



UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

Last week
we talked
about...

Radical Hospitality

How to Keep Them
Coming Back

Hebrews 11:1-2

- **1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. **2** For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony.

This Week's Topics:

Innovative
Worship for the
Traditional and
Contemporary
Setting

Intersectionality

Sealing the Deal



Innovative Worship in the Traditional and Contemporary Settings

How would you classify the style(s) of worship in your church setting?

- Traditional, Blended, Contemporary, something else?

How would you classify your church in those same categories?

- Are the two answers the same?

Douglas John Hall writes we have we have four well documented needs:

1. Meaning and Purpose
2. Moral Authenticity
3. Community
4. Transcendence – some experience of the Holy, the Other, that which is greater than men, greater than all of us put together, the transcendent.

Rev. Dr. Douglas John Hall is emeritus professor of theology at McGill University, minister in the United Church of Canada, former MacDougald Professor of Systematic Theology at St. Andrew's College, Principal of St. Paul's College.

Robert Hovda:

"Our limits and sins impose such ugliness upon the world. Public worship should reveal its beauty in every way it can."

- Worship whether traditional or contemporary, should first be contemplated in prayer.
 - God what would have us to do? Show us where we are not bringing you glory? Open our eyes to what we need to reach people and help them see you.
- Worship whether traditional or contemporary should be fresh and relevant.
 - Many times we do and try new things in worship that are fresh to the regulars, but irrelevant and confusing to the unchurched.

So how does the innovative part come in?

Getting Fresh

- Communicate the change in concise, but positive and necessary manner
 - Note: Some things should be communicated to the church at-large, some to leadership, some to staff or worship council, etc.
- Sometimes Fresh means stopping something.
- Insert Lan's Iteration disclaimer:
 - To try new things, we must be willing to fail at new things, and then try them again a different way.

Getting Fresh

- Worship should not only tap into the familiar to build a connection, but it should also stretch us.
- John M. Buchanan writes, “I'm not at all convinced that traditional worship is no longer viable and that people find it boring, irrelevant, and uninteresting. Or, put more accurately, nothing about traditional worship must, of necessity, be boring, irrelevant, and uninteresting. It often is. You and I know it is, but not because it's traditional. Boring and uninteresting worship can come in any style. I would make the case that traditional worship has a far better chance of being energetic, creative, interesting, because there is so much more to work with. I'm so tired of hearing the pipe organ blamed—for anything. A pipe organ played by an energetic, creative, and lively musician is irresistible; an organ played by a boring, unimaginative musician is boring, but then so is an electric guitar played by a boring guitarist.”

Getting Fresh

At Fourth Presbyterian Church we are almost as traditional as we can be. The liturgy is pure Reformed; the prayers and responses are from The Book of Common Worship, the hymns are from The Hymnal. But the music is thoughtfully chosen, carefully coordinated with the theological themes of the day, and lovingly and energetically presented for the congregation's worship. The choir is robed and so are the clergy: in black, with clerical collars and Geneva tabs. People sit in pews in a 1914 Gothic sanctuary with absolutely no architectural space to do much of anything in except worship, Reformed style. And that is what we do, four times every Sunday, with a full sanctuary at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

In seventeen years, I have never heard anyone say that worship is boring, or that we need to change styles in order to be relevant. That's not quite true. One formerly active member regularly tells me that our liturgy is out of date, and sends me tapes and compact disks of praise music. But he's unhappy with everything Presbyterian these days, and obviously unhappy with me on a lot of fronts. But what I have heard, over and over again, is gratitude for the integrity and power and opportunity to reflect on the mystery of life and death, of love and passion, of human hopes and dreams and fears, and the God who creates and loves and graces all of life.

We are not boring. We add brass once a month, and a children's choir at 9:30 weekly. We try to mix old and new hymns, spirituals, and Isaac Watts. We parade in and out on Palm Sunday, and light lots of candles at Christmas, and, week in and week out, preachers take their homiletic responsibility and opportunity with utmost seriousness. And week in and week out, John Sherer and friends bring to worship their amazing musicianship, and—even more importantly— commitment to the act of public worship.”

Rev. John M. Buchanan is the retired pastor of Fourth Pres., Chicago. 2nd Largest Presbyterian Church

Getting Fresh

- Technology – wonderful and arguably necessary addition to any service, but be intentional so that it is not a distraction. Use it as a bridge to reach multiple sensory points, multiple generations, add diversity, and connect people in-person and at home.
- Testimonies/Story Sharing –
 - Be intentional and when and why. Be prepared for what people will say. Be prepared for the transition in and out of it. Don't share their story before them and have a plan B for after

Getting Fresh

- Think of ways to interact.
 - I.e. Invite people to call out word or name during prayer time.
 - Bring zoom folks on the screen or have someone show or read the online prayer requests that come in the comments.
 - Hamilton invites people to create a verse for certain songs like (Woke up this Morning with my mind stayed on Jesus)
 - Haddonfield has a hymn-sing in their Saturday night service and lets people call out hymns to sing
 - What else?
- Introduce new music well.
 - For contemporary music I teach the chorus to the congregation then we sing the chorus together. Then we do the whole song. Repeat that song two more times in the next 6 weeks. ***Introduce a new song for Easter on Palm Sunday)
 - For hymns, tell people it's a new hymn and have the musician play it all the way through first.
 - Create a mini-songbook for people of music that we're currently doing that's not in the songbook. Include new stuff always!
 - Make a playlist and offer prayers for people to pray when they listen. Creates opportunity for community.

Getting Fresh

- Invite people to participate in ways that don't always invite being on the mic.
 - Writing liturgy/prayers.
 - Altar work and decoration. (You or somebody else is probably burnt out from or too busy to be the only one doing this)
 - Hospitality/Coffee Hour
 - Sanitizing
 - Zoom/Facebook Ushers
- Have teaching notes in the sermon. Something people can write down/fill in the blank and take home with them. Drives home the central point. Show on screen as well.
- Centralized focus on your screens. (Don't use 99 random backgrounds and clip art images). - Gospel According to Lan 1:3.
- Have youth liturgists once a month.
- Bring back prayer nights, hymn sings, worship nights. But don't wear people out with them.
- Play upbeat music before service.
- Myrna Bethke was the queen of takeaways in worship! RIP
- **Get fresh in talking about giving! (Communion and 30k story)**
- Include some congregational favorites on the days you're introducing new stuff.
- Recognize volunteers and staff at the end of each service with applause (And sometimes a gift).

Worship Beyond the Walls

What if once a year, we all met at the church on Sunday at the regular time and had a short devotion (song, scripture, prayer and brief meditation) and went out to serve together in the community?

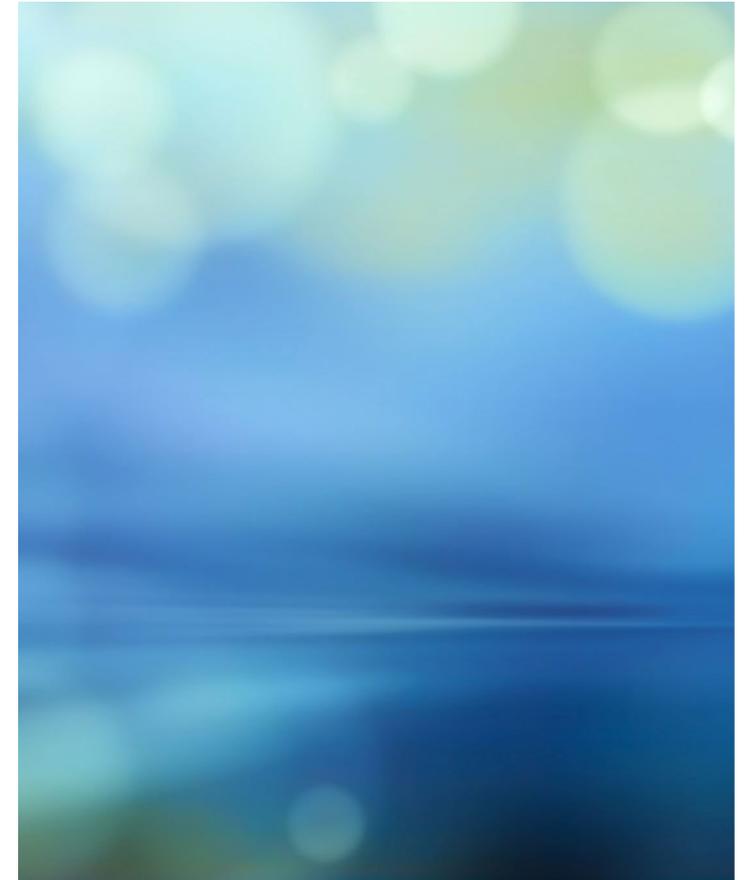
Find something everybody can do.

Engage multiple work sites if necessary.

Partner with another church.

Len Wilson suggests:

TakeRisks	Take the necessary risks to ignite innovation
Release	Release the Energy of your Co-Planners
Experiment	Experiment, even if you lack existing means.
Encourage	Encourage people to participate in the creative process.
Create	Create divergent paths for the Holy Spirit to work in people's hearts. •Convergent vs. divergent - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmBf1fBRXms



Which brings us to Intersectionality

- “The concept of intersectionality describes the ways in which systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class and other forms of discrimination “intersect” to create unique dynamics and effects. For example, when a Muslim woman wearing the Hijab is being discriminated, it would be impossible to dissociate her female* from her Muslim identity and to isolate the dimension(s) causing her discrimination...

Intersectionality brings our understanding of systemic injustice and social inequality to the next level by attempting to untangle the lines that create the complex web of inequalities. It is also a practical tool that can be used to tackle intersectional discrimination through policies and laws.” – intersectionaljustice.org

Intersectionality

- “Invites us who have been in the center to leave our safe zone, travel out to the margins, see the world from the perspective, invite the once-edged-out into the center, and prioritize their ideas **and** voices.” – John Cleghorn, *Resurrecting Church*
- Opens space dialogue and embracing the other
- It means taking into considerations those present and hoped for.
 - And don’t just use their faces and voices to make you look good. Welcome ideas. Make space for input and conversation. And don’t be sneaky about it. Be intentional. Sneaky inclusion leads to tokenism. *I’ve been there. Don’t do that.*
- “Justice-centered worship is, thus, many things. Each intersectional church has its own version, but common traits are diversity in leadership, a range of music styles, intentional theology preaching and liturgy, comfort with taking some risks, plenty of room for the Holy Spirit to blow and dance where it will.”
- Cleghorn

Sealing the Deal – Visitors to Members

- One of most important things is a point of contact within three days of their visit.
 - Put something personal in the message to let them know you remember them.
 - This is where I've found success in having my hospitality folks write postcard messages before they leave on Sundays
- Get their names, verbally and in writing/digitally
 - People are twice more likely to come back if you remember their names.
- Set up automated workflows for staying connected.
 - Planning Center People is super helpful for this. And it's free! Allows you to use forms (connect cards) that will automatically trigger workflows.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLe9oTCqGjA>

Sealing the Deal

- Assess spiritual gifts and help explore how they can be used in the church. This is good place to implement 1:1s or have ministry leaders come into new members class for no-pressure meet and greets.
- Encourage getting connected to a small group or ministry even before they join (so they're cultivating relationships outside of Sunday)
- Invite them to serve for short-term commitments. No more than a month.
- Make sure recurring giving is a readily available option in online giving and pledge cards are available in the physical space.
- Advertise regularly scheduled new members classes and that they can still join anytime.



Questions?

Next Week:

(read article
coming in email)

Facilities for The
Community

The Simple Church
Mindset & Missional Focus

Both/And Church



Thank You!

Lan Wilson

Lanwilson@gnjumc.org



WELCOME to

The Welcoming Church and
Worship

Lan Wilson



In this class
we will
discuss

Radical Hospitality through the creative lens and
intersectionality

How to keep them coming back - Visitor Retention

Innovative Worship for the Traditional and Contemporary
Setting

Sealing the Deal – Visitors to Members and the plan to get
there

Facilities for the Community

The Simple Church Mindset

Missional Focus

The Both/And Church



But first things first...

Leadership Academy

- 6:55pm** **Log into ZOOM**
- 7:00pm** **Welcome and Introduction to the class focus**
- 7:10pm** **Focus Area of learning with lecture, questions, small group break out discussion**
- 8:20pm** **Wrap-up, what's instore next time and homework (if applicable)**
- 8:30pm** **Adjourn till next time!**

Best Practices for Engaging in ZOOM Courses

**Log onto ZOOM
5 – 10 Minutes
before Class**

**“Mute” when
not speaking**

**Ask questions
or you may get
the answers
you need!**

**Share
speaking time**

**Use your ZOOM
Video Feature**

**When others
are speaking
use chat feature
to ask a
question**

Scripture and Prayer

- Hebrews 13:1-2
 - Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Radical Hospitality

First let's reflect on the article:

- Hospitality is love
- Hospitality is relational
- Hospitality is adaptable

What does love as hospitality look like?

- “It involves seeing ourselves as sent out by Christ and going out of our way, even at the risk of a sense of awkwardness and inconvenience, to invite people into some aspect of the church’s ministry,” – Bishop Robert Schnase
- It starts with the heart
 - The heart to be open, to embrace, and to share in every way
 - But too often, we want people to embrace us and tolerate us and conform to us, rather us welcoming with unconditional open arms



Radical Hospitality

- What does relational hospitality look like?
 - “As they get to know the people they serve personally, members will develop empathy and love for them...and be better able to address the needs of those it serves...”
 - It means be genuinely prepared to take the next step. Often we have people signing up for hospitality but we are not training them on how to point people towards the next step.
 - Sometimes we don’t know what the next step is.
 - How many of us can readily identify the process for joining your church?
 - When visitors return, we should be inviting them to events happening outside of Sunday service
 - We should be getting to know them, their gifts and needs.
 - What is follow-up process to get more connected with them and thank them for coming?

Radical Hospitality

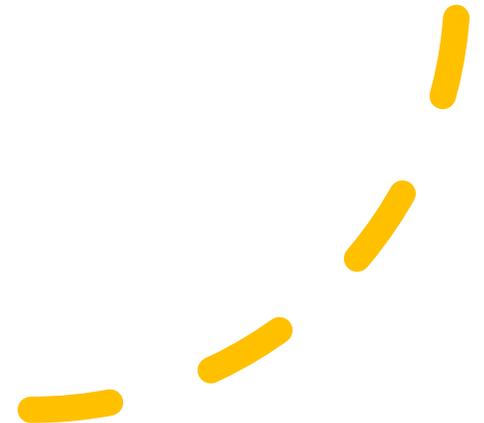
- What does it mean for hospitality to be adaptable?
 - "Hospitality also requires an openness to influence and change from without."
 - Keep in mind that visitors and basically like customers walking into a restaurant with a preset menu. But what we really want is them to a potluck meal...or rather an opportunity to partake and then help plan the future menus.
 - We don't do great job at being adaptable. We'd much rather ask people to assimilate rather than integrate.
 - But a radically hospitable church is one that is constantly working to be reflective and progressive, embracing new ideas and challenges, and finding new ways to meet the needs of the people and help them feel at home.

Radical Hospitality - How do we do it?

- Publicly, verbally, both printed and online let people know that they are welcomed.
 - Ask for feedback
 - Invite questions
 - Set a rhythm in the church year for the appropriate body of leadership to regularly reflect on how we can improve on being hospitable and welcoming and how we might have missed the mark
- Create spaces for questions and input
 - Some churches have follow-up discussions after coffee hour
 - Others have pizza with the pastor/leadership monthly
 - Host a questions about faith and the church a couple times a year and invite people to submit questions ahead of time.
 - Comment space on the connect card is great but will rarely give way for the proper discussion that will lead to change. So be sure other spaces for discussion and feedback are available like in the examples mentioned above.

Radical Hospitality – How Do We Do It?

- Create spaces regularly both online and in-person for people to connect with each other.
- Have pastor and/or leadership doing one-on-one's with folks (not just new), but conduct training beforehand on what is expected and what the goal of it is.
 - This should be done in safe spaces or virtually
 - Set a time limit of 30 minutes if virtually, 45-60 if in-person.
 - Ask about their experience so far, what they're looking for, spiritual needs, and explore how else they could be involved in the church.
- Set realistic but exciting goals for introducing new things in worship and changing things up.
- Give people a voice, not only in feedback space but in worship.



How do we keep
them coming back?

How Do We Keep Them Coming Back?

- Gallup reports that prior to COVID, 40% of Americans attending churches on any given Sunday. 20% **actually** attend. There are currently 246 million professing Christians in America and 350,000 local churches. So why come back to our church?
- People will come back when:
 - they have felt genuinely welcomed, and not just another number
 - They have felt appreciation for their presence
 - They feel seen and that others are seen and embraced
 - They know what we believe and what our values are
 - And they feel becoming a member of the community will not be challenging
 - “Plays well with others” – people may or may not be from the community and may or may not be Methodist already, but they will find it easier to connect when they see relationships with the community and other religious organizations in the community
 - When staying connecting is worthwhile and meaningful
 - What else?

How to Stay Connected Beyond Sunday

- Small groups. Have lists available in-person and online of open small groups can join. And tell people in service and in the follow-up of how to find them.
- Corporate/Community Prayer
- Let them know what the next Q&A opportunity is happening.
- Have discussion times and prayer times online the digital community.
- Facebook groups is a huge way to keep people connected and to disciple if done well

Facebook Groups- just for a sec...

- “If church happens only in a building, we’re missing 80% of people”. – Rev. Nona Jones – Author, From Social Media to Social Ministry, Church Planter, and Facebook/Meta Exec
- Move beyond sharing content about your ministry to making disciples through your ministry
- Fan/Business pages are great AND needed, but we aren’t building relationships and discipling through them.
- Create a facebook group under the Church Fan/Business Page for people to connect with you, with each other, and engage in discipleship
- Wait...but first...make sure you have a fan page. If the church page is a personal account...plan the switch to Fan/Business Page.
 - Do a big splash, launch. Advertise the change over well. And invite everyone to connect with it.

Example of a Facebook Profile Page



Example of a Facebook Business Page



 Like

 Follow

 Share



Edit Page Info

View Insights

View as Page Visitor

Create Ad

Create Event

Create Group

Ads Manager

Create Page

 Status  Photo

 Event, Products, Job + 



Write some

Posts

Facebook Groups

- It's great to have one group for the church at-large
 - You may have other groups such as small groups for youth (keep in mind SafeSanctuaries), certain ministries. But you want the main focus to be the big group.
- Learning Units/Guides in the facebook groups.
 - Post "Next Steps" or TableTalks discussion guides in the group
 - Post a 5 minute intro video for small groups that sets up the topic of study. Maximize use of the time in this video. Don't waste it with pleasantries or reading the scripture.
- ROOMS – This is like zoom calls for facebook. People won't need a link or anything. They can just join right in the group.
 - Here you can do prayer time, bible studies, quick meet and greets with the staff.
- Avoid it being constant posts for bad news. Pick a day of the week to share a prayer list.
- Set the rules for the group and make it clear. The group should be set to private.

Why Facebook Group and Why or Why Not Everything Else?

Nona's views on social media:

- Youtube's primary use is as a search engine for video content.
- The common thread driving churches' Instagram use is the goal of maximizing in-person attendance at upcoming events.
- Many churches and pastors use Twitter as a micromegaphone to share scripture and sermon quotes
- Snapchat is more of a broadcast platform for quick consumption
- Tiktok is a video sharing app but there is no community component.
- Facebook is the only truly social media platform.

Social Ministry, Cont'd

- If you knew that 80% of your community gathered every day in one place, wouldn't you strongly consider building a church there?
- Facebook groups accomplish two key objectives necessary for ministry to take place:
 - The people are already on the platform (Attendance)
 - The people can connect with one another (Relationship)



Questions?

Next Week's Topics:

Innovative Worship for the Traditional and Contemporary Setting

Sealing the Deal – Visitors to Members and the plan to get there

Facilities for the Community



Welcome
Back!!



In this class we
will discuss

Facilities for the Community

The Simple Church Mindset

Missional Focus

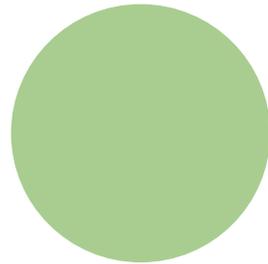
The Both/And Church

Scripture

—

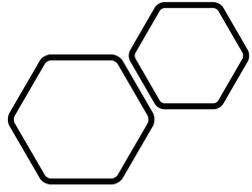
Hebrews

13:1-2



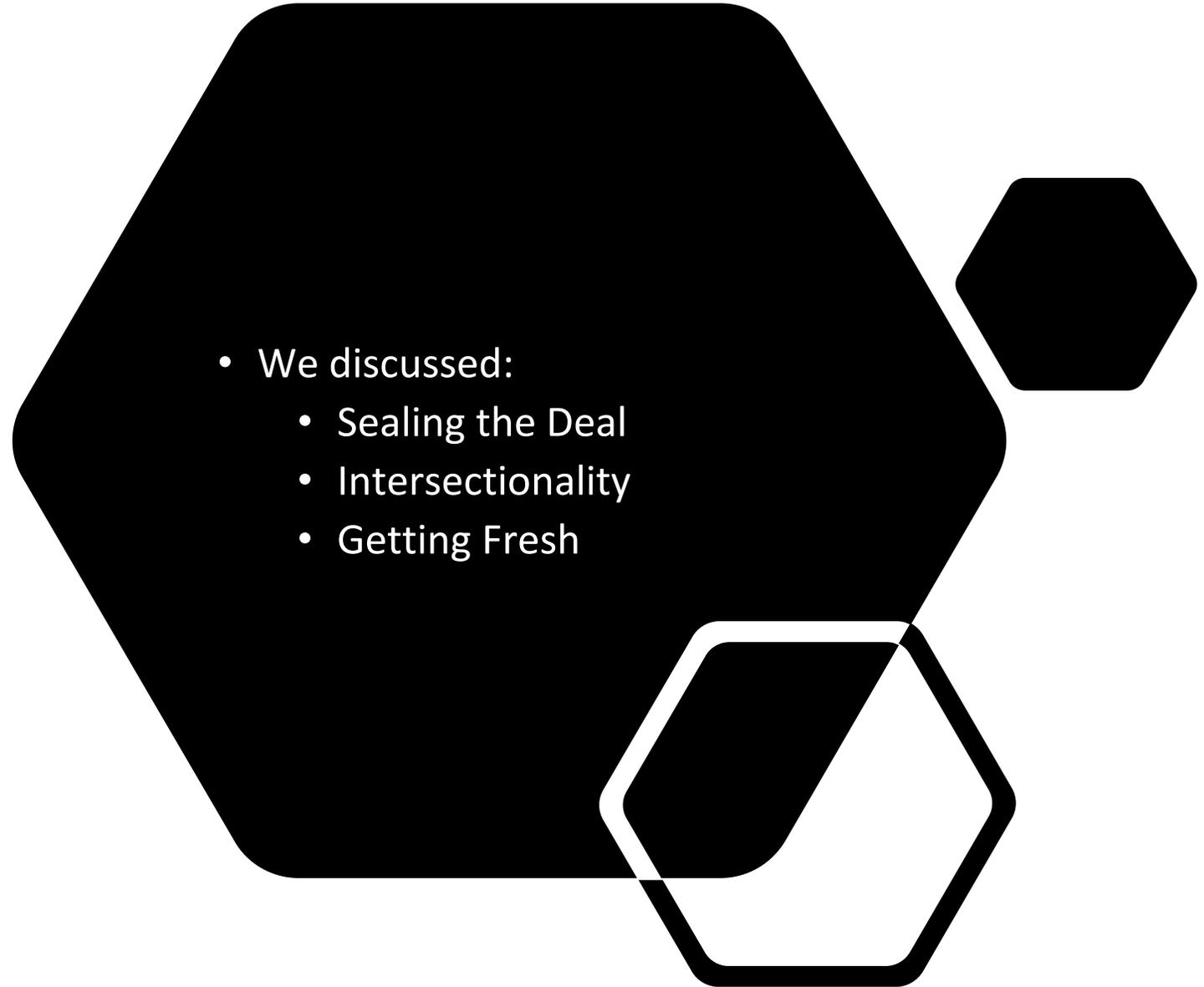
1 Let mutual love continue. ² Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Prayer



Share one
thing you
learned last
week...

- We discussed:
 - Sealing the Deal
 - Intersectionality
 - Getting Fresh





Facilities for the Community

What if we asked the community how our church facilities could best serve them?

A place *for* the community as well as a place *in* the community

Facilities for the Community

- Many of us are already opening our facilities for the community, but this is where I encourage you to assess CURRENT needs and see how the community might have changed or is shifting and seek out FRESH ways to build relationships and be of service to the community
- Often we have lists of rules and manuals that basically say 'you are not welcome here'
 - But sometimes being hospitable means being willing to get a little messy.
- Be intentional about how to reach new people through your facilities.
- Get to know your space capacities and the facilities capabilities.

Facilities

- Break area for law enforcement.
 - At my last church, we checked in regularly with the police department to let them know it was okay to hang out in parking lot. Which made the neighborhood feel safer.
- Learning centers for kids attending school virtually.
- Offer the church as a “we-work” space with free wifi for remote workers and college students.
- Rural churches – connect with the school and civic government about opening your sanctuary for school and community events,
- One church allowed a local chef/caterer to use their commercial kitchen and now she provides complete meals for their Little Food Pantry weekly and also caters their breakfast church.
- The choir room can be a great practice space for local musicians, groups to practice.



Facilities

- Think about what ideas are streams of income and what ideas are gifts to the community for the sake of building relationships.
- In all things, consider how your SafeSanctuaries policies effects it.
- Engage laity, trustees, etc. to help manage.

The Simple Church Mindset & Missional Focus

- Many times it is hard for people to truly connect and begin forming a relationship with our churches, because it is unclear what we are about, what we are working towards, and what our values are.
- Simple Church Mindset focuses on:
 - Clarity – the ability of the mission and vision to be communicated and understood by people.
 - Movement- the sequential steps that cause people to move to greater areas of commitment.
 - Alignment – the arrangement of all ministries and staff around the same mindset and goals.
 - Focus – the commitment to abandon everything that falls outside of the simple ministry process; the abilities to say no; the ability to say “yes to what works effectively and “no” to everything else.

Simple Church by Thom Rainer & Eric Geiger

Simple Church

- This applies to our approach to ministry, to hospitality, and to WORSHIP.
- And where some of us are still struggling to become the effect Simple Church, many are struggling in the transition to become an effective digital simple church.
 - Too much going in the church
 - Too much happening in the service
 - Too many “asks” each week
 - Too much happening on the website
 - Digital worship happening in too many venues and we aren’t connecting with people successfully and effectively.

Simple Church

- Streamline your focus, energy, and resources
- You can either do a few things great, or a lot of things good
- Plan the next big thing/next big move and get people on board
- Know the why. Get an idea of what success looks like. And when will we check-in to see how it went and how we'll do it next time.
- Take a breath if need-be before starting something.
- Get a second set of eyes on it.

Busyness can replace
effectiveness.

This should not happen.

Things to look out for
when introducing
change as we shift in
this season. - *Post
Quarantine Church,
Thom Rainer*

- Failure to gain influential allies – not taking sides. Just Positive reinforcements.
- No clear vision
- Failure to create short-term wins
- Failure to communicate a thousand times more
- GIVING OBSTACLES TOO MUCH ATTENTION.

Seven Ways to lead for Lasting Change – *Post-Quarantine Church – Thom Rainer*

1. Remind people of their biblical hope. - Hebrews 11:1
2. Remember, cultural change comes as the result of cumulative actions.
3. Visible action steps are essential
4. Allies are still imperative
5. Communication must increase exponentially
6. Leaders must be willing to accept membership losses
7. Leaders must align with the future

Both/And Church

- Are we trying to be a great church in the neighborhood or a great digital church?
- Are we trying to reach new people or get folks to come back that we haven't seen since the pandemic?
- Are we trying new things or trying to keep it simple?
- Does the church do discipleship on facebook or do we gather in small groups?
- Also, we are committing to privileging voices other than the majority in order to live in to God's hope and vision of an equal and beloved community. - *Cleghorn, Resurrecting Church*

Both/And Church

- The effective church today celebrates and trusts its appointed leader, but understands that it takes all of us, each one of us, online and in-person, young and old, to move the ministry of the church forward.
 - SPRC Online member example
 - Zoom ushers
 - Nursing Home Liturgists

Questions

- 1. How can I make offering time LESS awkward? I do an invitation to the offering, and then we have someone pass the plate around- lately it's been a couple of the kids (which is wonderful and they get so excited to do it) but it's hard to explain to the kids that they don't need to shake the plate at every person because some people give online or aren't giving at all... especially when visitors come around whether its the kids or the adults it seems to be profoundly awkward.
- How in the world do I get more laity amped up about doing this stuff? I tried to get a few of them to take this class, but I am struggling to get them excited about doing this work alongside of me instead of me doing the work for them
- For the energy music you mentioned using before worship, can we play Youtube or Spotify?
- I see the conference's license number on videos. Why doesn't the conference's copyright license cover our church?