

**Larger Church
Pre-Consultation
Church
Workshop**



PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

West Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church – revised 2013

Core Purpose

To understand how the world around us has changed and what we need to do in order to stay relevant.

Objectives

- Introduce leaders to some of the key principles of outward-focused churches.
 - Engage leaders in the “transformation” of the church toward fulfillment of God’s mission to “make disciples” of Jesus Christ.
 - Review the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations.
 - Understand the key components of the consultation process.
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Ground Rules

- Please turn off or silence your cell phones.
 - Ask questions if you do not understand something.
 - Be engaged by participating openly and honestly.
 - Be respectful of other opinions and open to new ideas and concepts.
 - Understand that the session goes quickly so the facilitator may need to move things along in order to stay on track.
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Culture Shifts

First Culture Shift

- ❖ We have moved from fellowship to social media.
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Second Culture Shift

- ❖ We have moved from an attractional mode to a social media mode.
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Third Culture Shift

- ❖ We are no longer in "Christendom" we now live in a Secular Nation.

Changes In Our World

1950's	Today
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flourishing, growing churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining, dying churches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-parent families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many forms of family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority not questioned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything is questioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denominational Era 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Big-Box" church Era

1968

- Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy assassinated
- Civil Rights Movement
- Role of Women
- Vietnam War
- United Methodist Church established

Today

- Personal Computers / Internet
- The World is Flat
- Social Networking
- Christianity moving south

Systemic Obsolescence

- Systems used in most of our churches were designed in the '50s and '60s
- Our systems are designed to get what they get.
- Need to move from a membership system (caring for our members) to a missionary system (reaching the lost).

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Changes In Our World, Continued

The Way We "Do Church" is Changing

- Attendance
 - From every week to twice a month
- Meetings
 - Used to be times of fellowship
- Committees to Teams
 - New people are more interested in action and not reports

Generational Differences

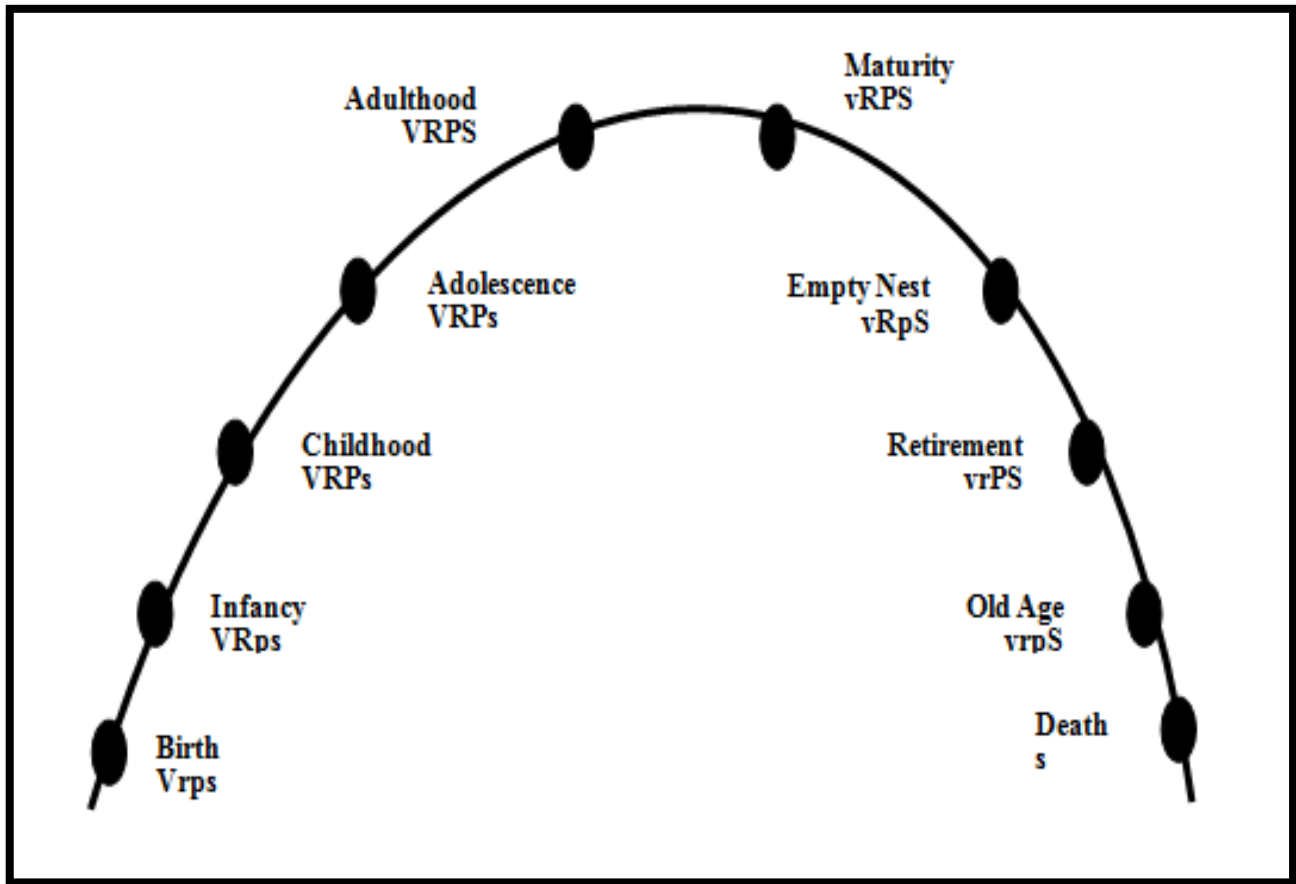
Generation	Born	Music
Builders	1915 – 30	Piano & Organ
Silents	1930 – 45	Electric Organ
Baby Boomers	1945 – 65	Bands
Baby Busters	1965 – 82	Acoustic Guitar
Millenials	1982 – 2000	iPod / hard to define
Generation Z	2000 >	??? / too early to tell

Signs of Hope

1. A renewed love for the Bible.
 - Increased hunger for deeper preaching and teaching.
2. Increasing passion for the nations.
 - Transformational church members are actively involved in reaching nations with the Gospel.
3. A concern for both eternal needs and temporal needs.
 - Transformational churches are focused on both the Great Commission AND the Great Commandment...with fervor.
4. The young and restless Millennial Christians. [born between 1980 and 2000]
 - The largest generation in America's history. (78 million)
 - Only 15% are Christians.
 - Causing shake up in our churches with their Holy Discontentment.
5. A desire for authentic and transparent leaders in our churches.
 - ...a return to godly, biblical leadership.
6. A healthy reevaluation of church and denominational structures.
 - New leaders are not anti-traditional...but want structures that are the best use of God's resources.
7. An increased emphasis on church planting.
 - U.S. currently has one church for every 1,000 people

Source: Dr. Thom Rainer's blog – 2011

Church LifeCycle



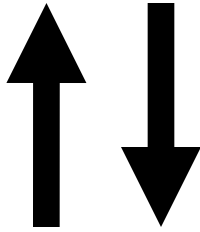
Key Components

- V = Vision Where will we go?
- R = Relationship With whom shall we go?
- P = Program How will we get there?
- S = Structure What form will help us go there effectively?

(Capitalized component is the driving force in the congregation.)

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Church LifeCycle, Continued



There are four key issues that determine where a church is on the lifecycle: Vision, Relationships, Programs, and Structure.

- When **vision** and **relationships** are driving a congregation's agenda the church will be experiencing the upward side of the lifecycle.
 - When **programs** and **structure** are controlling the agenda the church will be on the downward side.
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Vision In the area of vision there are three main elements:

Mission – why a congregation exists; its purpose; the business it is in.

Note: Congregations on the downside do not change until they become OUTWARD focused!

Vision – where the congregation is going; motivation or the heart necessary to make changes to move the congregation from the downward slope upward.

Values – boundaries that guide the congregation; will reflect the way a congregation stays focused (inward or outward).

Relationships The ability for people to develop relationships with others in the church is crucial for **changing** the lifecycle of a congregation.

Large
Mid-size
Small

- People are not looking for friendly congregations, they are looking for a congregation where they can make friends!
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Church LifeCycle, Continued

Programs The purpose of programs in a congregation is to:

- _____
- _____

Our goal through programs should be to convert consumers into committed disciples of Jesus Christ. There is one program that is not assumed culturally from our churches but is demanded for health and growth...._____!

Structure Structure is like a **skeleton in a body**. If it can be seen, then you are in trouble...yet without it you will collapse. Also, in healthy bodies, skeletons grow and develop so the body can grow.

For any congregational structure system to be effective three major things must happen:

1. The leader must be **growing and developing** as a leader while developing more leaders.
 - The growth of any organization is in proportion to the leaders being developed.
 2. Leadership must reflect how work gets done—responsibility, authority, and accountability.
 - **Groups** do not lead and cannot be held accountable, therefore the focus must always be on individuals to lead and be held accountable.
 3. The **Pastor/Leader** must turn the ministry of the congregation over to the **laity** (equip the saints to perform it) and they must turn the leadership of the congregation over to the pastor/leader.
 - Staff members lead their ministries and manage the programs to produce healthy, growing disciples and in turn a healthy, growing congregation.
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Five Practices of a Healthy Congregation

**Bishop
Robert
Schnase**

Acts 2:38 – 47

How's business? How are we doing in each area?

**Radical
Hospitality**

"Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7

Score (1-10)

"Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice Radical Hospitality. Out of genuine love for Christ and for others, their laity and pastors take the initiative to invite, welcome, include, and support newcomers and help them grow in faith as they become part of the Body of Christ. Their members focus on those outside their congregation with as much passion as they attend to the nurture and growth of those who already belong to the family of faith, and they apply their utmost creativity, energy, and effectiveness to the task, exceeding all expectations." page 11

**Passionate
Worship**

"How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD." Psalm 84:1-2

Score (1-10)

"Vibrant, fruitful, growing churches offer Passionate Worship that connects people to God and to one another. People gather consciously as the Body of Christ with eagerness and expectancy; encounter Christ through singing, prayer, Scripture, preaching and Holy Communion; and respond by allowing God's Spirit to shape their lives. Lives shaped by God's Spirit become the nucleus for congregations with extraordinary warmth, graciousness, and belonging. People are searching for worship that is authentic, alive, creative, and comprehensible, where they experience the life-changing presence of God in the presence of others." page 33

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Five Practices of a Healthy Congregation, Continued

Intentional Faith Development

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." Acts 2:42

Score (1-10)

"Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice Intentional Faith Development. From the first generation of Christians to the earliest Methodists to the youngest generations of faithful members today, the followers of Jesus mature in faith by learning together in community. Churches that practice Intentional Faith Development offer high quality learning experiences that help people understand Scripture, faith, and life in the supportive nurture of caring relationships." page 62

Risk-Taking Mission & Service

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Matthew 25:40

Score (1-10)

"Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice Risk-Taking Mission and Service. Risk-Taking Mission and Service includes the projects, the efforts, and work people do to make a positive difference in the lives of others for the purposes of Christ, whether or not they will ever be part of the community of faith."

"Risk-Taking Mission and Service is one of the fundamental activities of church life that is so critical that failure to practice it in some form results in a deterioration of the church's vitality and ability to make disciples of Jesus Christ." page 83

Extravagant Generosity

"You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity." 2 Corinthians 9:11

Score (1-10)

"Scripture is replete with examples and teachings that focus on possessions, wealth, giving, gifts, generosity, offerings, charity, sacrifice, and sharing with those in need. Giving is central to Jewish and Christian practice because people perceive God as extravagantly generous, the giver of every good gift, the source of life and love. People give because they serve a giving God." pages 108-109

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Five Practices of a Healthy Congregation, Continued

Growing, Healthy Churches...

- Externally focused with good deeds and the Good News linked together
 - See themselves as vital to the health & well being of their communities
 - Believe Christians grow best by serving & giving themselves away to those in need
 - Are evangelistically centered & believe in authentic following of Jesus Christ
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Consultation Event

- Friday
 - interviews
 - non-leader focus group
 - Saturday
 - leader focus group
 - workshop
 - *Invite everyone invested in the congregation's future*
 - Consultation team writes report
 - Sunday
 - Worship
 - Reading of the consultation report
 - 5 areas of strength,
 - 5 areas of concerns,
 - 5 prescriptions to address concerns.
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