

Indiana-Kentucky Conference  
June 10 - 12, 2010

Part One: A New Time

Part Two: A New Church

Part Three: Leading Change

Pentecost: The Two Questions

Acts 2: 12 "All were amazed and perplexed and asked, 'What does this mean?'"

Acts 2: 37 "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said, 'What then should we do?'"

Leadership skill: defining reality

Then

- Every respectable and upwardly mobile citizen was expected to be in church on Sunday morning. "Attend the church of your choice."

NOW

- The culture at large cares little if someone attends worship or not

THEN

- When someone moved into a new community one of the first things they did was join a church

NOW

- If someone decides to join a church, it is often only after a long process of deliberation and soul-searching

## THEN

- In the 1950's the phrase "under God," was added to America's Pledge of Allegiance and prayers were routinely offered in the public schools

## NOW

- Prayer is forbidden at all public school events, including graduation ceremonies

## THEN

- Stores were closed on Sundays

## NOW

- Sunday is the second busiest shopping day of the week.

## THEN

- Sermons preached from "important pulpits" were often quoted or reviewed in Monday morning's newspaper

## NOW

- This is hard to even imagine

## THEN

- A civic or community organization was expected to have at least one clergy on its Board and would ask him to offer prayer before meetings.

## NOW

- A civic organization will sometimes have a clergyperson on its board, but would not ask him or her to offer prayer

## THEN

- Baptism was expected as a social and family ritual. Preparation for baptism was largely a matter of communicating the logistics of the ceremony

## NOW

- Increasingly, baptism is chosen. More people come to baptism as adults. More churches have classes for those seeking to have their children baptized

## THEN

- The focus of church mission efforts was on denominationally sponsored foreign missions

## NOW

- The focus of church mission outreach is often on "hands-on" efforts.

## THEN

- The authority of the pastor of a local church was widely recognized in the community, as well as in the church

## Now

- The authority of the pastor of a local church is recognized only within the church (and sometimes not even there!)

## Then

- Worship services of "prominent churches" were broadcast on radio, free of charge, as a "public service."

## Now

- Churches that want their services on radio or television must purchase time; by and large mainline groups have disappeared from the airwaves while more conservative groups are highly visible.

## THEN

- The role of the laity was to help pastors do ministry

## NOW

- The role of the clergy is to equip laity for their ministry.

## THEN

- We emphasized membership

## NOW

- We seek to nurture discipleship

## Then

- There were no youth sports (soccer, hockey, swimming, etc.) on Sundays, certainly none on Sunday mornings

## Now

- Sundays, including Sunday morning are, prime time for youth sports

## So what's going on?

- It's a different world and the world in which most of our churches learned to be and do church is a world and culture that has ceased to exist
- Grief and letting go
- Risk and New Learning
- No Easy Answers
- Challenges **and** Opportunities

## A Helpful Distinction

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ■ Technical Problem                      | ■ Adaptive Challenge                                       |
| ■ Problem: Clear/Known                   | ■ Challenge: Requires Learning/Change (Loss)               |
| ■ Solution: Clear/Known                  | ■ Response: Requires Learning and Change (Risk)            |
| ■ Who does the Work? Experts/Authorities | ■ Who does the Work? People w/ the Problem (Growing Faith) |

## Our adaptive challenges

- The end of North American Christendom
- The waning of Modernity
- The Life-Cycle of Organizations

## Adaptive Challenge # 1

- End of North American Christendom
  - Read/ discuss "Running on Empty"

## End of North American Christendom

- Christian + Dominion = Christendom = Christian Rule, Governance, Establishment
- Church and society woven together in countless ways
- North American: cultural, not legal, establishment of Christianity

## Key Challenges to Emerge with End of Christendom

- Churches can no "assume the goods." We have to "deliver the goods," placing high priority on dynamic worship and faith formation
- Discovering how to be "accessible" to those with little or no church experience or "Christian memory."

## After Christendom

- From tribal education to immigrant education
- From mission out there to mission right here

## Adaptive Challenge # 2

- Waning of Modernity

## Waning of Modernity

- Ancient world: 500 B.C to 500 A.D.
- Medieval world: 500 to 1500
- Modern world: 1500 to 2000
- Post-Modernity: mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century

## Modernity and POMO

- Reason
- Optimism
- Universality
- Objectivity
- Meta-Narrative
- Other ways of knowing
- Skeptical of grand promises
- Local and particular
- Contextual
- Many stories

## Three Strands in the Great Cable of Religion (P. Tickle)

- Corporeal: Institutions, Organization, By-Laws, Structures
- Morality: How to live and behave; right and wrong
- Spirituality: Experience of the divine, of grace, of power beyond our control

## Key Challenges to Emerge from Waning of Modernity

- Re-discovering spirituality
- In a world of many spiritual options and choices, discovering an authentic Christian spirituality

## Key challenges After Modernity

- From being community institutions to being communities of spiritual growth and formation
- From reasoned religion to mystery-filled spirituality
- Read/ discuss "Why Some Churches Thrive"

## Adaptive Challenge # 3

- Recognizing the Life Cycle of Congregations

## Life Cycle

- Birth / Infancy
- Adolescence
- Prime
  - Aristocracy
  - Bureacracy
- Maturity
- Death

## Life Cycle of Organizations

- It is generally the case that the longer an organization exists the less it is connected to a sense of mission and the more the mission becomes ensuring the survival of the organization.
- Priority on Missional Purpose

## Several “Snapshots”

Quick Summaries that Provide  
A Vision

## From Institutional Church to Missional Church

- IC: largely identified with a building
- IC: goal is to have programs that attract people to the building
- IC Secondary goal: involve large numbers of people in management of programs and building

## To Missional Church

- Church is less about a building and more about a community of people and it's mission or purpose
- Programs still exist but for the purpose of equipping people with a faith that works in the real world and for participation in mission and ministry

## from Culture of Membership

- Customer centered
- Analogy: modern health club
- Comfort and satisfaction of members is point
- Ministry done by professional ministers

## To Culture of Discipleship

- Christ-centered
- Ministry of all baptized persons
- Growing in faith and service is the point
- Ministry belongs to whole church
- Disciples become apostles, participating in mission

## Part Two: A New Church

## Steps toward a New Church

1. Pastor/ pastoral staff must be or become people of faith
2. Take a new attitude into worship: expectancy and seriousness
3. Re-think Identity and Mission/ Purpose
4. Connect with Community

## Why Are We Here: Getting on Purpose

- The “Drucker Questions”
- Purpose: What God calls us to do, our reason for being, core mission
- Statement of Purpose and Sense of Purpose

## Read and discuss

- “Who owns the Congregation?”

## Getting on Purpose: Process

- What is God’s Mission, and what is our part of it and in it?
- A matter for discernment
- Nature and practice of discernment

## Purpose Process (cont.)

- Appoint "discernment team"
- Sermon/ study series on key biblical texts related to church
- Draw on UCC and local church source
- Two useful discernment questions
- Discernment team: listen, reflect, draft, test
- Use the Purpose/ Mission statement

## Sample Purpose Statements

- To grow people of faith
- To change lives, and change the world
- To be and make disciples of Jesus Christ
- To grow people of faith who participate in God's work in the world
- To welcome people to faith, equip people with a faith that works in the real world, and send people into the world to serve in Christ's name
- To be a community where Spirit and service come together

## Write the Vision

- Relationship of "Purpose" and "Vision"
  - Purpose: What God has called us to do
  - Vision: Given our purpose, our next steps (major priorities) in order to more faithfully and fruitfully fulfill our purpose
- Discerning Vision: What is God calling us to do in the next chapter to be faithful to our purpose/ mission?
- Strategies: SMART

## Sample Purpose and Vision

- Purpose: to grow people of faith who participate in God's work in the world
- Vision: Our key priorities for next chapter
  - Worship experiential, participatory and vital
  - Learn the practice of testimony
  - Transform mission from sending money, to being involved

## A Process for Writing the Vision

- Discernment (Again!)
- Review previous efforts
- Do a SWOT analysis
- Congregational Input
- Pastor Staff/ Input
- Outside Perspective
- Draft, Test, Use

## Management and Leadership

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ■ Short term orientation                  | ■ Longer term   |
| ■ Focus on one part                       | ■ Thinks systemically                                   |
| ■ Influence their team                    | ■ Influence beyond one                                  |
| ■ Emphasize existing norms and procedures | ■ Heavy emphasis on purpose, vision and values          |
| ■ Relate to 1 constituency                | ■ Political skills to relate to multiple constituencies |
| ■ Accepts given structure                 | ■ RENEWAL   |

## The Governing Board

- Management or Leadership?
- Makeup: representational or spiritual leaders?
- Size matters
- Key tasks: minding purpose, sponsoring vision development and monitoring, seeing that key systems are in place and working

## Core Ministry Teams

- Manage a particular program or ministry
- Rely on/ relate to Purpose and Vision
- Aligned with Purpose to complement other parts of the missional system
- Equipping is key

## Passion-driven Ministry Teams

- Arise in response to sense of calling
- Team leader(s) key
- 3 or more with staff liaison
- "Keep us posted"
- The responsibility for the success of the ministry team rests with the MT
- Monthly support for team leaders

## Part Four: Leading Change

### Leading Change (and living to tell the story)

Change or Loss

Don't overload (or underload) the agenda: "scope and sequence"

Anxiety: Staying Calm and Courageous No Matter What

### A formula to keep in mind

$$D + V + FS > R$$

## Leadership: What is It?

- Getting people to follow the leader's vision; or mobilizing people to engage their own most important challenges
- Leader's "mind the mission," and the discern, name, frame, describe and ripen the challenges (case: Acts 6)

## The Leadership Boat

- The sea or water
- The craft or boat
- The person of the leader
- The wind or spirit

## Leadership Strategies

- Build trust
- Define reality
- Get on Purpose
- Write the Vision
- Manage Distress
- Persistence! Persistence! Persistence!
- Becoming a learning organization

## Strengthening your Congregation's "Immune System"

- Clarity about mission/ purpose
- Mission/ purpose more important than keeping everyone "happy"
- Clarity about roles/ responsibilities/ decision-making process
- Avoiding Bunch-Ball
- Give Responsibility Back

- The Process of Change
- Three F's: facts, force, fear
- Three R's: relate, repeat, reframe

## Top Ten Take-Aways

- #10 The old adage, "If it ain't broke don't fix it," is not helpful in the current climate because once something is broken it is often too late to fix it.

## # 9

- In this era of discernment, we all need each other. Part of the congregational transformation initiative reflects a larger shift in our culture: the rise of social networking. The challenge for many pastors may be in learning how to ask for help, how to actively seek collaboration . . . And then to receive it.

## # 8

- "I don't know what the secret to success is, but I know that the secret of failure is to try to please everyone." Bill Cosby

## # 7

- A sense of crisis can paralyze a church, but a sense of urgency can help us grow

## # 6

- It can't happen without you, Pastor, but . . . It's not all up to you, Pastor. We, as leaders of churches, need to first be the change we are hoping to facilitate. In this new time a transformed heart is the primary tool for congregational transformation.

## # 5

- Christendom is a hard, hard habit to break. Especially as the alternative reality and its disciplines remain unnamed. Maybe this is why Luther said, "Sin boldly!"

## # 4

- Transformation doesn't always feel like progress. Sometimes it feels like chaos and regression. That's because the "it" (where we're being led by God) isn't always clear until we're there.

### # 3

- Communication is crucial! Repeat the message everywhere, all the time, in every medium possible. Status quo is "default" mode; if we want to change it we have to WORK to get vision into the lingo, imagination and experience of the congregation

### # 2

- The words of the living Christ, "seek first the reign of God . . . And all these things will be given as well," free us to put aside our anxieties about survivability and ask instead, "How do our words and deeds praise God and embody the gospel?"

### # 1

- There is no one book (not even mine!) to tell you how to do it in your congregation

### "Building Congregations/ Strengthening Leaders"

- Website:  
[www.anthonibrobinson.com](http://www.anthonibrobinson.com)
- "What's Tony Thinking?"
- "Weekly Reading"
- Upcoming Engagements
- Festival of Preaching Northwest
- [www.festivalofpreachingNW.org](http://www.festivalofpreachingNW.org)