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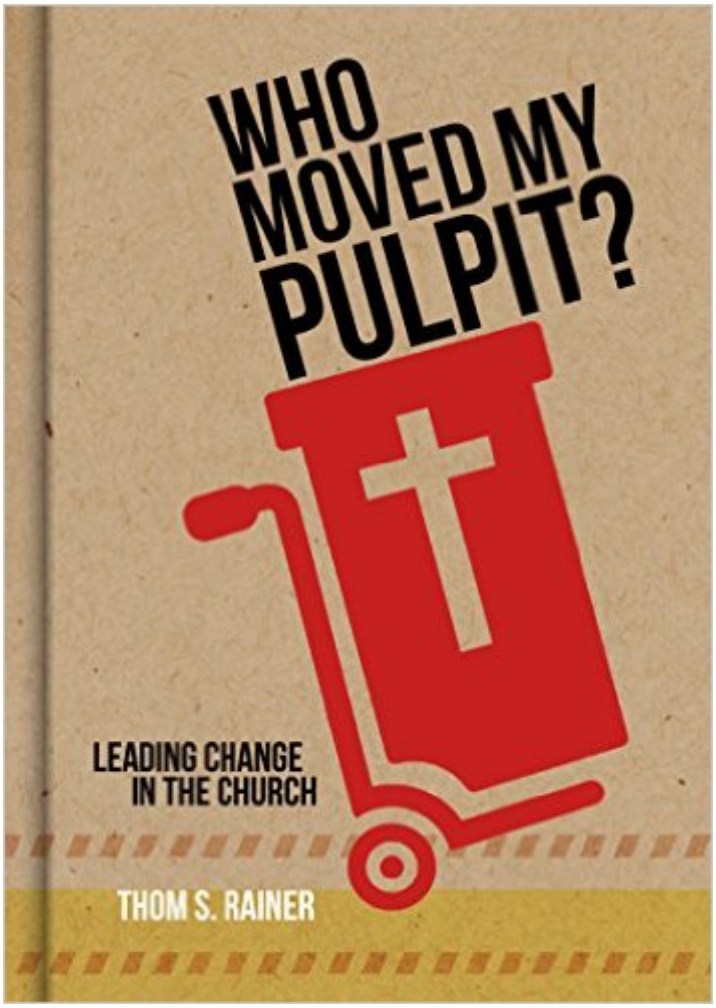
Who Moved My Pulpit?: Leading Change In The Church



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Synopsis

Who Moved MyÂ Pulpit?Â mayÂ not be the exact question youâ ™re asking. But youâ ™re certainly asking questions about change in the churchâ ”where itâ ™s coming from, why itâ ™s happening, and how youâ ™re supposed to hang on and follow God through itâ ”even get out ahead of itÂ so your church is faithfully meeting its timeless callingÂ and servingÂ the new opportunities of this age. Â Based on conversations with thousands of pastors, combined with on-the-ground research from more than 50,000 churches, best-selling author Thom S. Rainer shares an eight-stage roadmap to leading change in your church. Not by changing doctrine. Not by changing biblical foundations. But by changing methodologies and approaches for reaching a rapidly changing culture. Â You are the pastor. You are the church staff person. You are an elder. You are a deacon. You are a key lay leader in the church.Â This is the book that will equip you to celebrate and lead change no matter the cost.Â Â The time is now.

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Customer Reviews

Who Moved My Pulpit is the latest offering from Thom Rainer, President and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. This book follows the same practical and easily read format as Dr. RainerÃ¢Â Â™s last four books to churches Ã¢Â Â“ Autopsy of a Deceased Church, I Am a Church Member, and I Will.Motivated by an email he received from a frustrated pastor asking for help in learning how to lead his church through some much-needed change, Dr. Rainer tackles the issue by offering church leaders a pathway of hope through the necessary changes needed in most

churches.Dr. RainerÃ¢Â Â™s approach, as he readily admits, is not a Ã¢Â Âœplug-and-playÃ¢Â Â• program that a church leader can use that will guarantee results, but rather a Biblically based process that is at once theological, ecclesiological, and foremost practical. The title emerges from an event in the ministry of a midwestern pastor who, in trying to make the church more relevant to a growing millennial presence, replaced the pulpit which had stood on the platform of his church for decades and replaced it with a smaller, more modern version. The move, thought insignificant by the pastor, turned out to be more than the church was prepared to handle.In consultation with the pastor, Dr. Rainer and his team developed an eight-step Ã¢Â Âœroadmap Ã¢Â Â• that will enable a church leader to better navigate through the dangerous journey of necessary church change.Dr. Rainer suggests that no successful change will endure that was not birthed from a time of serious prayer on the part of the leader, and that the leader find someone else to join with him in prayer. Drawing from the example of Nehemiah, he suggests the leader pray for wisdom, courage, and strength. Ã¢Â Âœ I have never seen successful and sustaining change take place in a church without prayer.Ã¢Â Â• (p. 36)The second phase of the roadmap is to confront and communicate the reality with a sense of urgency. Dr. Rainer encourages church leaders to take a look at three important statistics Ã¢Â Â“ average worship attendance, baptisms, and average attendance in small groups. Those three indicators will paint a picture of the rise or decline of the church more than any other statistics. He also suggests the church leader ask Ã¢Â Âœoutside eyes Ã¢Â Â• to visit and evaluate the facilities and worship services. Those outside eyes will more impartially see what those who are at the church on a regular basis would otherwise miss. Then, he suggests the leader communicate urgently the reality of the church Ã¢Â Â™s condition and direction.Building an eager coalition is the vital third phase. The leader cannot affect change alone, but a coalition of other leaders who sense the problem and its urgency can more effectively motivate the church to move forward. Dr. Rainer outlines five important qualities needed in the members of the coalition: chemistry, position, influence, expertise, and leadership.The fourth phase is to become a voice for vision and hope. Ã¢Â Âœ A healthy church has a hopeful and visionary pastor.Ã¢Â Â• (p. 67) In this chapter Dr. Rainer encourages the leader to communicate a positive and hopeful vision for the church. A guiding vision is the goal for which the church aims, and the strategic vision is the specific plan for a specific time.Then the leader should expect opposition and prepare to deal with people issues lovingly, but quickly. In this chapter, Dr. Rainer shares the percentages of people who ordinarily are ready for change as opposed to the majority who are either waiting to see which way the church goes before adopting change or those who are resistant to change of any kind.In what is a major theme in all of Dr. RainerÃ¢Â Â™s writing and teaching, the sixth phase involves the

necessary process of moving the church from an inward to an outward focus. He suggests leaders help churches incrementally move through changes in the mindset of the leader as well as the budgetary priorities of the church.The seventh phase is another prominent theme in Dr. RainerÃ¢Â Â™s teaching, picking Ã¢Â Âœlow-hangingÃ¢Â Â• fruit. By low-hanging fruit, Dr. Rainer suggests looking for early, easily achievable wins that help engender confidence and build momentum.The last stage is to implement and consolidate the change. Dr. Rainer challenges the leader to never let urgency wane or complacency set it, but to constantly communicate the need to always move forward. He reminds the leader that change is not complete until the changes are not longer spoken of as changes but as Ã¢Â Âœthe norm.Ã¢Â Â•Who Moved My Pulpit is an encouraging and helpful book for any pastor or church leader who finds himself leading a church that must change or face death. Each chapter includes real-life stories that help the reader place the information in a usable context. Dr. Rainer includes with each phase the guidance and advice leaders need to move their churches through the eight phases.I highly recommend the book to all church leaders, and especially to those leaders who feel overwhelmed and unprepared to lead the church to higher ground.

While Who Moved My Pulpit is small book it will have a BIG IMPACT in the way you lead change at your church. It is a nice little hardback and is 143 pages when you include the Church Change Readiness Inventory in the appendix of the book. It would be a great read for leaders at all levels in the church and would be a valuable tool to use with a group of leaders. There are thought provoking questions and exercises at the end of each chapter that will no doubt lead to much needed conversations about change in your church. The best thing about this book is that it not only accurately identifies the key problems in leading change, it offers the solutions as well. By providing a clear road map for leading change it will give you the both the clarity and confidence you need to move forward.

If you are a pastor or church leader you need to get this book. Thom Rainer in Who Moved My Pulpit? lays out clearly the pitfalls, the purpose, and preparation needed for leading change in the local church.Having done various short term mission trips to assist different churches during my time in college I have seen first hand that there are churches heading towards decline all across America because of an inability to change. There are churches I have preached in as a summer missionary that no longer exist for that very reason.Dr. Rainer begins the book by looking at a pastor who implemented a change poorly in his church which led to a great amount of conflict, he

follows this up by providing a glimpse at the human barriers to change in the church. Chapters 3 and 4 are really the fulcrum of the book, if we don't begin with prayer we will not know God's will for our churches. People in the churches also need to see the urgency of change, so many church members are blind to the fact that the church they serve and attend is dying. The following chapters layout practical steps needed to bring about change in the local church from building a coalition of the willing to addressing people issues, and re-shifting the focus of the church from inward to outward.If you're a church leader and you're reading this chances are your church is plateaued or declining. While we must never change the message we have, sometimes we must rethink the methods and means we use especially as the community around the local church changes. I fully agree with Dr. Rainer life is short and we must seek to make the greatest difference we can for the church and for the kingdom. Grab this book and learn how to best implement change in your church.Disclosure: I received this book free from from the publisher for providing this review. The opinions I have expressed are my own, and I was not required to write a positive review. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade CommissionÃ¢Â Â™s 16 CFR, Part 255[...]

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