Handout For ….

Emerging Church

The Elastic-Creative-Vintage Church

How the Postmodern Church is Stretching Christianity for the Better

By Dr. Bob Whitesel

Seminar overview. Growing up in a cultural milieu of fragmentation, experimentation and change, postmodern young people are demanding creativity and innovation in the church and its outreach strategies. Discover how every Christian must struggle with and apply the flexible nature of a Good News that is effective yesterday, today and tomorrow.

"Organic" is preferred because of …

1. Validity in Scripture & grammar.

2. Antecedents & validity in theological, social and political disciplines.

The 3 melodies of an Organic Church

1. The melody of orthodoxy.

2. The melody of authenticity.

3. The melody of engagement.

4. The melody of missional church growth.

>>>>>>>>>>**Stretching Points**<<<<<<<<<<

Endless choices result in varied times, styles, and locales of discipleship, worship, and spiritual experiences. Culture is studied and sifted, judging some aspects, affirming others, for the transformation of the whole.

Loss of shared experiences result in emphasis upon creating community in small groups, and by clustering two to seven small groups.

Meaning conveyed as surfaces and images leads to use of iconography, symbols, and liturgy to communicate Christian truths.

Increasing two-tiered economy necessitates low-cost, low-overhead church facilities, ministries, and salaries. Volunteerism is expected, even in executive roles. Solidarity with the poor and disenfranchised is expected.

Personal journaling, Bible Study, and prayer disciples are encouraged. Personal encounters with God are just as valid as corporate ones.

Inter-church networks are based on personal relationships and commonalities, not theology or history.

Church structures, change, and strategy are shaped by bottom-up forces, not top-down ones.

Organic churches stay connected to those they serve inside and outside of the church, adjusting strategy and evaluating ineffective ministries.

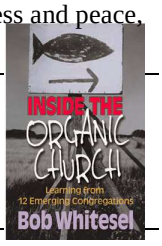
The church must be up-to-date as well as appreciative of traditions. Podcasts stream biblical sermons to attendees' iPods, while Byzantine imagery and disciplines create mystery and expectation in worship.

Modern narratives are weak. Sermon illustrations that chart the preacher's life, pale in comparison to stories of Christian saints and sages.

Quality in performance and execution can readily undercut authenticity and engagement. Keep it real, even if paltry and meager.

Holistic approach to worship & outreach means a variety of arts are valid in worship, as well as social and evangelistic outreach. Musicians are only one category, among many artistic equals.

Ask-assertive environment, thus it's okay to doubt and raise questions; everybody does. Spirituality is messy, not tidy. Questions are demarcations of the journey.

Christ is the only hope for wholeness and peace, but not for success or arrogance.

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