

Tribal Communities

How the Organic Church is Reinventing Community Through Small Groups

By Dr. Bob Whitesel

Seminar overview. Many people know that small groups are the glue that hold together congregations. But many small groups models are outdated and/or ineffectual. Bob Whitesel looks at the radical and unusual application of small groups in 12 emerging congregations and draws lessons every church can utilize.

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.

Small Group Missions and Models:

Clustering Small Groups for Survival

Clustering Small Groups for Social Action

Congregation – Celebration – Cluster – Cell

Developing Small Group Leaders

Unique Types of Small Groups

Should Everyone be in a Small Group?

Groups That Don't Work With Postmodernists

The Secret to Celling your Church,

Create Tribal & Organic, Not Synthetic, Small Groups

(See also *Growth By Accident – Death by Planning: How Not to Kill a Growing Congregation* by Bob Whitesel, Abingdon Press, 2004; especially Chapter 10: *Missteps With Small Groups* and Chart 10.1).

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