



St. Stephen's in-the-Field
Episcopal Church & Preschool



Changing the Conversation

A Book Study for Transition

Changing the Conversation Chapter Two

And yet ... It is About You

- We did not create the cultural shifts that have occurred that changed the landscape of our society. Therefore, it is not about us.
- However, it is about how we respond to the shifts in culture and religion in our time. ... it is about us! (p 37)
- How do we respond? How do we answer the God who is at work in the midst of these enormous changes. (p 38)

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And yet ... It is About You

- Acts 2:12 – All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"
- Acts 2:37 – 38 – Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers," what should we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- God is doing something new, "What does this mean?"
– "What do we do?" – "How do we respond?"

Transition into the Future - © David Starr, 2015

Changing the Conversation Chapter Two

And yet ... It is About You

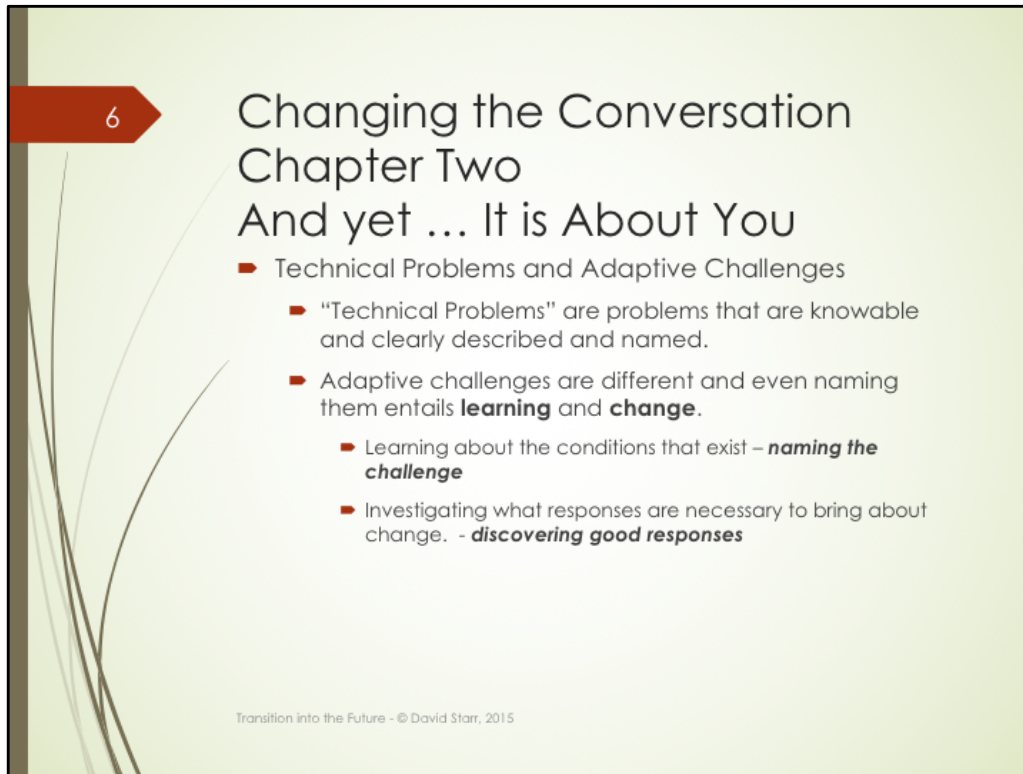
- Moving forward productively – How do we answer God in our own time and in our own congregations.
 - Stuck Conversations
 - Technical Problems – Adaptive Challenges
 - Grief Work to be done
 - Creating a sense of urgency

Changing the Conversation

Chapter Two

And yet ... It is About You

- Stuck Conversations
 - The blame game
 - Defining ourselves over and against others
 - The search for the silver bullet
 - "If only ... "



Discovering what good responses are may mean **moving beyond the techniques, strategies, and concepts we already know and have at our disposal to learn new ones**. Finally, and this is crucial, who does the work when it is an adaptive challenge with which we are dealing? Not experts or authorities. **They may have some role, but in the end the work must be done by those who have the problem, those who are facing the challenge**. In other words, we cannot offload responsibility for learning to be the church in new ways in our new time onto clergy or seminaries or lay leaders or denominational staffs. This adaptive work requires the engagement of the church, of congregations, of all God's people.

Robinson, Anthony B. (2008-10-16). *Changing the Conversation: A Third Way for Congregations* (p. 48). Eerdmans Publishing Co - A. Kindle Edition.

There is one more facet of the technical/adaptive distinction that is worth noting. Adaptive work, or "engaging adaptive challenges," to use Heifetz's language, is **intrinsically spiritual work**. It is spiritual work precisely **because it is about changing lives, about changing and transforming human hearts, minds, and communities**. This point can be deepened by returning to the threefold sequence of adaptive work: **naming and framing the challenge, discovering and learning forms of response, and then engaging in and doing the work by the people who have the problem or challenge**.

Robinson, Anthony B. (2008-10-16). *Changing the Conversation: A Third Way for Congregations* (p. 50). Eerdmans Publishing Co - A. Kindle Edition.

Changing the Conversation

Chapter Two

And yet ... It is About You

- Grief work to be done
 - Loss of Christendom
 - Loss of Ken
 - Changes in the community and world

Changing the Conversation

Chapter Two

And yet ... It is About You

- Sense of Urgency
 - Describing the situation
 - Feeling the pinch of reality
 - Empowering leadership from below or outside
 - Appreciative Inquiry
 - Changing the story we tell about ourselves
 - Urgency comes from the Gospel itself

Changing the Conversation Chapter Two

And yet ... It is About You

- Sit at tables with people you know less than others
- This is a conversation not a debate
- Speak out of your experience – use "I" statements
- Give everyone the opportunity to speak
- Remember we all have made the promise to respect the dignity of all of God's children.

Changing the Conversation Chapter Two

And yet ... It is About You

- Table Conversations
 - What are some of the technical problems we face here at St. Stephen's?
 - What is one Adaptive Challenge we face here at St. Stephen's?
 - Pages 54 to 59 name six ideas for developing a sense of urgency, which seems most urgent to pueblo situation here at St. Stephen's. Why?