

Handout For

Emerging Church

Church Out of the Box: Is it Church?

Radical and Effective Approaches to Growing a Christian Community

By Dr. Bob Whitesel

Rationale for this seminar: Today, many creative and improvisational churches are emerging. Christian leaders often wonder if these churches will last, if they are heretical & if they can be outreach models for other churches.

The research base. I surveyed dozens of organic congregations that are reaching young people. From this group I selected 12 to include in my fourth book for Abingdon Press titled *Inside the Organic Church: Learning from 12 Emerging Congregations* (2006). Some of these churches are small, some are struggling, some might be called mega-churches, but all had transferable lessons that other churches can use to reach people under 35.

Research results. Subsequently, *Inside the Organic Church* lists 36 ideas that almost any church can utilize to reach younger generations. I also add to the Gibbs/Bolger list of identifying marks, 12 more distinguishing characteristics.

Seminar overview. Are online communities, cell churches, multiple-site churches, really healthy congregations? And do they demonstrate effective evangelism? I will explain the signs of health, and the warning signs of weakness in outreach strategies.

Signs of health in postmodern outreach.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Warning signs of weaknesses in postmodern outreach.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Signs of outreach weaknesses and strengths in specific organic ministry styles.

Ancient-Future Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Cell-Cluster Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Mosaic Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Cultural Mandate Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Aesthetic Arts Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Café Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Rhythmic
(e.g. drumming) Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Improvisational Churches

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

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