partiality. In our ministry contexts leadership cannot solely be about the person or personality of the leader. It is imperative that leadership centers itself in the promise, the purpose, and the plan of God. This can be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Eugene Seals and Matthew Parker, *Called to Lead* (Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois.1995), 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ibid.,23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> It is critical for leadership to operate from a biblical moral code that cultivates standards and produces principles if there is going to be any transition and transformation of the ministry context.

accomplished by meditating on and activating scriptural principles in one's life and evaluating one's doctrine and life considering scriptural principles. Seals and Parker provide six disciplines that will help leadership be ready spiritually, physically, and mentally:

## 1. Seize opportunities afforded you instead of complaining about lack of opportunities.

- 2. Work hard at every assignment. Avoid making excuses for laziness.
- 3. Exercise forgiveness Become a channel of God's reconciling grace.
- 4. Commit yourself to character development and personal growth.
- 5. Trust God.
- 6. Persevere in righteousness, realizing that the judge of all the earth will do right.<sup>17</sup>

Leadership is manifested in obedience to the word of God which is not always popular and can be lonely. Leadership acknowledges that God is sovereign and as stewards we have been positioned to communicate God's message and carry out God's work according to God's command. Leadership is not a call to prostitution, popularity, promotion, prosperity, pleasure, or peer approval but rather leadership is a call to character. Character is the mental and moral qualities distinctive to the individual set aside for leadership. Leadership that is effective and successful in producing a desired or intended result recognizes three essentials:

- 1. An understanding of how energy works.
- 2. A knowledge of the environment.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.,25.

 A faith that sustains it in spite of the threat of economic and physical hardship.<sup>18</sup>

As I have discovered through both personal pastoral experience and this research project leadership must discern how and when to receive and to release energy into its context. It is imperative that leadership be energized and possess the ability to motivate while being fulfilled and expressing joy in cultivating change. Leadership must propel the ministry forward with lively and visual energy that saturates the entire ministry purpose. Which is to actively fulfill its mission and vision. Leadership must possess a love for the context in which it seeks to transition and transform. Having a clear knowledge of the past and the present is crucial in implementing any lasting shifts. Love is crucial in shaping every ministry context, showing that leadership is invested and plugged into the problems, the processes and the promises of its people is critical to transitioning a ministry context.

Leadership should possess creative faith in God. This faith in God should include a willingness to sacrifice to ensure that the goals set for the ministry context can be achieved. Leadership that is creative generates resources and does not allow the lack of them to interfere with the fulfillment of the ministry's purpose. Leadership must be creative as it charts reasonable and achievable goals for its context understanding the importance of completing whatever has been proclaimed. Seals and Parker offer up one model of effective leadership that exists in the book of Esther.<sup>19</sup> Asserting that leadership must Know yourself, Communicate clearly and precisely, Make decisions, Have well-defined goals and Strive to develop people's self-confidence to a level of performance beyond their expectations.<sup>20</sup>

It is imperative that leadership develop its strengths and choose teammates that compensate for your weakness. You are not in this by yourself, you are a part of a team so learn how to be yourself. Bring your team together and ensure that everyone knows the game plan and their role in fulfilling it. Make no assumptions, remove all doubts about what is being asked of the team. Do not put off making decisions. Act with purpose after you have seen and heard from your teammates. Always have clear and transparent goals to ensure that everyone is in the loop as far as achieving the ministries objectives. A leader should not try to be superman or superwoman but should invest in others and create a sense of ownership amongst the team so that everyone is putting their best foot forward to achieve the goals of the ministry.

Effective leadership must employ prayer. Prayer can be described as a solemn request or expression of thanks addressed to God and is one of the spiritual disciplines. These disciplines are habits, practices and experiences that are designed to develop, grow, and strengthen certain qualities of the spirit. William Willimon asserts that prayer is boldness born out of confidence in faithfulness of God to the promises God makes, confidence that God will

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> There are some exegetical problems that exist when using Esther as a model of effective leadership. While many scholars disagree that this model should be held as an example particularly for women in ministry because Esther is sexually exploited in the text. Seals and Parker utilized it to present a model of effective leadership that was both creative and successful.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Eugene Seals and Matthew Parker, *Called to Lead* (Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois.1995), 34.

be true to God's self.<sup>21</sup> Leaders pray because they need God; they need to be in God's presences, they need to encounter God through that experience so that they might receive inspiration, illumination, and instruction. Prayer is crucial in leadership because prayer disciplines leadership to place itself before God so that it can be transformed. According to Seals and Parker, without prayer leadership is helpless.<sup>22</sup> Prayer allows leadership to approach the throne of grace and obtain guidance from God so that God's purpose may be accomplished through the leadership team.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> William, Willimon. Interpretation A Bible Commentary (John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky. 19880, 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Eugene Seals and Matthew Parker, *Called to Lead* (Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois.1995),51.

#### CHAPTER TWO

#### THE FLUKER MODEL OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Walter Fluker describes ethical leadership as the critical appropriation and embodiment of moral traditions that have shaped the character and the shared meanings of a people (an ethos).<sup>23</sup> This type of leadership does not emerge from a historical vacuum but from the lifeworld of particular traditions and it speaks authoritatively and acts responsibly with the aim of serving the collective good. Much like how Seals and Parker define leadership as a call to character, Fluker's description of ethical leadership is predicated upon the wisdom, habits and practices of traditions that have helped shape one's character. Seals and Parker view character through the lens of what one possesses whereas Fluker views it as an adventure, a quest for unity of self and consciousness. However, they all agree upon the fact that leadership is simply about character.

Ethical leadership asks the questions of values in reference to ultimate concern. The description of ethical leadership is depicted as a triangular model that incorporates three interrelated dimensions of human existence: self, social and spiritual. Fluker asserts in his monograph, *"Ethical Leadership"* that:

In the dimension of the self or the personal, the concern is with the question of identity and purpose (Who am I? What do I want? What do I propose to do and become?). The social or public dimension involves the relationship with the other (to whom and what am I ultimately accountable?). The spiritual addresses the human need for a sense of intimacy, excellence, and hope in reference to the great mystery of being

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Walter Fluker. *Ethical Leadership* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota. 2009), 33.

(Who am I? What do I want? What do I propose to do and become? Who is the other? How am I to respond to the actions of the other on me?).<sup>24</sup>

The interrelated dimensions of ethical leadership (self, social and spiritual) form the basis for leadership in a community (integration, wholeness, and harmony). Ethical leadership is a relational model that attempts to discern the purpose that drives leadership to its goal of connecting, cultivating, and converting communities into places of integration, wholeness, and harmony. Integration is the process by which a well-balanced psyche becomes whole. Wholeness is the state of forming a harmonious unit, and harmony is the quality of forming a pleasing and consistent whole. If leadership purposes are to be achieved in a ministry context it is imperative that the self, social and spiritual dimensions of a ministry be aligned. This is where answering the questions of mission (what we are about or what we want to do) and vision (how we are going to do it) would be helpful in establishing baselines upon which to build. Therefore, leadership is about understanding one's context and growing both the context and the character of the one leading.

Leadership that is centered around building character and community can be concerned with achieving a goal and pays attention to its application. How it operates, articulates, how it speaks and action, how it affects. This form of leadership either gives life to its organism or it drains the life out of its organism. It is imperative that leadership sees itself as a part of the ministry organism and not apart from it. Oftentimes the missing link in ministry settings is the interrelatedness of the three dimensions of self. Who are we, what is our identity and what is our purpose? Social, who are we connected to and accountable to and spiritual, what is the meaning of all this. Leadership that builds character wrestles with these questions and the model of ethical leadership seeks to provide a pathway to deeper discovery.

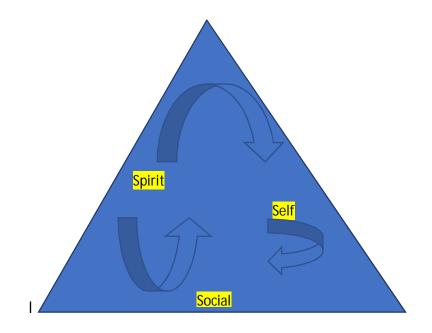


Figure 1. The Ethical Leadership Model

Fluker articulates that the three dimensions of this triangular model are not linear but circular and cyclical, as in a spiral or "a liberated circle". The geometrical form of the spiral is an unfinished circle, spiraling inward and outward in infinite patterns of opening and closing, moving deeper into the recesses of consciousness and outward in the world of people and things.<sup>25</sup> Leadership stands at the intersection of self and consciousness attempting to discern and deliver both identity and purpose. For ethical leadership spirituality becomes a discipline

that demands ethical leaders to nourish and cultivate a sense of self that recognizes community.

Spirituality is at the core and social life of ethical leadership. It informs the interconnecting relationships between the private and public spheres of leadership. This is especially essential in ministry contexts because leadership exists in front of (what is seen by the masses) and behind the proverbial veil (what is only seen by a select few). Leadership that is effective must exhibit a spirituality that informs but also reflects upon itself with purpose using analysis, criticism, interpretation, and justification. This type of leadership possesses the ability to transition and transfigure a ministry context.

#### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE HISTORICAL CRITICAL EXEGETICAL FRAMEWORK

Three distinct functions can summarize biblical leadership: Servant (server), Steward (manager) and Shepherd (quide). These functions flow into 5 specific underpinnings: Character, Calling, Competence, Community and Christ. Character addresses what is needed and necessary to lead while calling relates to the guestion of purpose and the why of leading. Competence speaks to what is best for leading and community refers to who is being led. Chief among all these categories is Christ who ultimately guides the leading. Building upon this foundational understanding I have chosen to investigate the Joshua model of leadership which lives into and out of the three distinct function presented above servant, steward, and shepherd. The Joshua model has its origins in the book of Exodus where we are first introduced to Joshua as the general "in" leadership of the forces of the Lord.<sup>26</sup> We encounter him again at the base of Mt. Sinai as part of the inner circle as Moses goes up the mountain.<sup>27</sup> Here Joshua is seen being "of" leadership. We next meet him "with" leadership experiencing the rebellion of God's people through worshipping the Golden calf.<sup>28</sup> The fourth time we see Joshua is in the tabernacle where he is "connected to" leadership as Moses talks face to face with God.<sup>29</sup> The next time we interact with Joshua is when he runs "to" leadership to protest the prophesying of others not named Moses.<sup>30</sup> The sixth time we encounter Joshua he is "a part" of the leadership

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> The Jewish Study Bible, (Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 2014), 133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ibid.,153.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid.,179.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid.,180.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Ibid.,294.

team chosen to spy out the land of milk and honey.<sup>31</sup> The next two times we meet Joshua we discover a young man that is ready to lead God's people.<sup>32</sup>

Understanding Joshua's model of leadership begins with discerning the importance of being prepared and trained to lead. Joshua sat and served at the feet of a tremendous teacher and mentor, Moses. Joshua learns several lessons that, as Francis Schaeffer indicates, all in leadership must comprehend, "1) Power is not merely the capability of the general and the sword, but power is of God. 2) The importance of the interplay between the seen and the unseen worlds. 3) God's glory comes first. A leader must never confuse themselves with God. 4) You must be willing to stand with God even when the majority is opposing you."<sup>33</sup> These four leadership lessons add necessary contextual depth to the Joshua model that is laid out in the first chapter of the book that bears his name.

The book of Joshua begins after the death of Moses and continues until the death and burial of Joshua. It recounts how the people of Israel entered the land and settled it. Under the leadership of Joshua, a second Moses, Israel marched united, crossed the Jordan River in ceremonial procession and set up camp in Gilgal. The book portrays the conquest of the promised land as a complete and outright victory directed by God, led by a Moses-like figure, and accomplished by a people who have sworn allegiance to God. Joshua's leadership begins with these verses that read

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Ibid.,295.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Ibid.,415.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Francis Schaeffer, *Joshua and the Flow of Biblical History* (Crossway, Wheaton, Illinois. 2004).26.

Be strong and resolute, for you shall apportion to this people the land that I swore to their fathers to assign to them, But you must be very strong and resolute to observe faithfully all the teachings that My servant Moses enjoined upon you. Do not deviate from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Let not this Book of Teaching cease from your lips, but recite it day and night, so that you may observe faithfully all that is written in it, Only then will you prosper in your understanding and only then will you be successful. I charge you: Be strong and resolute; do not be terrified or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.<sup>34</sup>

According to Jerome Creach, this pericipe begins with the typical narrative account of those well-known figures appointed with specific tasks in the Old Testament. However, Joshua's commission ceremony is similar to the investiture of Solomon in I Kings 2 where David charges his son much like God charges Joshua here with (1) a charge of encouragement (a call to "Be strong and courageous"); (2) a description of the mission (cross the Jordan; put Israel in possession of the land): and (3) a promise of assistance ("I will be with you")." <sup>35</sup> Joshua's commissioning story attempts to establish the royal character of a leader. The Lord commands him to meditate on the Book of Law. This is also an ideal expected of kings as is described in Deuteronomy chapter seventeen.<sup>36</sup>

The 1<sup>st</sup> chapter of Joshua immediately lifts three distinctive dimensions of leadership. In the 7<sup>th</sup> verse, Joshua was called to be a Servant just like Moses was. In the sixth and eighth verses, Joshua is called to be a Steward of the given land and law. And in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> verses,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> The Jewish Study Bible, (Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 2014), 442.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Jerome Creach, *Interpretation* (John Know Press, Louisville, Kentucky. 2003),22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Deuteronomy conception of kingship entails an extraordinary restriction of royal authority and in this seventeen chapter we discover more about what a king can not do verses what a king may do.

Joshua is called to be a Shepherd, a guide of God's people. Joshua is to be an avid learner (indicated by the need for meditation in the 8<sup>th</sup> verse) as all in leadership must become.

Joshua's charge reflects ideas and factors that are paramount for any effective and efficient leadership team which desires to transition and transform a ministry context. The Lord charges Joshua three times in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and the 9<sup>th</sup> verses to "Be strong and courageous." The 1<sup>st</sup> enunciation is connected to his Faith (firm belief). In this verse we discern the importance of trusting and depending upon the Lord. He is called to believe in God to fulfill the promise not upon human effort because it is God who is giving them the land that he will lead them into. The second articulation is attached to his Obedience (submission and compliance). In this verse we discover the imperative of being obedient which ensures that you will live in the knowledge of one's proper place before the creator and will be prudent and possess wisdom. The final assertion is affixed to his Attitude (mindset). In this verse we ascertain the necessity of recognizing and realizing that when you are called to do the will of God you are not alone.

The central theological conviction of the Joshua Model of leadership illuminates the importance of the interrelatedness of Seals and Parker's Call to Character and Fluker's Ethical Leadership Model of "Self, Social and Spirit". Essential to employing this Joshua Model of leadership that transitions and transforms is the necessity of aligning oneself and one's community with the divine instructions of God as narrated in the Bible, a text written by humans. Similarly, to the community of Israel coming into the land of Canaan, the community at the Brook is undergoing a transition and transformation. In thinking about and pursuing this transition I draw upon the words of Joshua 1:7-8, which asserts

But you must be very strong and resolute to observe faithfully all the teachings that My servant Moses enjoined upon you. Do not deviate from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Let not this Book of Teaching cease from your lips, but recite it day and night, so that you may observe faithfully all that is written in it, Only then will you prosper in your understanding and only then will you be successful.<sup>37</sup>

Obedience, which can be described as submission and compliance, is the key to this leadership framework and those that are in leadership must Comprehend, Practice and Communicate the instructions outlined in Joshua 1:7-8. Leadership must comprehend the book of law. To achieve this goal, they must understand and know which requires them to meditate regularly and consistently "on it day and night." Therefore, leadership must practice in both their personal and public lives that is not turning "from it to the right or the left." Leadership cannot lead the community to obey without exemplifying obedience in their own lives. Leadership must boldly and confidently communicate these instructions. This can be derived from "always on your lips." With the knowledge that God will not abandon, leadership can actively seek to do God's will. The Joshua Model of Leadership requires boldness from leadership that is predicated upon the confidence that God's will, will be done therefore leaders can: "Be strong and courageous."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> The Jewish Study Bible, (Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 2014), 442.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

#### APPLICATION TO MINISTRY CONTEXT

During the last eleven years as I have functioned as the shepherd of Brooks Church in St. Leonard, Maryland. During this time, I have encountered and experienced many challenges that have led me to employ evolving methods of leadership to meet the needs of a growing and thriving worshipping population. In preparation for 2020 and beyond, the Brook completed a six-week strategic visioning process with the leadership and lay membership teams. Where we sought to create an environment of instruction, interruption, inspiration, and implementation by addressing the emerging needs of a budding community. Compelling the ministry team to ask questions and unearth answers around, what is the church, why do people come to church, what are people looking for in a church, who are we as a church, what do we offer as a church and what kind of church do we really want to be?

These questions really stretched us as a ministry because for decades Brooks had been a family church but in the last eleven years it has started to shift into a community church. And through this six-week process, where sessions lasted at least 2 ½ hours at a time. The ministry grappled with the answers that were shared considering the current situation in both the church and the community. Leading to the birth of a new vision for 2020 and beyond to "Come A.L.I.V.E. @ The Brook". We are seeking to be Awakened from spiritual slumbers, Lifted from the muck and mire of the mundane, Ignited to serve with significance, Valued to cherish and cultivate our community and Empowered to build up the kingdom of God here on earth. The vision is predicated upon the biblical foundation of Psalm 103, "forgetting not all his benefits."

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The results of this research project will form the basis of how the leadership team at "The Brook" proceeds through yet another season of transition and transformation. As our denomination (United Methodist) prepares for a possible split in September of 2021, the coming changes will undoubtedly resurrect uneasy feelings from the church split that occurred at The Brook in 2000. It is imperative that an effective and efficient model of leadership be adopted to move the ministry beyond yet another moment of transition. I aim to employ the imagery of crossing over and the framework of the Joshua Model of Leadership, which exemplifies obedience to God's instructions to my ministry context. We will operate from the premise that obedience affords one the ability to "be strong and courageous." Therefore, leadership will seek to be obedient to God believing that God will allow the ministry to be prosperous (to live in one's proper place before the creator) and successful (to be prudent and possess wisdom).

If leadership is going to be "efficient and effective and transition and transform a ministry," it is imperative that it build upon the Character of those that lead by bridging the gap between Self, Social and Spiritual and emphasizing the necessity of communal Obedience to the will of God. This emphasis can lead us to move our ministry to become a place and a people of Covenant. The leadership team will intentionally go about ensuring that we are all invested in building up the ministry by bringing about a relationship of communal commitment. To that end, the leadership team plans to create and implement a Church Covenant and a Leadership Team Contract as a basis of ministry guided by relational cooperation. The model of leadership that has been developed through this research project builds upon the relational cooperation of the membership by employing both leadership and lay leadership covenants. These will be crucial in ensuring that the ministry is fulfilling the vision that has been birthed. The establishment of the this model fits The Brook because it builds upon the three key assumptions 1) leaders are called of God, 2) leaders are the chosen vessels of God and, 3) leaders have heard and sought the voice of God. These assumptions are rooted in the history of the church and highlight the importance of focusing on developing covenantal relationships.

Leadership is not about being in isolation but rather in relation. Furthermore, in this context leadership is expected to be forthcoming, powerful, spiritual, prophetic, visionary, and disciplined operating with integrity, ingenuity, and intelligence. Each of these characteristics reflects what an effective and efficient model of leadership looks like in my ministry context. Leadership that models these attributes possesses the ability to transition and transform a ministry.

#### CHAPTER FIVE

### NARRATIVE TIMELINE AND INTERVIEWS

Through the nine contributors interviewed during the month of May in the year of 2020 the interviews were conducted via the telephone and video conferencing by Rev. Jason L. Robinson. The selection of the nine participants were based upon several criteria: number 1) members of the church for at least 10 years, number 2) members of the church under multiple pastors and number 3) member of the church not in a current leadership position (as to not be impacted or influenced by the pastor conducting the interview).

Participants	Gender	Age	Education	Marital Status	Membership	Pastors
					Years	
1	Female	76	High School	Married	45	8
2	Female	76	High School	Divorce	30	6
3	Male	49	College	Married	40	5
4	Female	56	College	Married	20	3
5	Male	75	High School	Married	40	6
6	Female	49	College	Single	11	2
7	Female	75	High School	Married	39	6
8	Male	70	High School	Divorce	56	7
9	Male	60	College	Married	40	3

The characteristics of this African American congregation are reflected through the nine participants that were interviewed. Brooks is a family-oriented ministry that appeals to mostly married couples with a few pockets of singles. The majority of members have at least a high school diploma with a significant number having college and graduate degrees. Members work in a variety of fields including small business owners, farmers, federal employees, teachers, and physicians. In recent years, the ministry has undergone massive missional and visional transformation as it has sought to enlarge its ministry territory through strategic planning. This multi-generational family/community congregation has improved both its internal and external witness and has begun to attract people of all creeds, colors, and communities. The interviews afforded me the opportunity to reconstruct a ministry timeline covering significant events from the last fifty-six years<sup>38</sup>.

The narrative ministry timeline clearly indicates how the Brook has experienced and encounter many ministry shifts/transitions throughout its one hundred and seventy- four years of existence. Whether it be pastoral, cultural, communal, societal, denominational, or technological the Brook as risen to the occasion. The timeline indicates that the Brook is a strong ministry that requires leadership that is efficient and effective to propel it from potential to prominence. The history recorded upon the narrative ministry timeline implies that the ministry has the capability and the capacity to fulfill its vision but not always the courageous leadership needed to compel it forward.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> The narrative ministry timeline is located within the appendices, number 1.

The interviews began with a history lesson as The Brook has experienced a great deal of both transition and transformation since its founding one hundred and seventy-three years ago. Over the years my ministry context has operated under various names, The Meeting House, Island Creek Church, Brooks Church, Brooks Methodist Church, Brooks United Methodist Church, The New Brooks United Methodist Church and The Brook. During this time, the church has been blessed to be served by a variety of gifted shepherds whose leadership has had to navigate the ministry through many challenging transitions. From fires and relocations building, splitting, reorganizing, renaming, renovating, resurrecting, resurging and finally to rebuilding again. Throughout its history The Brooks' ministry context has been littered with examples of leadership that was and is transformative.

Brooks United Methodist Church has experienced differing styles of leadership on many levels throughout its amazing history while being served by 28 Pastors beginning in 1881 with Rev. T.H. Adams, Rev. W.H. Cooke, Rev. H. Alexander, Rev. George R. Williams, Rev. D.L. Washington, Rev. W. Murray, Rev. John H. Jackson, Rev. R.H. Adams, Rev. G. Morton, Rev. A.L. Jenkins, Rev. C.C. Brown, Rev. J.B. Arter, Rev. Elijah Ayers, Rev. E.P. Moon, Rev. W.E. Brooks, Rev. Clarence Davis, Rev. B.F. Hall, Rev. John Brooks, Rev. J.W. Jenkins, Rev. J.W. Carroll, Rev. J.H. Foye, Rev. R.F. Sharperson, Rev. J.S. Mason, Rev. Joseph Collins, Rev. Anaichi Belu-John, Rev. John D. Snowden, Rev. Kay F. Albury "and myself, Rev. Jason L. Robinson."

As I attempted to address the question of *How effective and efficient leadership can transition and transform a ministry context*, I was blessed to interview nine individuals who do not currently hold leadership positions at The Brook; but have had experiences and encounters with five of the last seven shepherds that have served at The Brook. Here are the questions that guided our discussion:

## Membership

- 1- How long have you attended or been a member of Brooks United Methodist Church?
- 2- How many pastors have led the church during your membership at Brooks United Methodist Church?
- 3- What keeps you coming back to Brooks United Methodist Church? Ministry Leadership
- 1- What leadership qualities are you looking for in a pastor?
- 2- How is leadership viewed at Brooks United Methodist Church?
- 3- What transitions have you experienced under leadership at Brooks United Methodist Church?

**Ministry Moments** 

- 1- What transformational events has Brooks United Methodist Church experienced? If any?
- 2- What role has leadership played in those transformational events at Brooks United Methodist Church? If any?
- 3- What have been the defining ministry moments that you have experienced at Brooks United Methodist Church? If any?

At its core there have been specific traits (character, courage, competence,

commitment, and clear communication) that have been proven over the years to be

effective and efficient within this ministry context. I conducted in depth interviews with nine participants who brought with them over 474 years of ministerial encounters. These nine contributors articulated that effective and efficient leadership employed the traits in these strategic areas of ministry Worship, Stewardship, Discipleship, Christian Education, Community, and the Serving of the needy, in order to bring about transition and transformation.

Every ministry context must begin with its foundation, where transformation and transition are birthed with worship. It is critical that leadership is authentic in leading the ministry through worship as they attempt to encounter the Divine. The backbone of any ministry context is going to be the need to transition and transform their stewardship. To create stewardship, it is paramount that leadership establish an attitude of accountability/faithfulness within the ministry context. Worship and stewardship will only be efficient and effective if the ministry context is built upon cultivating discipleship.

In developing discipleship, it is imperative that leadership transitions from membership and focuses on developing well rounded congregants who have ministry purpose. Therefore, building a transformative ministry context is predicated upon Christian Education. Leadership must understand that discipleship undergirds all the other ministries. When leadership has cultivated the appropriate atmosphere and an attitude around Worship, Stewardship, Discipleship and Christian Education it is better prepared to meet the needs of the wider community. And when dealing with the community leadership must discover what the actual needs are and design and deploy programming that matches those needs. Furthermore, when

leadership has appropriately addressed the ministry areas it cultivates the heart of a ministry context where compassion and love are the building blocks of service.

Those who were interviewed were engaged by using the sociological approach to data collection that lifts the meaning of social events and what they represent to human participants. The contributors brought with them a wealth of experience at The Brook as their membership ranged from 10 years to 56 years. They have all experienced varying styles of ministerial leadership that have produced fluctuating results. The interviews were guided by the combinatorial methods inherent in Seals and Parker's Conceptional Definition of Leadership (a matter of character) and Fluker's triangular model of Ethical Leadership (Self, Social and Spiritual). The participants shared Seals and Parker view of leadership as a call to character and integrity before God, before yourself, before your family, before your team and before your public.<sup>39</sup>

All nine participants individually highlighted these attributes in varying degrees and indicated that leadership should possess: 1) trustworthiness, 2) spirituality, 3) consistency, 4) faithfulness, 5) compassion, 6) responsibility and 7) vision. This lives into Fluker's dimension of the self or the personal. The concern is with the question of identity and purpose (Who am I? What do I want? What do I propose to do and become?).<sup>40</sup> The participants also disclosed a kind of second tier of qualities that leadership should 1) exude humility, 2) don't show favoritism, 3) be powerful, 4) be organized and 5) be passionate. Each of these were listed as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Eugene Seals and Matthew Parker, *Called to Lead* (Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois.1995), 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Walter Fluker. Ethical Leadership (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota. 2009), 34.

admirable characteristics among leaders. The one outlier was that leadership should be "brutally honest." As one participant articulated, "Often-times leadership attempts to safeguard feelings rather than set sheep straight".

Building upon these assertions in the interviews, I then sought to address how leadership is viewed in the ministry context. Participants shared that the leadership is respected and held to a high standard. Leadership is perceived as a collaborative effort not an individual or family enterprise. The expectation is that leadership will influence, instruct, and inspire the ministry context through excellent verbal and non-verbal communication while ensuring transparency. Leadership is viewed as a calling not a job which brings leaders into covenant with those that they lead. Leadership is to be and to set the example for how the ministry context will be run. The interview then shifted into the transitional and transformative events experienced under leadership. This corresponds to Fluker's social or public dimension, involving the relationship with the other (to whom and what am I ultimately accountable?)<sup>41</sup> With regard to the transitional events, there was not a clear consensus around transitional or transformative events. However, two categories, pastoral transition and church growth emerged among four of the nine participants that lived into the other five participants' responses. There are inherent challenges in adapting to pastoral transition and adjusting from a family church to a community church. Both impacted 1) ministry structure, 2) ministry growth, 3) ministry style of worship, 4) ministry perspective, 5) ministry expectations and 6) ministry communication.

There was an overwhelming agreement amongst the nine contributors about the transformative event experienced under leadership at "The Brook", the building of the 2.5-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup>Ibid.,34.

million-dollar worship center in 2016. The participants asserted that the people, the plan, and the process was transformational. They felt this was transformational for the ministry context not just because of the product that was produced but because the leadership team was clear, concise, consistent, and courageous in fulfilling what had been shared by the members during a listening party where the vision for the building project was unveiled to the ministry in July of 2013.

The interviews also addressed the specific roles that leadership played in these two highlighted events. In the building of the church there was a consensus around 1) visioning, 2) planning, 3) designing, 4) financial oversight and 5) timeline of completion. Leadership was efficient and effective in laying out the vision, the plan, and the design of the entire building process. Leadership was transparent from the beginning, from the groundbreaking in September of 2015 to the first service held in the worship center in October of 2016. Leadership under the direction of the Spirit of the Living God in concert with the faithfulness of the people of God were able to produce a transformative moment in the lives of the people of The Brook.

The other transformative event that was shared with consensus among all nine participants was the splitting of the ministry in 2000. Brooks United Methodist Church separated into two parts, Healing and Deliverance Ministry and The New Brooks United Methodist Church. Four out of the nine respondents did not leave the ministry while three left with the new ministry and two stopped going to church completely. The discord and the displacement that resulted from this event transitioned those who stayed to wrestle in real time, recalls Fluker's dimensions of Self (identity and purpose) and the Social (relation with others). Those who stayed grappled with who they were as a ministry, what they would become as a ministry context and what modifications needed to be made to ensure that they would be transformed as a ministry context. The interviewees consensus around the role that leadership played in the splitting of the ministry was 1) secrecy. Leadership, according to the participants did not share the plans or designs with the overall ministry in advance. As one interviewee stated, "one day we were United Methodists and the next day we were a Non-Denominational Ministry." The interview participants indicated that there was little to no notice given about the meeting where the vote was taken to leave the denomination which resulted in the splitting of the church. Leadership was the sole actor in this process and the lack of transparency clearly has colored the lenses of the ministry context.

The interviewer then sought to tie all this information up in a culminating and defining ministry moment and the participants were clear in stating the fact that through it all, through all the ups and downs of a tumultuous history, The Brook is still here. This lives into Fluker's third dimension of the triangular model- the spiritual. This dimension addresses the human need for a sense of ultimacy, excellence, and hope in reference to the great mystery of being (Who am I? What do I want? What do I propose to do and become? Who is the other? How am I to respond to the actions of the other on me?<sup>42</sup> The fact that the ministry has come together and pushed past a "surviving mentality" to a "thriving mindset" is a testament to the faithfulness of God, the fortitude of the people, and the focus of capable leadership.

The defining moment for this ministry was and continues to be the church staying together as a family and plotting, planning, and pushing past the past while preparing for the present.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.,34.

Leadership cultivated ministry around the Pentecost concept found in the second chapter of Acts of the Apostles, where the people had everything in common, devoted themselves to teaching/fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayer. Leadership rallied those who decided to stay and rebuilt a ministry that was constructed on the principle of faithfulness to God. This is what will propel the people into the future. Furthermore, several of the participants, five out of nine, highlighted that when the church started functioning with a clear ministry vision and operating out of an organized framework and structure the ministry truly began to expand. As one participant avowed, "when you know who is really in charge, it benefits the ministry as a whole."

### CHAPTER SIX

### THE ROBINSON MODEL OF LEADERSHIP

The model of leadership that is being developed through this project builds upon the rich history of servant leadership in the African American tradition. This is a history that drips with leadership employing both priestly and prophetic functions as embodied in Joshua's leadership of the people of Israel as they are about to enter the promised land. Joshua is a second-generation leader who studied under the visionary Moses and carried the reins of that visionary leadership that was handed down. Joshua's example of leadership builds upon Moses' visionary leadership and stands on the promises of God to never again abandon his chosen people.

In that same fashion the new model of leadership being developed through this research builds upon the character elements of Seals and Parker's conceptual definition of leadership, the ethical model of Fluker and the obedience factor of Joshua to create a model of leadership that is capable of transitioning and transforming a ministry context. The model developed through this research project can be employed by anyone who is willing to be bold and courageous by holding themselves accountable to a biblical standard that is predicated upon God's plan and God's purpose. Character, obedience, and discipline are the key components to this model of effective and efficient leadership, and it requires coming into covenant with one's self, one's social environment and one's spirituality.

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Having been blessed to pastor two congregations over a sixteen-year period, I have experienced, experimented, and enlisted many leadership strategies. And what has been discovered is nothing new but needs to be stated at the beginning of this introduction: each ministry context is unique, and each context requires a distinctive plan of action that is efficient and effective in creating an environment for transition and then prayerful transformation. The Robinson Model of leadership operates from the standpoint that leaders usually do not walk into fixed ministry contexts but rather ministry contexts that need to be fixed. The Robinson Model will be effective at the Brook because leadership is the engine that drives and steers the ministry context.

The Robinson Model lives into and out of the leadership expectations therein, which were shared in both the introduction and resurfaced in the presentation of the information obtained in the interviews. Leadership and leaders are: 1) called by God, 2) the chosen vessels of God and, 3) have heard and sought the voice of God. For the Brook effective leadership inspires people and places a priority on developing disciples. Effective leadership is critical at the Brook and for other ministry contexts as well. In the research literature, effective leadership can be defined as that which is practical in approach, constructive in design, functional in operation and fruitful in return.

The Robinson Model operates from an efficient and effective platform designed to entail four phases: Discernment (the ability to judge well), Development (the process for specified growth), Direction (the ability to manage movement), and Deployment (the ability to bring resources into effective action). Therefore vision, which is the ability to imagine and to implement what things could and should be according to divine direction, is essential to this model of leadership. Vision takes time because it propels leadership to ask the questions: why are we doing this, how are we going to do this and who is going to do this? Furthermore, the cultivation of vision is also painful because it requires leadership to live between what is and what will be. This is an intentional investment as indicated in Proverbs (18 and 29) asserts that "For lack of vision a people lose restraint, But happy is he who heeds instruction." <sup>43</sup> Vision, or the lack thereof, is at the core of any effective and efficient ministry context that hopes to achieve transformation.

#### Phase I: Discernment

The building of vision in the Robinson Model begins in the Discernment phase with the questioning of what spiritual disciplines (the practices being performed to induce spiritual experiences and development) are being employed to ensure that the proper God encounters are occurring.<sup>44</sup> At the top of the list is an effective prayer life, which is the key component to building leadership's discernment capabilities. Prayer, that which is born out of confidence in God's faithfulness allows leadership to place itself before God so that it can be transformed. Therefore, centering leadership (the placing of oneself before God), allowing leadership to confess (the acknowledging one's deficiency before God) while affording leadership the proper connection (the relationship needed before God).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Jewish Study Bible, (Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 2014),1482.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Henry Cloud. 9 Things a Leader Must Do (Integrity Publishing, Franklin, Tennessee. 2006), 37.

Effective and efficient vision requires an investment in the presences, the plan, and the people of God. Vision must be bigger than a project because projects end as soon as you announce their completion date. Vision must become the ministry's passion; all ministry provided to the community should flow out of vision established. It is critical that leadership articulate this perspective clearly because vision should become a ministry rallying point that ensures focus and faithfulness amid uncertainty. Vision as I have discerned from both the research and the interviews undertaken in this research project is the key component to which the Robinson Model is built upon.

Essential to the Robinson Model is having a keen sense about who you are as a person with regard to your identity and purpose and what you bring to the table as one called (picked out by preference) to leadership. The underlying, determining characteristics of one's identity is a critical component in leadership because regardless of models or tactics leadership seeks to employ, who they are at their core will always surface. Leadership must employ the David thesis, of being yourself as presented in first Samuel 17:38-40 in which, "Saul clothed David in his own garment; he placed a bronze helmet on his head and fastened a breastplate on him. David girded his sword over his garment. Then he tried to walk; but he was not used to it. So, David took them off. He took his stick, picked a few smooth stones from the wadi, put them in the pocket of his shepherd's bag and sling in his hand, he went towards the Philistine."<sup>45</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Jewish Study Bible, (Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 2014),580.

Leadership must be extremely clear about who it is, what it possesses and who it is not, because the powers that be will attempt to array you in all types of tailored garments.

Only operating as your authentic self will produce what God has anointed, appointed, and authorized a leader to do. Critical to effective and efficient leadership especially within the Robinson Model is an awareness of identity.

#### Phase II: Development

In the Development phase, the Robinson Model seeks to cultivate an awareness around the processes that will be employed to ensure the commitment of leadership. In this stage leadership seeks to bring the ministry into a covenantal relationship where there is not only transparency but accountability. Leadership connects the ministry context with the ministry's calling, thereby building upon the three vision questions: Why are we doing this, how are we going to do this and who is going to do this? During the Development phase, leadership designs the steps that must be implemented and followed to propel people into that covenantal relationship of accountability. Hence the creation of both a ministry covenant agreement and ministry covenant contract<sup>46</sup>. Leadership, in this phase becomes accountable to God, to their counterparts, to their team and to the ministry context itself. They were designed based upon the mission and vision of the ministry.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> The ministry covenant agreement and the ministry covenant contract are located within the appendices, number 2 and 3.

The theology behind both the covenant agreement and the covenant contract is to create an intentional commitment among the ministry not just the appointed leaders that requires everyone connected to the Brook to become invested in the mission and vision of the ministry. These tools help establish a community that holds each other accountable for the well-being and overall health of the ministry. The covenants and contracts are binding agreements publicly before the ministry and privately on paper before God and the pastor.

#### Phase III: Direction

The direction phase of this model is where leadership must have clearly defined management capabilities. For a leader or group of leaders to motivate and guide a congregation, I have formulated an approach called the "Five Robinson Principles of Leadership."

- 1. Listening
- 2. Learning
- 3. Loving
- 4. Liberating
- 5. Launching

The Robinson Model of Leadership is predicated upon Listening, it is not about the leader, it is about God and the people of God. The leadership model is grounded in Learning, understanding how energy, power, and resources flow in a specific ministry context. The model is centered in Loving, which is to be lasting, open, vast, and emphatic while availing oneself to the ministry context in service to the ministry context. The intention of this leadership model is rooted in Liberating the ministry by ridding it of ineffective modes and models of leadership. The final principle in this phase of the Robinson Model is predicated upon Launching, casting effective mission and efficient vision.

### Phase IV: Deployment

The deployment phase addresses the implementation of resources which builds upon the three prior phases of Discernment (the ability to judge well), Development (the process for specified growth), and Direction (the ability to manage movement). In this phase leadership must effectively and efficiently activate the vision that has been cast ensuring that it lives out of the ministry context and community. Leadership in this stage at every step of resource implementation (whether it be people, plans, protocols, or provisions) must engage in critical evaluation. Leadership should be evaluating whether the appropriate methods are being deployed to ensure that effective and efficient transformation and transition is occurring. Furthermore, leadership must be amenable and adaptable to the changing ministerial landscape to be both effective and efficient.

After leadership has progressed through the four phases The Robinson Model operates upon: Discernment (the ability to judge well), Development (the process for specified growth), Direction (the ability to manage movement), and Deployment (the ability to bring resources into effective action). The Robinson Model unveils "The S.H.I.F.T." as a means of providing a framework upon which transitional and transformational leadership can center (ground/base) itself. THE S.H.I.F.T

- 1. S- Servanthood (create an atmosphere predicated upon serving)
- 2. H-Humility (courageously affirm others)
- 3. I-Intentionality (cautiously create a hospitable environment)
- 4. F-Forward Thinking (constantly have an ear towards the future)
- 5. T- Training (continually be open to instruction and direction)

The S.H.I.F.T. requires ministries to live between the "what is" and the "what will be." In order to do this leadership must employ a model that allows the leadership team and ministries to be courageous (not deterred), caring (displaying concern), creative (involving imagination), calculating (determined reasoning), cultivating (developing for use) and crop yielding (generating product).

#### CHAPTER SEVEN

## CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

As I reflect upon what I have learned through the material contained within this research, I am encouraged and excited about what is unfolding in the ministry that I have been blessed with the privilege to lead. Conducting and concluding this research project produced seven leadership essentials that will prayerfully lead to ethical, effective, and efficient leadership. It is imperative that leadership: 1) Excavate, 2) Extract, 3) Evaluate, 4) Earn, 5) Embrace, 6) Execute, and 7) Do not Exaggerate. Leadership must excavate, dig deep unearthing what lies beneath movements and motivations within the ministry context. Then leadership must extract, wrestle with, and remove those programs, protocols, and people which are infecting the ministry context. Next leadership must evaluate, assess process gauging both ministry context and those who minister including themselves. Propelling leadership to dismiss and eject superman/superwoman/super-people, "I" people and programs (known as pet projects) from the ministry context. Leading a leadership team to not make ministry decisions based upon people's reactions. Ministry decisions are predicated upon God's direction. Allowing leadership to earn, gain and receive the right to lead within the ministry context. Therefore, moving leadership to embrace, accept and adopt a team mentality. Prodding leadership to execute, implement and employ an approach that cultivates an environment of betterment. Ensuring that leadership eliminates the need to exaggerate, embellish and enhance one's stature within the ministry context because each role is imperative to the overall well-being of the ministry.

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Through the research compiled within this project these seven essentials are critical to leadership to generate transition and transformation within a ministry context.

As I reflect upon the research completed, the interviews performed, and the leadership model created in this transitional and transformational season. Where the world is experiencing an unpresented pandemic and social upheaval wherein there is an attempt to end racial inequality. The leadership of the church must add its prophetic proclamation to this present moment. Because the world is yearning for effective and efficient leadership that is not only transitional but transformational. Leadership that is visionary will be the key because as indicated in Joshua 3:4, "since you have never been this way before".<sup>47</sup> Leadership that can imagine a world never before seen, has the power and vision to inspire an economically diverse population to implement radical social changes that respond to some of America's most persistent and related problems: racism and economic inequality. This requires leadership that understands the shifting landscape and is not sheltered in its social silos. 2020 and beyond is begging for a Pentecost moment, a new birth where the Spirit fills us with the power that is present at both the resurrection and the accession of Jesus Christ.

As the world is experiencing a ministry moment, the church, the body of believers are being presented with an opportunity to help birth a new crop of courageous leaders both within and outside its walls.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Jewish Study Bible, (Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 2014),443.

This moment requires leadership that the Robinson Model asserts is courageous (not deterred), caring (displaying concern), creative (involving imagination), calculating (determined reasoning), cultivating (developing for use) and crop yielding (generating product). The church itself has not been exempt from experiencing this moment because the upheaval and the unpresented nature of this pandemic and social unrest have closed the church's doors and propelled the church to reimagine itself.

The rules, the routines and the rituals have interrupted and the church, it is congregation and its clergy have rediscovered and have been reminded of its true origins once again. The church community is not a building but rather it is the fellowship of believers who come together and do the will of God (spreading the good news) in the earthly realm. The church after decades of doing the same thing over and over has had to innovate immediately to continue to inspire and impact lives. This requires visionary leadership to meet the moment and the platform that the Robinson Model is built upon discernment (the ability to judge well), development (the process for specified growth), direction (the ability to manage movement), and deployment (the ability to bring resources into effective action) will be useful for meeting this moment.

### **Educational Application**

The Robinson Model offers new perspectives for leaders building upon its primary pillars of Discernment (the ability to judge well), Development (the process for specified growth), Direction (the ability to manage movement), and Deployment (the ability to bring resources into effective action). It allows for the cultivation of effective and efficient vision and the ability to imagine and to implement what things could and should be according to divine direction. The Robinson Model builds upon the character elements of Seals and Parker's conceptual definition of leadership, the ethical model of Fluker and the obedience factor of Joshua to create a model of leadership that is capable of transitioning and transforming a ministry context.

In an educational setting, student leaders can examine the ways in which the Robinson Model along with Fluker, Seals and Parker can be used to cultivate an effective an efficient platform for prophetic leadership. These models attempt to propel student leaders to unearth the underlying hinderances that impede efficient and effective ministry through intentional self-reflection, corporate covenants, and missional mindsets. The Robinson Model employs a combination of coaching and visionary leadership styles. Leaders using the coaching style guickly recognize team members' strengths, weaknesses and motivations and work with team members to implement smart goals. Visionary leaders have the powerful ability to drive progress and usher in periods of change by inspiring and earning trust through new ideas. The Robinson Model effectively utilizes both of these leadership approaches in its first three phases, Discernment, Development and Direction. The fourth phase, Deployment, is an integration of the revelation obtained from the first three phases of the model. The Robinson Model through its four phases seeks to address both the mental and social concerns that leaders must tackle. When taught in an educational setting, the Robinson Model can be used to teach students how to move an organization from transition to transformation. In addition, student leaders can learn to identify their own unique gifts and the importance of coming into covenant relationship with the community or organization they are seeking to lead. By employing the

Robinson Model in educational settings, student leaders can learn to engage, encounter, and employ vision that connects the mundane with the miraculous.

Ministry Implementation

The implementation of The Robinson Model in ministry contexts will lead to 1) an awareness of self-identity. The necessity of centering, confessing, confirming, and connecting one's self to visionary leadership. 2) an awareness of accountability. The prerequisite of establishing leadership to commit to a covenantal relationship with the community it seeks to transition and transform. 3) an awareness of approach. The requirement of leadership to intentional live, to purse a lifestyle of leadership that is predicated upon these five attributes a) Listening, b) Learning, c) Loving, d) Liberating and e) Launching. 4) an awareness of activation. The obligation of leadership to move from the theoretical to the practical.

In my ministry context, during this time, we employed The Robinson's Model S.H.I.F.T. (Servanthood, Humility, Intentionality, Forward Thinking and Training). Allowing leadership to cultivate an atmosphere predicated upon serving courageously while affirming others cautiously. Creating a hospitable digital environment that constantly had an ear towards the future while continually be open to instruction and direction. This afforded us with the ability to

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discern the ministry needs by asking the paramount questions: How will we keep the ministry connected? How do we become more interactive and hospitable, without being pushy online? What does ministry look like totally online and are the proper technologies and people in place to meet the needs of our ministry context?

We then sought to develop a programmatic schedule of ministerial offerings that spoke to our ministry context and that addressed both demographics (low/high tech savvy individuals) within our ministry context. Transitioning us into the directing phase where we addressed, created, implemented, and employed effective communication to ensure the ministry context was plug into all the avenues of information that was available. Propelling us in the deployment stage to reposition resources (people, paper, and purpose) as we engaged a larger ministry context reach. Ensuring that the ministry is living into its mission of "Equipping, Encouraging, Empowering and "E" mpacting disciples for Jesus Christ."

2020 has been a transitional and transformative moment that has allowed this research project to transition from a theoretical premise into practical application. What has been researched has been put into actual use and has been evaluated at every step of instruction and implementation allowing for real time adaptation. The research on leadership and the new model rendered herein has proven to be efficient and effective and is capable of transitioning and transforming a ministry context.

### **APPENDIX 1**

## BROOKS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTRY TIMELINE

1961

-leadership allows financially solvent families to run the ministry
-leadership allows the ministry to grow into segments

1964

-leadership brings to fruition ministry plans to build a church

-leadership expectations begin to be modeled for the ministry

1968

-leadership leads the ministry to the completion of the building project

-leadership and ministry become stable (33-year tenure ensues)

-leadership is community oriented

1969 - 1970

-leadership and ministry disagree on joining the United Methodist Church

-Brooks becomes a United Methodist Ministry

-leadership leads ministry through growth

1980

-leadership leads congregation in the burning of the mortgage of the church

-leadership leads the ministry to build a new parsonage

-leadership and ministry are stable

## 1994

-leadership is in transition

-leadership takes on a new form (dictatorship)

-leadership becomes secretive

### 1995-1999

-leadership leads the ministry through explosive growth

-leadership begins to shift the ministry into a Pentecostal style of worship

-leadership becomes more important than ministry

# 2000

-leadership splits the ministry into two parts

-the two ministries worship separately

-the two ministries go through litigation

-the United Methodist Church and the newly formed ministry settle in court

### 2001-2004

-United Methodist Church appoints new leadership

-leadership renames ministry (The New Brooks United Methodist Church)

-leadership begins to reconstruct the ministry

## 2004-2005

-new leadership is assigned (history made first female pastor in churches history)

-leadership creates new worship (Hour of power)

-leadership leads in the creation of multimedia ministry

-leadership creates new worship ministry (Gospel choir)

-leadership leads ministry to begin construction on the new addition to building
-Leadership hires new ministry staff (Youth pastor)
-Leadership leads ministry through explosive youth ministry growth
-Leadership developments new youth ministries (Dance, Step and Mime)
-Leadership lead the music ministry in the recording of and album
2009 - 2010

-new leadership is assigned

-leadership establishes the ministries mission, vision, and slogan
-leadership leads in modernizing the ministry (creation of website and Facebook page)
-leadership implements new Bible Studies and new Wednesday Night Service
-leadership creates a church logo, T-shirt, and letterhead
-leadership leads the ministry through reorganization (creating operational protocols)
-leadership creates and host leadership conferences to empower and equip the ministry
-leadership creates "The Kingdom Agenda" to resolve the church debt in 18 months
-leadership leads the ministry out of debt in ten months

-leadership leads the ministry through property upgrades (roof/paving of parking lot) 2011 -2012

-leadership begins to lead the church through tremendous growth -leadership transition over 50% of the ministry to the stewardship of tithing -leadership is stable and implements children's church (Kids in Divine Study) -leadership leads ministry to renovate the lower level of church including the kitchen -leadership leads ministry to totally upgrades churches communication capabilities
-leadership expands technology (new social media outlets & live streaming capabilities)
-leadership creates several new ministries (Hospitality/Reach Out & Touch)
-leadership leads ministry to burn the church mortgage
-leadership sends two members to the Dominic Republic on Mission Trips fully funded

-leadership continues to lead the church through tremendous growth
-leadership unveils the vision to build The Worship Center
-leadership send one member to Kenya on a Mission trip fully funded
-leadership builds two mission houses in the Dominic Republic
-leadership creates The Love Movement (centers the ministry in loving one another)
-leadership implements The Nehemiah Movement (stewardship campaign)
-leadership begins to transition the church from family to community church
-leadership breaks ground on construction of The Worship Center

## 2016-present

-leadership celebrates with the congregation the completion/opening of "TWC"
-leadership begins to expand the ministries outreach from local to international
-leadership continues to invest in ministry mission (creation of Random Acts)
-leadership celebrates uniting with over two-hundred and seventy- three disciples
-leadership prepares the ministry for the denominational split of the UMC
-leadership provides vision for total online ministry because of the pandemic

-leadership creates new worship format for online ministry

- -leadership implements weekly program scheduling during the pandemic
- -leadership creates Miracle Monday, Prayer-line Wednesday, and Thoughtful Thursday
- -leadership implements a google hangout space for video meeting and virtual fellowship
- -leadership ensures that all methods of giving are available digitally
- -leadership puts in place a Return to Campus Plan that includes tracking and tracing

# **APPENDIX 2**

# Brooks Church Covenant Agreement

Follow me as I follow Christ - this day I come into agreement with my brother & with my sister as a part of The Brooks Church Family

Standing on the promises of God & walking in the prophetic word that powers this ministry

I will fully participate in all that this ministry is led to do under the Spirit's guidance- Pastor Robinson leadership & the ministry team's direction

Today I offer myself - my talents - my time & my treasures to you God for the building of your kingdom!

Today I come into covenant with you before my brother & my sister as I light this candle in Jesus name - Amen!!!

# **APPENDIX 3**

# Brooks Church Leaders Covenant Contract - 2020 & Beyond

"Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits - who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle". – Psalms 103: 1-5

- I. Commitment
- A) Pray for the Ministry
- B) Participate in the Ministry
- C) Praise the Ministry
- II. Challenges Come A.L.I.V.E. @ The Brook
- A) A Awake (stir up the Spirit of the Living God within the ministry you are a part of)
- B) L Lift (exalt the name of our Lord and Savior in the ministry you are a part of)
- C) I Ignite (be provoked and excited by the ministry you are a part of)
- D) V Value (regard the people and the ministry that you are a part of)
- E) Empower (give the authority to the persons in the ministry that you are part of)

# III. Communication

- A) Leaders will be expected to let the Pastor or Churches Administrative Aide know when they will not be present for worship, meetings, and bible study.
- B) Leaders are expected to attend at least one training event or leadership conference a year.
- C) Leaders will be expected to come up with and develop, in association with the Pastor, new ideas for church growth and overall wellness of church membership
- D) Leaders will be expected to give of their time, talent, and treasure.

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