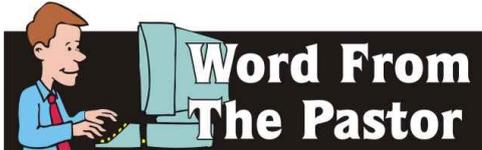


May 2014



Hello, hope all of you are well. It seems that all we talk about is what does the future of the church look like? Everywhere I go, every meeting, tons of blogs, district wide, conference wide, church wide, you get the idea. It is probably one of the most talked about subjects of our time, rightfully so. So let's once again dive into the depths of our future through the mind of Carey Nieuwhof, who shares with us 11 points of the relevant church of the future (and present I suppose).

No one really knows for sure...one thing however is for sure...it will change! Personally I feel deep in my heart that I was not "called" to build a mega church, but rather to share the "Good News" about God's love for us and to live that out in my community – some thru my words but mostly thru my hands and feet." How do you see the church in 5, 10, or 20 years from today? Where are you in that picture? Are you there?

1 Corinthians 14:26-33 The Message "So here's what I want you to do. When you gather for worship, each one of you be prepared with something that will be useful for all: Sing a hymn, teach a lesson, tell a story, lead a prayer, and provide an insight. If prayers are offered in tongues, two or three's the limit, and then only if someone is present who can interpret what you're saying. Otherwise, keep it between God and yourself. And no more than two or three speakers at a meeting, with the rest of you listening and taking it to heart. Take your turn, no one person taking over. Then each speaker gets a chance to say something special from God, and you all learn from each other. If you choose to speak, you're also responsible for how and when you speak. When we worship the right way, God doesn't stir us up into confusion; he brings us into harmony. This goes for all the churches—no exceptions"

Here are 11 Traits that Carey Nieuwhof (pastor and author) finds need to be met to be relative in the future. What do you think about them?

1. The ability to say no. One of the reasons churches don't change is because leaders are unwilling to say no to current members who prefer things the way they were. When you learn to say no to the preferences of some current members, you learn to say yes to a community that is ready to be reached. (For more on learning to say no, see this post.)

2. Outsider focus. Churches that become passionate about people outside their walls will be far more effective than churches that are passionate about keeping the few people they have inside their walls. Better still, you will have a healthier church. We call individuals who are fixated on their wants and needs selfish and immature. Selfless and mature churches will have an impact because of their passion for people God cares about.

3. Quick decision making. If you have a decision making process that's slow and complicated, you will not be able to keep up with the pace of change needed. Having multi-level approval processes and having to get congregational approval on matters will block innovation. I agree with Jeff Brodie, if you can't make a decision within 24 hours, your process is too slow (see Jeff's helpful post on 5 essentials for every church constitution here).

4. Flexibility. You don't need to change your mission (for the most part), but you do need to change your methods. Flexible and adaptable churches that can innovate around strategy and different initiatives will have the freedom to make the changes they need to make an impact moving forward.

5. A willingness to embrace smaller to become bigger. Mega-churches will continue to grow, but most of us won't lead mega-churches. When small churches stop trying to be mega-churches, good things can happen. In fact, more and more larger churches will start embracing smaller venues, locations and partnerships to keep growing. A greater number of smaller venues might be a hallmark of future churches making an impact.

6. A quicker, lighter footprint. I learned this phrase from my friend Rich Birch (you should read his blog). Churches need a quicker, lighter footprint to grow. If you're waiting for millions to build your building, you might wait forever. Get innovative and start looking at portable and non-traditional ways of growing your ministry. Quicker, lighter footprints will be necessary (see this Leadership Network article for more on innovate, inexpensive building alternatives).

7. Valuing online relationships as real relationships. Churches that aren't online beyond a website are going to miss the boat. Real interaction with real people online is...well...real. Sure, face to face is deeper, but people will tell you things online they can't muster the courage to tell you face to face. Whether you get them to a 'real' church is increasingly debatable. I would love that. But we'll have to see. As much as you might hate it, virtual relationships are becoming real relationships.

8. An openness to questions. Most unchurched people today come in with questions that seem weird to those of us who spent a life time in church. Don't try to answer them right away. Churches that understand that embracing questions is as important as providing immediate answers will make an impact in the future. We're discovering that if you embrace questions, the answers eventually find their way into people's lives. The Holy Spirit actually does move in people's lives.

9. A high value on experimentation. The more traditional you are, the less you will value experimentation. The more successful you are, the less you will value experimentation. If you start to raise the value of experimentation, you will accelerate change and flexibility. The churches that connect with their community will be the churches willing enough to try a variety of things, and who also have the courage to kill them as soon as they stop producing results.

10. Prioritizing a for you not from you culture. Andy Stanley often talks about what he wants for people, not just what he wants from them. Churches in decline often think in terms of what they can get from people – money, time, growth etc. Churches that will make an impact on the future will be passionate about what they want for people – financial balance, generosity, the joy of serving, better families, and of course, Christ at the center of everyone's life.

11. A tailored experience, not a tailored message. You don't have to tailor the message to unchurched people (see what Andy Stanley says about that here), but churches that have an impact will tailor the experience. There were presents under my tree last Christmas. But I'm not a shopping mall fan. 90% of my gift buying happened online. The content was the same – the experience changed. Churches that decide they will hold the message sacred but tailor the experience to an ever shifting culture will be more effective.

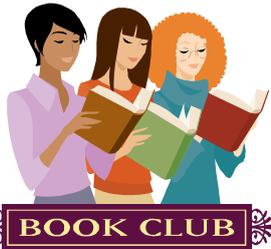
What did you think about the things Carey is proposing? I am interested in what all of you are think about when it comes to this subject and love to hear from you. I am especially interested in what the under **something** Group (up to 50 years of age) think about church, what it may look like in 5, 10 or 20 years from now. I hardly ever get to sit and talk about that with many of you, so I thought why not give you an opportunity to say...so here is our invitation.

Calling all of you under 50 something who are interested in the future of the church, or want to share about what you see in the church today. This could be your opportunity to begin to help shape that conversation and that vision. Come and see, join us for pizza and a conversation. Bring your kids; we will have activities planned for them. **Saturday June 28th 5 to 7 pm at the church.**

Hope to see you there...peace, rene'

Book Club

June 11th the book club will meet at the home of Niis Bue, 1516 24th Avenue, Longview Phone number is (360) 425-



7121. We will be reading and discussing the book, "War Brides" by Helen Bryan. This is an enjoyable book with a look at several women who married during the war and how they ended up in England, the life they lived with and how they endured. Please come even if you haven't read the book. This book club is for women who enjoy reading and sharing their ideas and thoughts. We are always looking for new books to read.

We had a great meeting in May with another book club from Rainier and discussed a book we had all read. This was a large group of 11 women and it is something we may try to do again next year.

Sharon Klump



Thank you, church family, for all your love and support before and during my recent surgery.

Thank you for the beautiful cards and flowers; for your phone calls and visits. And, most of all for your prayers.

You are all special to me. I feel truly blessed.

Vernette Deckman

The reason I love my church is everyone welcomed me and Samantha with open arms.

Showed us what a family is all about. Even though we are not there we are in spirit. My love and prayers are with all of you.

Sincerely

Samantha and Lisa Buzell



United Methodist Women

- All women of the church are welcome and encouraged to attend
- 1st Thursday of each month 10:30 am

United Methodist Men

- All men of the church are welcome and encouraged to attend
- Third Wednesdays 7:30 pm

Women's Book Group

- Meets 2nd Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. (except July and August) in member's homes.

Sunday School

- Each Sunday Sept through May
9:30 a.m.

Adult studies

- Adult Sunday school class
- "God Has Left the Building"
Sunday 9:30 am in room 1

Music

- The "Unity Crew" rehearses Sundays at 9:00 am and Wednesdays at 6:30 pm

What has changed and how churches are responding

In addition to the changes in paid lay staffing for churches, there also have been significant changes regarding the nature of clergy leadership in congregations.

While virtually all congregations in the U.S. have pastors, from time to time the background, characteristics, and roles of these clergy change. E. Brooks Holifield has noted many of these changes in his comprehensive and richly documented history of clergy in the United States, *God's Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America* (Eerdmans, 2007, [Amazon](#), [Cokesbury](#)). He illustrates how clerical authority has assumed multiple forms over the years and has undergone continual evolution, greatly shaped by distinctive social and cultural factors.

Role. For a number of reasons, both theological and practical, clergy are far more likely today to see their role more closely connected to the biblical concept of "equipper of the saints" than as the one who does ministry *for* a congregation. The roles of worship leadership, preaching, and pastoral care still occupy much of a pastor's time, but the roles of visionary, teacher, and developer have grown more important. Rather than serving on behalf of the congregation, pastors are more likely to see all members as ministers, help them discover those ministries, and thus strengthen them to be motivated and equipped to serve. When this model works well, the impact of the congregation's total ministry grows exponentially.

Full-time or part-time. Far more churches are served today by part-time pastors than ten years ago, and many of these are bi-vocational. Protestant congregations in the U.S. tend to be relatively small since the more historic denominations grew rapidly when the country was overwhelmingly rural. Thus, as the population has shifted from its rural nature during the early twentieth century to a predominantly non-rural population today, the size of many of these churches has declined. The median worship attendance (half more, half fewer) continues to decrease across mainline denominations. Therefore, the number of churches that can afford a full-time pastor is decreasing. For example, there were 2,000 fewer United Methodist churches averaging 100 or more in worship in 2012 than in 2002. With many judicatories of mainline denominations having minimum salary requirements for churches with full-time clergy, increasingly fewer churches can afford such clergy.

Age. Churches are far more likely to have a pastor aged 55 or older today than ten years ago. The percentage of pastors in mainline denominations of this age increased from 30 percent to 50 percent. Churches are much less likely to have a pastor between the ages of 35 and 54. This group of pastors fell from 55 percent to 44 percent of pastors during the decade. And churches are about as likely today to have a pastor under 35 as ten years ago since there was only a modest increase in the percentage of younger clergy (from five to six percent).

Gender. It is somewhat more likely that a church's pastor is a woman now than ten years ago as women continue to represent a larger percentage of all clergy.

What has not changed

Leader and guide. When pastors arrive at a congregation, they are seen as a spiritual leader for the congregation. No matter how young the pastor or how small the congregation, this continues to be true. However, the best pastors continue to wear the mantle of leadership lightly. Unfortunately, there appears to be an increase in those advocating a "my way or the highway" approach to pastoral leadership. But the truly effective pastors know that they are also guides on a journey toward God's next faithful step for the congregation, a journey that began before their time of leadership and will continue beyond it.

continued next page)

Insider and outsider. Pastors have a place in the congregation from the beginning of their service there and continue to enjoy access to the most joyful and sad moments in the lives of parishioners. Pastors are the ultimate insiders in that they are present and central in all the big events of the congregation. However, in another sense, a pastor is never a true insider. There is always some distance between pastor and congregants and, in the end, it is this critical distance that permits the pastor to be helpful as a spiritual leader, whereas total identification would not.

Professional and servant. Clergy were among the original professionals in the United States, and in many ways pastors share characteristics with other professionals. The presence of specialized training, standards, codes of conduct, peer review, and other such marks of professionalism serve clergy and congregations well. But, as Holifield points out, clergy historically and today continue to live in a tension between being a professional and being a servant of God's vision. The two are not mutually exclusive, of course, but the tension remains for most clergy today. Clergy know that "professional" only partially describes who they are since they see their ministry primarily as a sacred calling from God.

[Lovett H. Weems, Jr.](#)

"This article is reprinted by permission from Leading Ideas, a free e-newsletter from the Lewis Center for Church Leadership of Wesley Theological Seminary and available at www.churchleadership.com."

Longview UMC History

A number of years ago I was asked to take over the position of LUMC Church Historian.

I started updating the first photo/scrapbooks that had been put together through the years, trying to get names and dates of people and events.

I took a lot of pictures when I first started, collected articles from the newspaper that had to do with our church and congregation, made a "picture quilt" history. The albums are located in the church library.

Then came the "digital" camera and for some reason my picture taking has dwindled considerably, and some of the snaps, etc. have been removed to be used in various displays for some of our celebrations, and not returned to their original spot in the albums.

I currently have quite a collection of items to be put into these books and plan on attacking that job some time this summer. If anyone has a photo they think they could part with that has happened the past couple of years and would give to me I would appreciate it.

My other concern is "THE QUILT". It is in my cedar chest and should be hanging somewhere in the church. I would ask you all to check the walls and see where an appropriate place might be. I plan on bringing it to the next council meeting after this note is put into the newsletter so "be ready"!!

Shalom

Mona Petersen



Nominations



Hello everyone, I hope you won't let the heading of this article deter you from reading and taking this note to heart (even though it may sound like work, lol). I know that all of you love this church, many of you have put down on paper why this is your church, what made you come to begin with, and why you stayed. I want to thank you for that, because it is so important for us to remember why. From time to time when I get bummed out about what difference I seem to make, I open up our web page and read through the many letters you all wrote, and that pulls me out of my depression, puts me back on my feet and re-charges my soul. I love to read them and they never get old. Try it for yourself sometime. Those letters are also an important part of our testimony to the world. So many people these days search online before ever walking into a church. I know of several people who are at our church now who read those testimonies, and it was your words that compelled them to come and visit the first time. Awesome job guys...please keep writing them.

My point however is that the kind of church we have here doesn't just happen on its own or by accident. There have been many great leaders with big hearts and buckets of patience, many who are still serving our church here today, and many who are not with us anymore who have given their time and energy to make sure that the day you walked in here you would feel at home, feel accepted, and feel loved. Those leaders, some came without much fanfare, they just stepped in and shared their gifts with us. Some came kicking and screaming, but in the end were glad they did, lol. Those leaders are in need today, in need of the next bunch of saints to take over some of the responsibilities of this church.

There are many places to serve. Worship, finance, keeping up the building and lawn, office, cleaning, dreaming, training, singing, all types of ministry. It is my hope and prayer that if you are not serving Longview UMC in any particular way at this time that you would think about what brings you joy, what are your gifts, and where might they add substance to God's plans here in Longview. If you decide where you would want to serve, then find someone in that area and ask them about it. Share your gifts and ideas with them, and see what happens. There will be another generation after you. What would their world be like if they didn't have a way to get to know God, hear the amazing stories Jesus told, and experience a loving community that will accept them for who they are?

We have a team (committee) called the committee on nominations and leadership development (formerly the nominating committee or committee on lay leadership). This committee or team serves throughout the year to guide the church council or alternative structure on matters regarding the leadership of the congregation (other than employed staff). Members of this committee must be sensitive to the leadership needs of the congregation and know the capabilities, gifts, skills and experience of the persons in the congregation. (Yes, you could serve here as well). This team will hope to find leaders who are willing to serve this church in the many ways which are needed. We are just now beginning to look at 2015. So if you have prayed about, thought about and talked about being one of those saints who will serve this church in these particular ways please come and talk to me (rene'), and lets find out where we can go together...like Jesus said, "come and see".

Peace, rene'



The Social Justice team is planning an interesting RMN anniversary service on June 8, 14. What is the Reconciling Ministry Network, you ask? It is an ever expanding group of churches or groups within United Methodist Churches that are working to change the language of the United Methodist Book of Doctrine (the church's legislation) to allow LGBTQ people to serve openly in the church as ministers and to change the language so it is more accepting of LGBTQ folks. The Pacific Northwest RMN group is very active and usually offers legislation at Annual Conference to advance the cause. In addition, RMN publishes a wonderful quarterly newsletter which we have placed on the table in the Narthex. Feel free to take a copy.

Longview joined the RM Network eleven years ago, and each year we have planned a special service to recognize our commitment and involvement. This year we will have a special speaker, Jane Brazell, from Olympia who will speak on "Safe Sanctuary". When I think of Longview UMC, I think that we are a safe sanctuary for those who do not feel comfortable in church - especially for those who have felt rejected by churches because of their sexual orientation. We will learn more from Jane, an energetic young woman who survived ex gay indoctrination and who is committed to making church a safe place for LGBTQ folks. I think you will find her presentation interesting and meaningful.

Jan Hanson, from the Longview Library, will also report about the "Rainbow Community" group of young people, meeting at the library every Monday afternoon at 3:30 pm.

This group, together with the Diversity Group from Lower Columbia College will be holding the first Pride Day celebration on June 6 at LCC. Pride Day will culminate that evening with a young people's dance at McClelland Arts Center. Our church through the Pride Grant is renting the space and providing refreshments.

In addition, we will present the annual Jay Gregory Memorial Award that Sunday to one who has given significant support to and advocacy for LGBT rights. It is always a pleasure to present that award.

On this Sunday, we get great joy out of singing "The Reconciliation Song", which I think of as our LUMC RMN anthem.

It should be a great Sunday so come and bring your friends too.

Barbara Vining

Late Breaking News!

It isn't often that I claim editorial privilege, but this is one of the times.



Here I am holding my very new great-grandson, Jacen Tyler Brand born May 23rd at 7:49 am, weighing 7 lbs. 5 oz. , 20.5 inches long. He has quite a bit of dark hair and is absolutely beautiful! Congratulations to the new parents, Caitlyn and Dyllon. You will all have a chance to meet Jacen soon.

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Check out our website!

www.umclongview.com