



Tara Beth Leach, author of *Emboldened: A Vision for Empowering Women in Ministry*
Available November 14, 2017
 \$16, 208 pages, paperback
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“Tara Beth has chosen the right word to describe not only women who have gone before us, what God is doing among women today, but also what especially church leaders need to be doing today: embolden the woman as a way of letting the gifts of God be given to the people of God.”

— from the foreword by **Scot McKnight**, Northern Seminary

Senior Pastor Challenges Women and Men to Embolden Their Sisters in Ministry

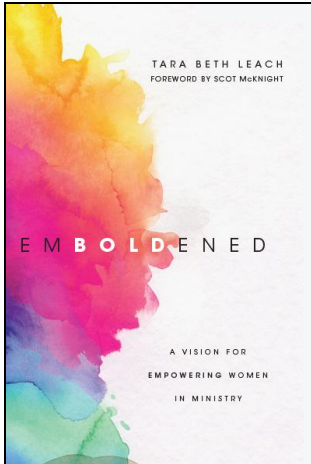
Tara Beth Leach, senior pastor of her denomination’s flagship church, issues a stirring call for a new generation of women in ministry to teach, to preach, to shepherd, and to lead in her book, *Emboldened*. She shows that God not only permits women to minister—he emboldens, empowers, and unleashes women to lead out of the fullness of who they are.

A leading voice in the Nazarene church, Tara can be heard preaching on Sunday mornings at First Church of the Nazarene of Pasadena, also known as PazNaz, as well as speaking at colleges and conferences across the country. She was one of the featured preachers at the 2017 NTS Hugh C. Brenner Preachers Conference and often speaks on the challenges and strengths of including women in ministry.

Tara is a graduate of Olivet Nazarene University (BA, youth ministry) and Northern Theological Seminary (M.Div.). She is a regular writer for *Missio Alliance* and has contributed to other publications such as *Christianity Today*, *Christian Week*, *The Jesus Creed*, *The Table Magazine*, *Reflecting the Image Devotional*, *Renovating Holiness*, and most recently a chapter in *The Apostle Paul and the Christian Life: Ethical and Missional Implications of the New Perspective*, which features other contributors including N.T. Wright, James D.G. Dunn, Scot McKnight, and Bruce Longenecker.

“When I see the evangelical church, I see that women have largely been sidelined,” Tara says. “*Emboldened* is a book for men and women who desire to have a renewed imagination. After reading this book, women will be encouraged and inspired, and men will have a better understanding on how to come alongside of their sisters.”

To connect with Tara, you can find her at her website tarabethleach.com or you can follow her on Twitter: @TaraBeth82.



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“An Important Young Voice that Offers the Church of Jesus a Much Better Vision of the Future”

“With grace and honesty, Tara Beth Leach unpacks her journey of becoming a woman senior pastor in a prominent evangelical church. In doing so, she blazes a trail for us all, both men and women, in empowering women for ministry. Robust in its theology, practical in its wisdom, *Emboldened* tells us why God’s mission demands nothing less of us in these times: women *and* men together leading God’s church.”

– **David Fitch**, Northern Seminary, author of *Faithful Presence*

“A double shot of spiritual espresso to awaken, encourage, and embolden every woman in the kingdom of God.”

– **Frank Viola**, author of *From Eternity to Here* and *God’s Favorite Place on Earth*

“It’s time for the church to expand its imagination to include the strengths that women bring to the table as senior leaders, and Tara Beth Leach helps us do just that in this engaging book. Finally we have a primer for women in pastoral ministry that is both practical and theological. *Emboldened* is unflinching in naming the challenges that keep women sidelined in the church while at the same time inspiring those willing to brave those challenges. This will be the first book I recommend to women considering vocational ministry.”

– **Gail Wallace**, cofounder, The Junia Project

“One day, Lord willing, the American church will look back in disbelief at our failure to see the emboldening of women as essential to living faithfully under the rule and reign of God. This book, however, presents the opportunity to bring us much nearer to that day. I commend it strongly to all, but especially to my fellow brothers in Christ; may we heed this vision as a fresh, kingdom-oriented call to ‘biblical manhood.’”

– **JR Rozko**, codirector, Missio Alliance

“Pastor Tara Beth Leach has produced an inspiring writing to embolden those who are called for ministry. For women called to vocational ministry the pathway is not easy, but Leach reminds us that the call cannot be ignored. This is the mission of God, and in the words of Pastor Tara Beth, ‘I get to do this.’ This book is a vital new resource for the church. It’s for all women who are called to ministry and for those who will embolden others who have been called.”

– **Carla Sunberg**, president, Nazarene Theological Seminary



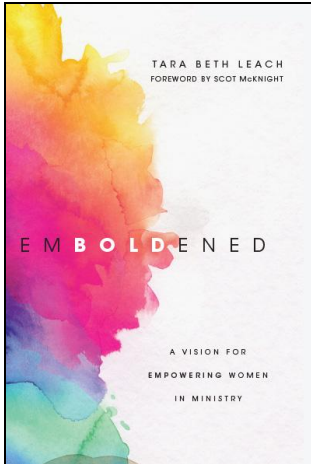
ENDORSEMENTS

“Emboldened is a clarion call of instruction and inspiration to not settle for fifty percent participation, but for the church to engage one hundred percent of its people in the mission. My friend Tara Beth Leach is an important young voice that offers the church of Jesus a much better vision of the future. If you want to be challenged, inspired, or catch a glimpse of the church’s tomorrow, read *Emboldened*.”

– **Dave Ferguson**, visionary leader of NewThing, author of *Finding Your Way Back to God* and *Starting Over*

“Tara Beth has chosen the right word to describe not only women who have gone before us, what God is doing among women today, but also what especially church leaders need to be doing today: embolden the woman as a way of letting the gifts of God be given to the people of God.”

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“Far too many women have been left without wings to soar, pulpits to preach, and churches to serve. It is my prayer that women will read this book and be inspired to use their gifts for the edification of the kingdom and the glory of God, and men will walk away with practical steps on how to embolden women in their midst.”

—Tara Beth Leach, author of *Emboldened*

“I’m in for the long haul, and I want other women to join me.”

On Sunday mornings, I often look around the congregation and wonder how many women sitting in the pews have lost the kingdom imagination for their role in the body of Christ. I sometimes wonder how different the worldwide church would be if all the women in the pews lived into their full potential of using their gifts to edify the body of Christ. How many women have extraordinary gifts of leadership but are held back because only the men in their congregations are given opportunities to lead? How many women have supernatural gifts of preaching and teaching but don’t know it because they have bought into the narrative that men alone preach and teach? How many women have unusual gifts of shepherding but are blind to it because they’ve never observed a woman shepherd?

Not too long ago I came across an infographic for the Church of the Nazarene — a denomination that has affirmed women in ministry since its inception. According to this graph, only 7 percent of its pastors are women. The median worship attendance of a church with a female pastor is thirty-three. When I dug a little more I learned that although 24 percent of newly ordained clergy are women, only 8.2 percent are senior pastors, none are administrative leaders, and 19.3 percent of women are unassigned. Sadly, these statistics reflect the landscape for many women in ministry. In another study through Barna, it was found that women are frustrated by the lack of opportunities in their local church and even believe they are undervalued by their church leaders. As many as 20 percent feel underutilized, and 16 percent feel they are limited by their gender. The study notes that although these seem like small percentages, this actually amounts to millions of women in the United States who feel sidelined in their churches.

After reading these statistics, I wanted to commiserate with some of my sisters in Christ. As I sat at my computer, I could see all of the faces of women who have left the ministry *because it was just too hard*. I could see the faces of women in ministry who have been deeply wounded by the church, those who have given up altogether, or those who, although they have a gift to preach, have no pulpit to preach from, or the ones who no longer see the stress as something worth pressing through.

Since 2004, I have served in both parachurch ministry and pastoral ministry in local churches as a youth pastor, women’s pastor, a teaching pastor, and now a senior pastor. Every Sunday I stand before a congregation that affirms all of me and also emboldens me. They’ve given me a place to lead, teach, preach, and shepherd. I am grateful for every opportunity, review all of my years with great fondness, and look ahead to the future with much excitement. I rejoice when I have the opportunity to share the story of God — the life, teachings, fulfillment, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, my King. I can do nothing but shed

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tears of joy when someone first decides to turn their heart and life to Jesus. I delight when I watch the people within the body of Christ discover the gifts and talents God has given them through the Spirit. I become weak in the knees when someone in our midst begins to read the Bible, saturate in its words, and become a student of the Word.

I desperately love the church. Sometimes I stand in utter disbelief that not only did God call me to teach and preach, but I *actually get to do it*. I am grateful for the men and women who have emboldened me to stand behind the pulpit and teach in a way that only Tara Beth in the Spirit could. I am grateful for congregations who have believed in me and loved me, and I am grateful for a congregation that loves me now.

But also, as a woman who has been in full-time ministry for over a decade, I understand wounds—I know them intimately. There have been days that I too have wanted to give up. There have been moments when the pressure of ministry and the obstacles as a woman are so challenging that I think, *why bother?* With two little boys at home, I often think it would be easier to walk away from the ministry. But I haven't, and I won't. I'm in for the long haul, and I want other women to join me. I want to pull all of the wounded women into one big room and tell them to *keep on preaching on*. I want to tell them to not give up, to come back to the church, to persevere together, and to hold fast to the One who calls us.

And I can see the faces of every little girl, every young seminarian, and every young and aspiring minister. I want to write them a love letter and show them the kingdom vision for women in the body of Christ. I want to offer them words of hope, inspiration, and encouragement so that when they reach bumps in the road, they would know Whose they are and by Whom they've been called.

But I also want to pull into a room all of the male pastors and church leaders who are professing egalitarians. I want to hold a town hall meeting of sorts and give *them* a pep talk, and plainly teach them how to embolden women in ministry and give them a platform to flourish. Far too many women have been left without wings to soar, pulpits to preach, and churches to serve.

It is my prayer that women will read this book and be inspired to use their gifts for the edification of the kingdom and the glory of God, and men will walk away with practical steps on *how* to embolden women in their midst.

— Taken from the introduction