

## Leading in a Liminal Season

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Dr. Susan Beaumont + Bethany Resources + Eastertide '20

We dwell these days between the 'no more' and the 'not yet'...we stand at the threshold of "used to be" and "maybe gonna be (soon we hope)" We reach for resources— practical and prayerful help. Susan Beaumont's full title tells it all—"*How to Lead when you don't Know where you're Going- Leading in a Liminal Season.*"

While waiting for the COVID all-clear, we pastors pray to lead with Presence as we both tend the soul of the institution, and discern what God is up to within and amongst us. This invites us to tell our story in a way that helps clarify our purpose while we lean into the emergence of our next NEXT steps. Good work to do as we nourish our own spirits and care for the souls around us.

We've all read tedious tomes on organizational development and met tons of church consultants w/ one good idea and several not-so-much. What is fresh about Beaumont is the unique blend of solid, sensible Alban Institute type analysis with a heart tuned to the graces of ancient spiritual practices. Her sensitivity to the art of Spiritual Direction and honed skills of discernment are clearly trained into this small volume well worth \$28.

Torn loose from the comfort of our church routines and rituals, we are learning afresh to sift the wheat of essential organic function from the chaff of distraction and institutional busy work. As we scramble to assemble 'tech smart' services offered as a means of grace, we're also inquiring: where does all this lead? Can I again lead others to green pastures and still waters?

In other words: what's it going to take to: a) survive? b) thrive?

Much of what we face is beyond rational, predictive management techniques. More than ever, leadership is all about 'showing up.' Susan's preface on p. ix and p.x lays out a path of practice. No nifty formula. No easy-peasy answers. No cut and paste. Just a path.... but here's the thing: you know in your deepest soul what a thriving congregation looks like, smells like, acts like, laughs like, loves like. You led there once and will again. The gifts and graces that sustained you then are yours again.

Say your prayers, get some Scripture in you, pray with friends who hold your soul, read and re-read Beaumont, and as Parker Palmer would say: "the mystery moves our bones, and Way opens."