



Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Church Council Training Events

WELCOME!!!

Sunday, Feb. 15, 2009

Redeemer Lutheran Church

Sunday, Feb. 22, 2009

First Lutheran Church



Some Core Biblical Imaging of the Church

- **People of God** – “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people.” (1 Pet.2:9)
- **Body of Christ** – “For as in one body we have many members, and not all have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” (Romans 12:4-5)
- **Communion of Saints** – “God is faithful, by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor. 1:9)

Ninety-six images and analogies are used in the New Testament refer to the nature of the church (according to Images of the Church in the New Testament by Paul Minear).



The Church is...

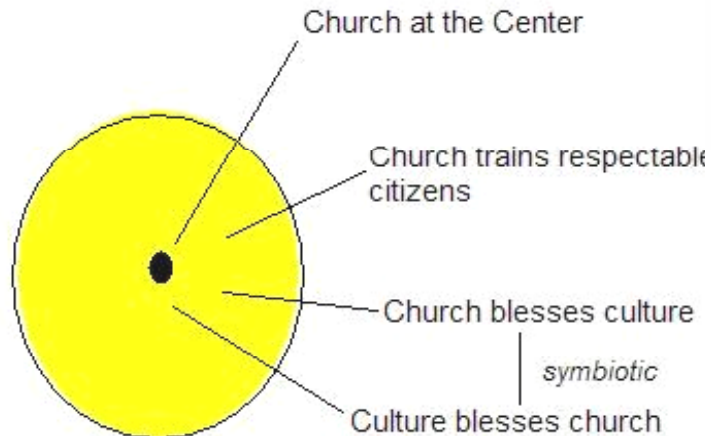
The Church does what it is...

The Church organizes to do what it is...

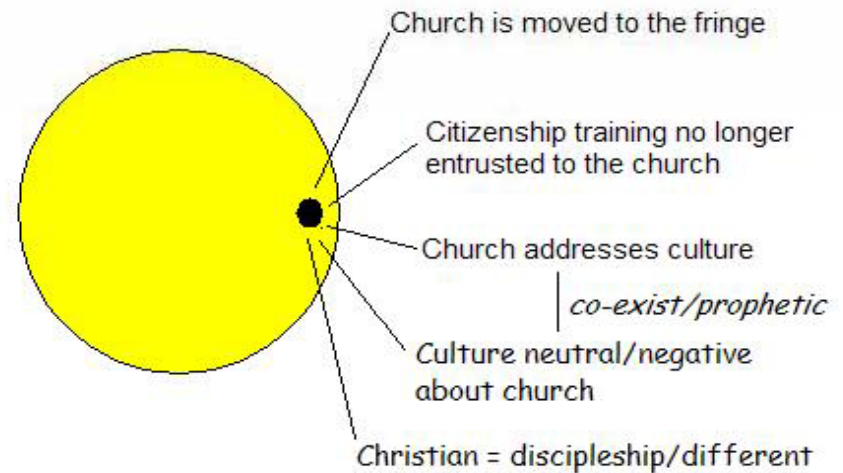
The Essence of the Church: A Community Created
by the Spirit by Dr. Craig Van Gelder

The Changing Context

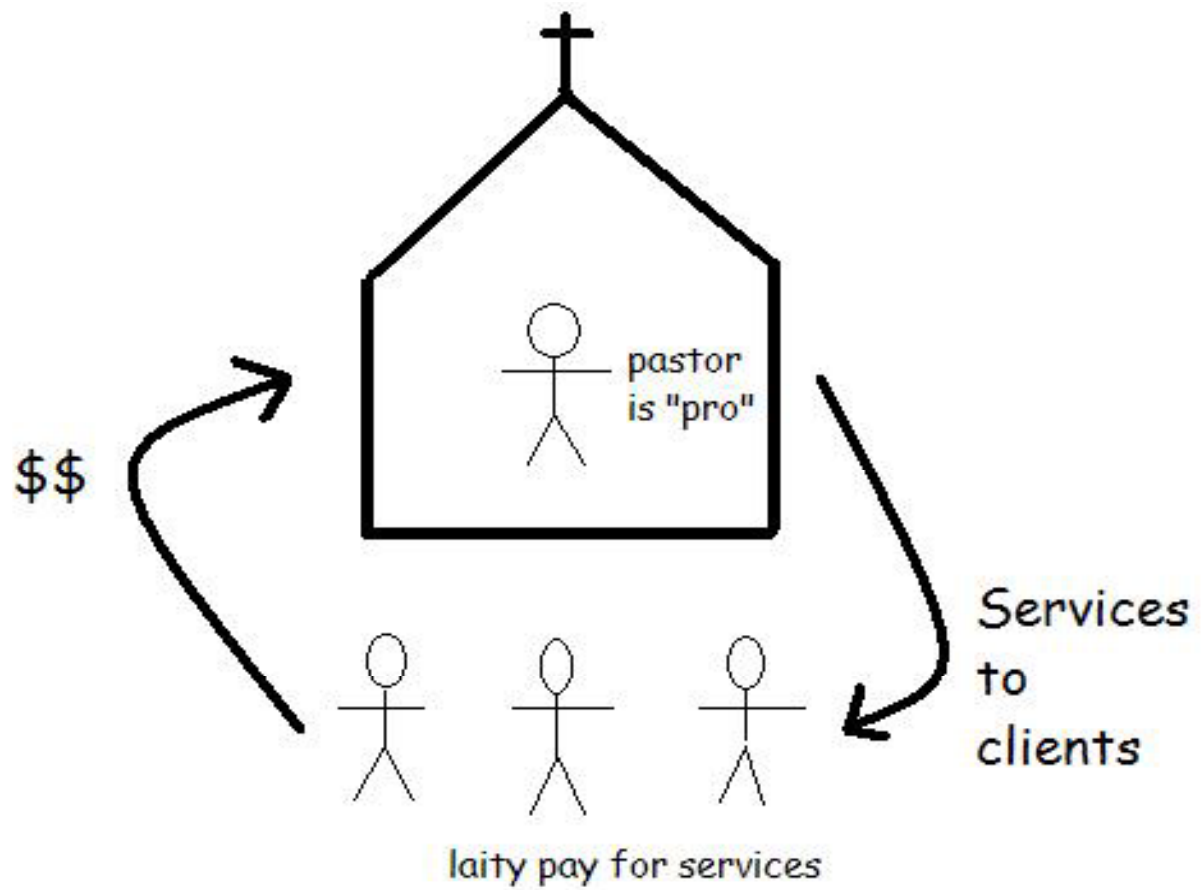
The Old Context



The New Context

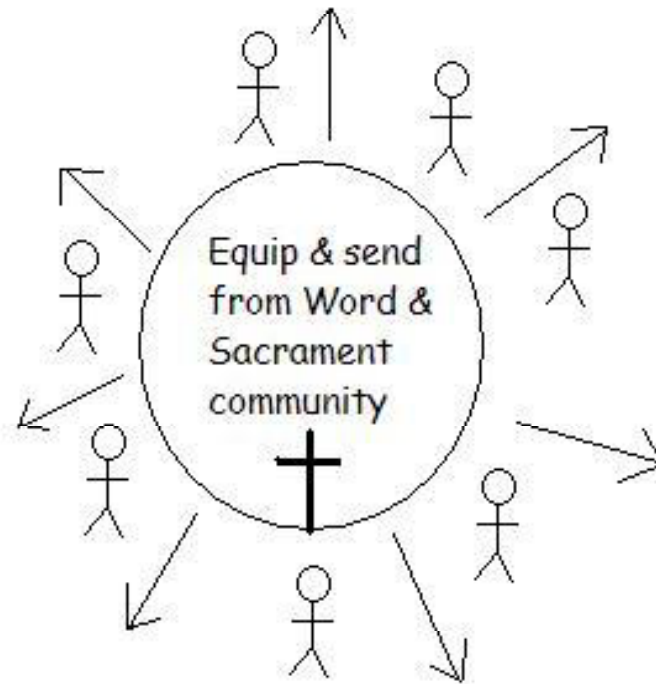


A building, a pastor and enough laity to pay the bills is the functional nature of the church for more than a few congregations in the past context.



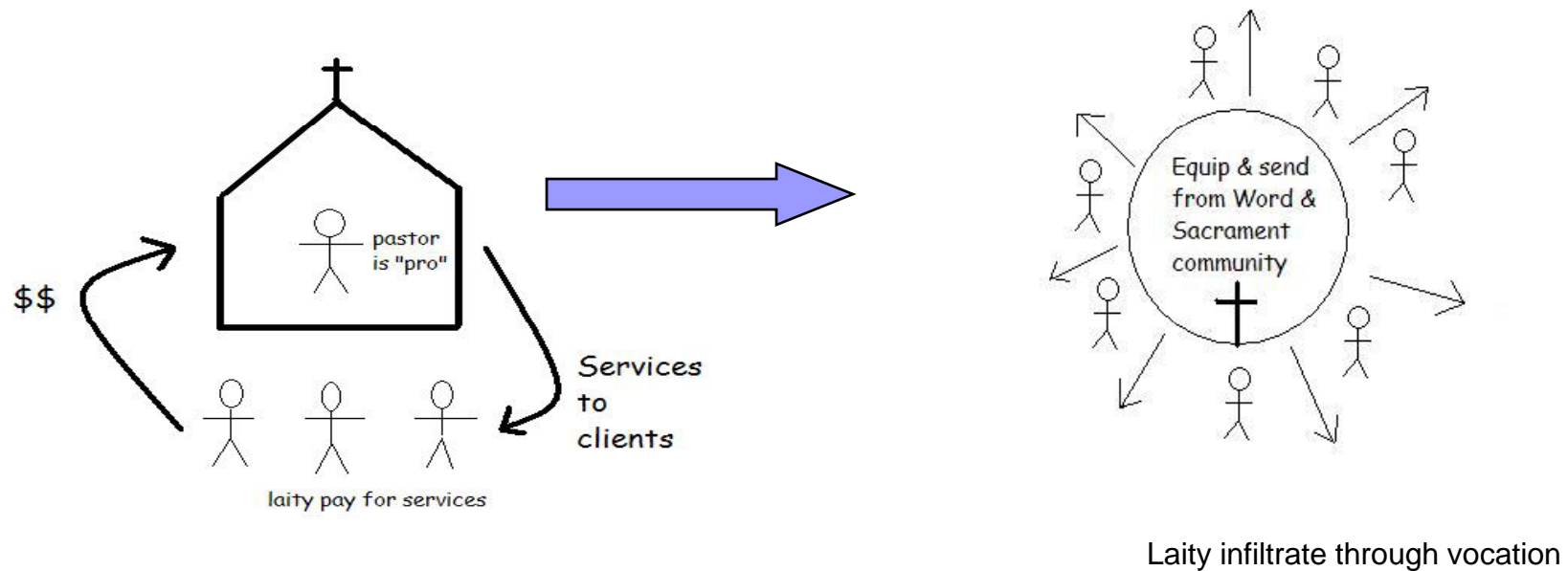
The Church for the Current Context:

A missionary outpost equipping and sending



Life/ministry as witness and "parable of the kingdom"

The Changing Church



“Communities of care” → “Missionaries of grace”

Dr. Alicia Vargas



Characteristics of Healthy & Renewing ELCA Congregations

- **Purpose** – A collective sense of what God wants them to do. Always contextualizes the “missio dei” and points to the world
- **Willingness to Change** – So committed to God’s purpose that they will change what they do to get it done
- **Leadership** – laity and clergy who work together as a team
 - **Priesthood of all believers** – everyone knows that all of life is ministry and service to God happens 24/7 – not just in a church building or when we are “religious”

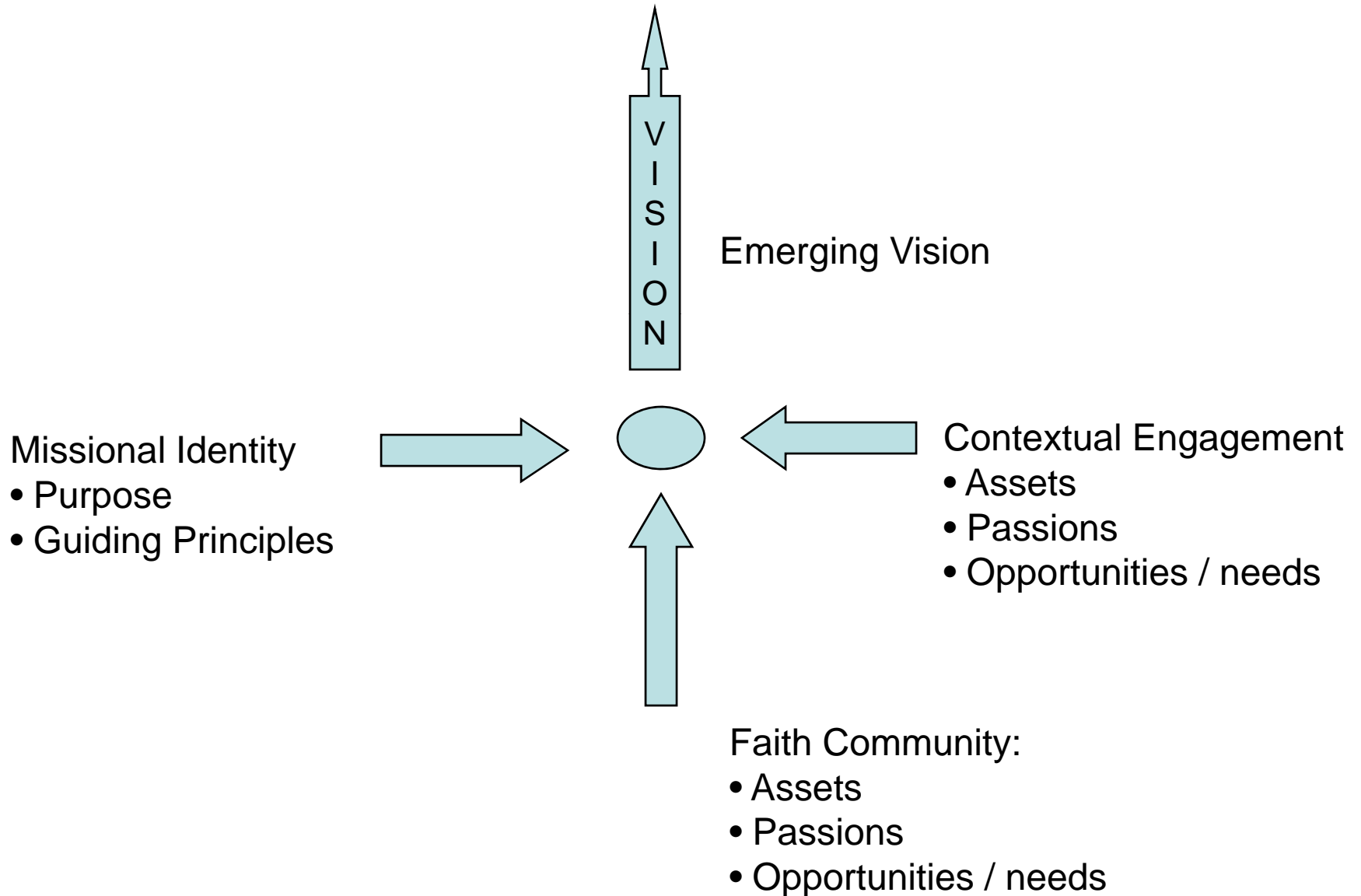
It takes all of this centered in prayer, word and sacrament to make it happen!



Mission – Purpose - Vision

- Mission as “Missio Deo” - God’s mission
 - Isaiah 42:5-9 Luke 4:14-22
- Purpose as our role in God’s mission (contextual)
 - Discerning God’s will (yearning)
 - Asking the God questions...and acting on it
 - Core values & guiding principles provide a means for our we can hold ourselves accountable to our purpose
- Vision as seeing what we’ll look like and what will be as we live out our purpose here and into the future
 - Future has more power to shape our present than the past
 - Luke 9:57-62
 - Rev. 21:1-6
 - Philippians 3:7-14

Vision – What's Involved?





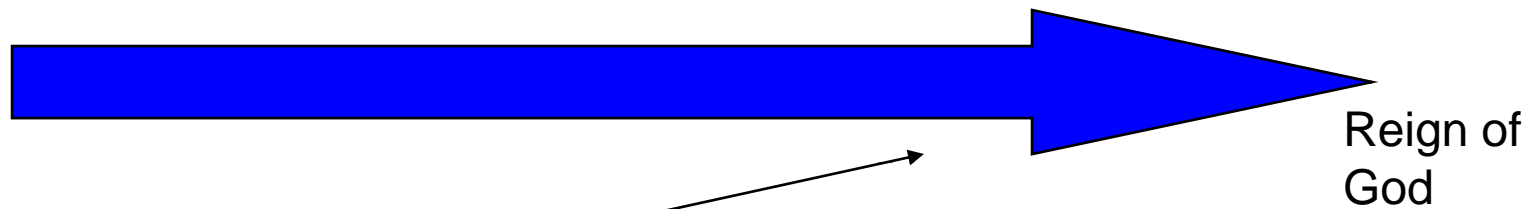
Theological Praxis

Connecting Ministry to Context

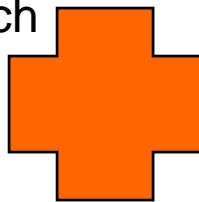
- Incarnation – Word Becoming Flesh
“God’s Work Our Hands”
- “Bad News / Good News” Ministry Planning
(Loren Meade Alban Institute)
- Sacramental lense “visible means of grace”

As the world changes, the constant of God's purpose remains

God's work to bring about the Reign

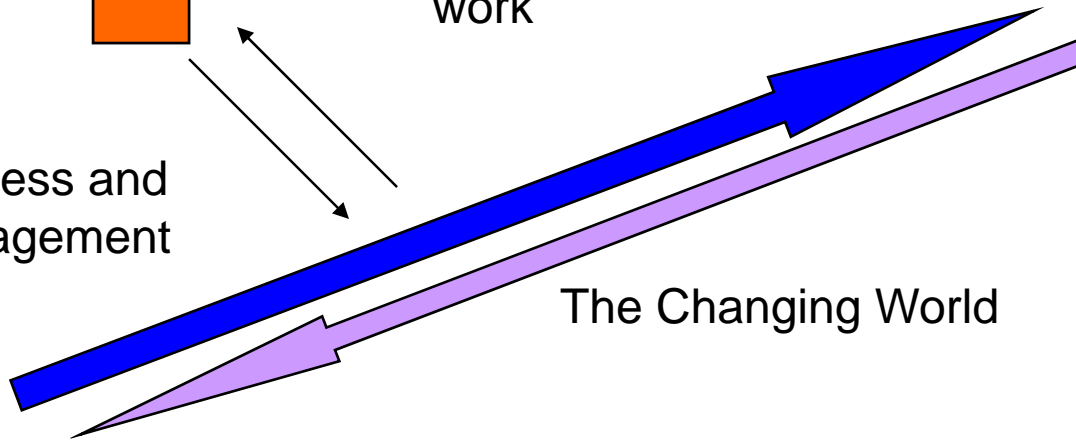


Church



Church called to participate in God's work

Witness and engagement



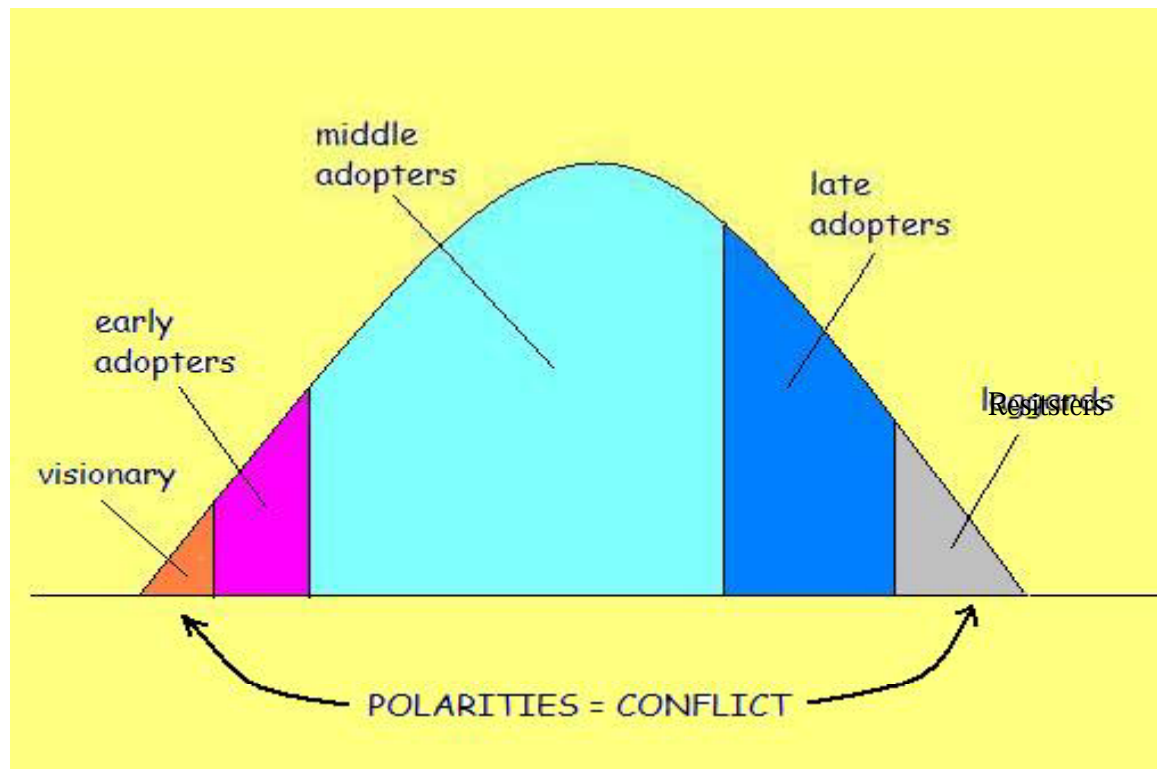


A Formula for Change

Dissatisfaction + Vision + Concrete Action > Costs

- Dissatisfaction – people don't change what they think is already fine
- Vision – a preferred future/ God's dream for our congregation (includes: purpose, principles and time)
- Concrete Action – Something really has to happen
- Costs – The price of change. Can be money, grief and loss, grief, conflict. Whatever causes resistance.

A Culture of Change and/or Conflict



Not every change results in conflict. But every conflict is related to change.



Three Basic Principles About Change

(according to A Grain of Wheat Giving Voice to the Spirit of Change by Dr. Chuck Lofy)

- Change is never a neutral experience. It always evokes strong reactions
- If the reactions to change are not processed, they go underground and remain as unfinished business.
- There is no change that cannot be processed by the human spirit, when the Holy Spirit is at work.



Action Points: Help people through transitions

Give people time to process change. Help people negotiate the time between when the old is declared dead and the new is in place. This will provide clear boundaries and help people to deal with:

- Feelings of loss or being lost
- Fear of the new
- The impatience of wanting to get on with it
- Thing about who is losing what.
- Don't be surprised at over-reaction.
- Acknowledge the losses openly and empathetically.
- Expect and accept the signs of grieving.
- Give people information and do it again and again.
- Treat the past with respect.
- Let people take a piece of the old way with them.
- Show how the changes ensure the continuity of what really matters.



Address Fatigue Factors

- “Impression without expression leads to depression”
 - Un-named fears, unresolved grief
 - unexpressed appreciation/affirmation/joy
- Laboring under the law alone rather “Living in God’s Amazing Grace”
- Doing tasks that seem to have no purpose nor contribute to something grand and greater
- Pay attention to a group of 95 year olds (Dr. Anthony Campolo)
 - Reflect more
 - Risk more
 - Do something that would live on



Theological Praxis Connecting Ministry to Context

Incarnation-Word becoming flesh

- God's kingdom is not of this world but for the world
- Loren Meade's "Bad News/Good News" exercise
- Sacramental thinking "visible means of grace"

Parish as Place

* Samuel Moor Shoemaker



Key Church Council Qualities & Characteristics

- Follow Jesus
- “Do Feet”
- Earn the nickname “Barnabas”
- Give Permission
- Understand and appreciate everyone has a gift to share
- Model attitude of gratitude
- Set the tone and climate in congregational life
- Foster and facilitate a strong sense of purpose
- Multiply other leaders




Called to Lead

- Baptism is both a promise and a commission.
- Your election or appointment to a position of leadership in your congregation is an expression of the baptismal calling.
- Your peers in the congregation have seen in you the abilities necessary for leadership.
- You may not feel qualified, but you have been authorized!
- Many gifts one body.



Your Turn...

Discuss implications and applications
for your congregation



**The church
has left
the building.**

