

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CREATING A NEW LIFECYCLE IN AN AGING AND DECLINING
CONGREGATION: REVITALIZING CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER,
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE
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CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	ix
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	x
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....	xiii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Context.....	1
The Problem.....	3
Definition of Terms.....	4
Description of the Proposed Project	5
Scope of the Project	5
Phases of the Project	7
Research.....	7
Planning	8
Implementation	9
Evaluation	9
Writing	10
Conclusion	10
CHAPTER 2: BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE REVIEW	11
Introduction.....	11
The Seven Churches of Revelation.....	11
Christ’s Leadership for His Church	14

Reflections for Today's Church.....	17
Christ's Call for Spiritual Renewal.....	18
The Meaning of Repentance	24
Repentance and the Kingdom of God.....	25
Repent or Else.....	26
Spiritual Renewal for Today's Church	28
Christ's Command to Love.....	30
Reflections for Today's Church to Love	33
Christ's Concern for the Truth.....	35
Truth for Today's Church	37
Christ's Teaching about the Holy Spirit	38
The Holy Spirit is Christ's Representative	39
Christ's Teaching about the Paraclete.....	40
Reflections for Today's Church.....	41
The Church and the Open Door	42
Reflections for Today's Church: Embrace Christ's Open Door.....	44
Conclusion	45
CHAPTER 3: GENERAL LITERATURE REVIEW	47
Introduction.....	47
The Lifecycle of An Organization	49
Defining Various Lifecycle Models.....	49
Major Causes for Plateau and Decline.....	54
The Process of Transformation for a Pentecostal Congregation	60
Transformation of the Leader	60
Transformation of the Spiritual Life of the Congregation	66

Transformation of the Spiritual Community of the Congregation.....	69
Transformation of the Spiritual Formation of the Congregation	72
Releasing Spiritual Gifts in the Congregation	75
Transformation of the Missional Effectiveness of the Congregation ..	78
Transformation of the Management/ Structure of the Congregation...	80
Creating New Lifecycles: Leading the Transformational Process	84
Re-Creating Growth Points.....	85
The Change Process	86
The Preparation for Re-Envisioning a Church.....	88
The Process for Re-Envisioning a Church.....	90
The Practice of Re-Envisioning a Church	91
Conclusion	93
CHAPTER 4: DESCRIPTION OF FIELD PROJECT	95
Preparation of the Project.....	95
Preparatory Assessments	95
Consultations and Coaching	98
Development of Comprehensive Plan	101
Execution of the Project.....	101
The Divine Urgency of Leadership Development	102
The Divine Urgency of Spiritual Life	103
The Divine Urgency of Spiritual Community	105
The Divine Urgency of Discipleship/Ministry	106
The Encounter Retreat	107
School of Discipleship	109
The Divine Urgency of CLC’s Jerusalem Harvest	111

The Divine Urgency of Management	113
Results of the Project	115
Guiding Coalition: Pastors and Board	115
School of Discipleship Participants: Non-Leaders	117
The Project’s Contribution to Ministry.....	118
CHAPTER 5: PROJECT SUMMARY.....	120
Evaluation of the Project.....	120
Keys to Project Effectiveness	120
Keys to Project Improvement	124
Implications of the Project.....	126
Recommendations for Pentecostal Leaders	128
Recommendations for Further Study	131
Conclusion	132
APPENDIX A: 2012 CHURCH LIFE FUNCTION ASSESSMENT COMPOSITE SCORE	134
APPENDIX B: ICC FROM CHURCH LIFE RESOURCES.....	136
APPENDIX C: DICK HARDY EVALUATION	137
APPENDIX D: 18-MONTH COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN.....	170
APPENDIX E: CLC VISION GRAPHIC	172
APPENDIX F: ASSIMILATION PROCESS FOR RED CARPET TEAM .	173
APPENDIX G: PATH OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH	174
APPENDIX H: ENCOUNTER SCHEDULE AND TOPICS	175
APPENDIX I: SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP	177
APPENDIX J: PROMOTIONAL PRIORITIES	179
APPENDIX K: SPACE UTILIZATION AND INTERIORS STUDY	193

APPENDIX L: CHURCH LIFE FUNCTION ASSESSMENT AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT.....	204
APPENDIX M: 2014 CHURCH LIFE FUNCTION ASSESSMENT COMPOSITE SCORE	205
SOURCES CONSULTED.....	206
Introduction.....	206
Chapter 2: Biblical-Theological Review	206
Chapter 3: General Literature Review	209
Chapter 4: Field Project	217
Chapter 5: Project Summary.....	217

ABSTRACT

Statistics indicate that over 80 percent of churches have plateaued or suffer decline. Within time and without intervention, these churches will die as they follow the natural flow of the organizational lifecycle. However, churches do not have to experience the final stages of the organizational lifecycle because they possess potential for renewed growth. Pastors can learn the art of leading a church through revitalization, advancing God's purposes, restoring health, and renewing the church to pulsate with the dynamic presence of Christ.

This project examines that which brings life and transformation to the local church through biblical research on church health and through the study of organizational lifecycles and their impact on churches. It explains the transformational process that tackled the decline experienced by Christian Life Center (CLC), Fort Lauderdale, Florida and brought substantial growth. The research describes the development of a comprehensive plan that identifies immediate urgencies and steps needed to break restricting behaviors and hindrances, and outlines the necessary steps to renewing health and fostering growth in the church. This project demonstrates the creation of a new lifecycle using a biblical, comprehensive, Spirit-filled approach, one that works systemically and developmentally for churches of any size.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I remain indebted to a number of people for the outcome of this project. I'm thankful for those who have encouraged and inspired me to see this through to completion.

First, I want to express appreciation for Mike Harper, who embraced the vision to bring Church Life Resources to Europe to assist the pastors of the Fellowship of European International Churches. He encouraged Dr. Wayne Lee to test the universal principles outlined by Church Life Resources through this group of passionate servants. I'm grateful that Doc Lee invited me to join his consultants cohort through the AGTS doctoral program. My ministry will forever be impacted by Doc Lee and Church Life Resources. Doc Lee provided mentoring, consultation, and inspiration for the vision in my life, and I would not have embarked on this journey if it were not for his encouragement.

The AGTS Doctor of Ministry team (Dr. Cheryl Taylor, Director; Dr. Ava Oleson, Program Coordinator; and Dr. Lois Olena, Project Coordinator) provided instrumental support for this transformational journey. Their graciousness and inspiration proved critical at just the right times. They gave me much needed advice, support, and encouragement. Dr. Olena offered profound insights that helped shape the project and continuously, but gently, nudged me along to complete the journey. Often I would allow the project to slip to the back burner, only to be motivated by a timely email from her to

keep pressing forward. I would tell me wife, “Oh, my project coordinator is writing. I better get to work!” I benefited from her wisdom and knowledge—what an asset she is, both to me personally and to the Doctor of Ministry team.

I also want to express gratitude for Dr. Ben Aker, my biblical adviser, who provided insights that assisted me in thinking through important issues and Dr. Michael Clarensau, who brought insight and depth to this project.

I am also extremely thankful for Erica Huinda, my editor, who has been invaluable. She walked with me through the eighteen months of this project with grace and fortitude. She helped bring clarity to the project with her gentle input and suggestions.

I deeply appreciate the pastors, staff, board, and members of Christian Life Center for their support and patience as I pulled away for periods of time to conduct research and write. Most importantly, however, I want to thank the church for embracing God’s vision for the future, for going on a journey of change and aggressively implementing God’s divine urgencies. Together, we have witnessed the creation of a new lifecycle and have learned the process of revitalization. I pray that we will continuously be brought back to the change points that produce new life, growth, and vitality. I love being your pastor!

For my wife of twenty-six years, Candi Manning, I am constantly—and eternally—grateful. This project was our life, one that she embraced, lived, and breathed. In the midst of all the ministerial demands, she would arrange for me to break away in order to keep pressing forward. She patiently listened to ideas and findings, and she sacrificed family time and energy in helping to manage the church when I left for yet

another round of research and writing. I will forever remain thankful for her love, support, and commitment.

And most importantly, I give thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ, for His love, grace, and mercy in my life. He has given me vision, passion, anointing, and strength to fulfill His divine purposes.

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1: Adizes's Organizational Lifecycle Model	50
Figure 2: Bullard's Model of Congregational Development	52
Figure 3: Composite Scores of CLC's Church Life Function Assessment	96
Figure 4: Fifteen Vital Functions of CLC	96
Table 1: Church Life Function Assessment Sub-Scale Percentage Scores from 2012 and 2014	116
Table 2: Average Scores for Pre (A) and Post (B) Assessments of Spiritual Health Dimensions	117
Table 3: Summary Table for Paired-Samples <i>t</i> -tests on Sub-scales and Overall Health	118

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 1988, Win Arn shocked church leaders with his statistics that four out of five churches remain plateaued or declining. He explained that “many churches begin a plateau or slow decline about their fifteenth to eighteenth year.”¹ Research shows that this trend has continued. Church attendance continues to decline especially as young people leave their local churches. Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold claim that “the church in America faces great challenges. Most churches are plateaued or declining in worship attendance. The percentage of people attending church is shrinking, and young people eighteen to twenty-nine are abandoning the faith.”² This information factually reinforces what churches and pastors inherently experience across the nation.

The Context

Between 1994 and 2011, my wife and I served as missionaries with the Assemblies of God World Missions. For the last twelve years of our missionary service, we served as senior pastors of Vienna Christian Center, Vienna, Austria. We also served on the leadership team for the Fellowship of European International Churches, a

¹ Win Arn, *The Pastor's Manual for Effective Ministry* (Monrovia, CA: Church Growth, 1988), 41.

² Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon E. Penfold, *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014), 26.

relational network of the Assemblies of God that oversees more than fifty churches in thirty-nine nations across Europe.

As we searched for church health models that would assist our international churches in the European context, we came into contact with Dr. Wayne Lee, who developed a church life model in conjunction with his organization Church Life Resources. This biblical, comprehensive, Pentecostal model for church health offers a systemic, developmental approach to church ministry that I believed would greatly assist our churches and pastors. As a result, I enrolled in the leadership and consultants cohort he was offering through the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (AGTS) in Springfield, Missouri.

One year into the program, the Lord brought a major shift in ministry and life to my wife and me—a change that would ultimately birth this project. In 2011, the Fellowship asked us to succeed retiring pastor Pastor Max Yeary, who had served as senior pastor of Christian Life Center (CLC) in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for the past thirty-three years. Our experience as foreign missionaries and pastors of a large international church had led to this invitation to pastor CLC. The similarities of both congregations made this a natural ministry fit. At the time of our transition to CLC, attendance averaged nearly 1,600 per Sunday. Congregants represent approximately twenty-five different nationalities, with 91 percent of the congregation being of ethnic decent. The largest ethnic groups include Caribbean (78 percent), Latino (9 percent), and Brazilian (2 percent).

Christian Life Center began in 1957 as Oakland Park Assembly of God. In 1987, the church built a 40,000 square foot facility on Commercial Boulevard in Fort

Lauderdale and adopted its current name to reflect its new location. The church continued to experience growth over the next twelve years, and in 1999, the church erected an additional 100,000 square foot worship center that encompasses a 2200-seat auditorium, adult education classes, prayer chapel, choir rehearsal room, bookstore, and nursery. The church then converted the original facility to house children's ministries, youth ministries, offices, and a preschool.

The Problem

During its fifty-seven-year history, CLC had grown into a megachurch with a peak attendance of 2,100 congregants; however, for the seven to ten years prior to the pastoral transition, CLC had slowly declined by approximately 25 percent. CLC had lost a clear focus on its mission and vision, become programmatic, and struggled to embrace its identity. With worship attendance in decline and many within the younger generation feeling disconnected with the formality of the services, CLC faced multiple challenges: a shortage of quality staff and leaders, a lack of passionate spirituality, low relational connectivity, no solid systematic discipleship, low volunteerism, misaligned outreach, and dwindling resources.

In addition, although the auditorium seats 2,200, the parking facilities limited the adult seating capacity to approximately 1,500. Due to the heavy debt load on the main worship center, the church had not made any renovations to the children's and youth facilities. Landscaping and curb appeal desperately needed updating, and the signage remained inadequate. The worship center lobby no longer met practical needs, and technology had not been updated since the construction in 1999. CLC needed a major

face lift, both internally and externally. CLC needed to establish new vision that would reverse its decline and create a new lifecycle.

The Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop a transformational process that will address the decline at Christian Life Center.

Definition of Terms

Church Life Function Assessment—a comprehensive church health analysis developed by Wayne and Sherry Lee with Church Life Resources. It asks 150 questions to assist ministry leaders in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of six missional values and vital functions of the church.

Church Revitalization—the process of bringing life and growth to a church in plateau or decline.

Lifecycle—the series of changes in the life of an organism or organization. Organisms and organizations are born, then grow, age, and die.

New Lifecycle in a Church—renewed vision, health, spiritual vitality, authentic relationships, increase in volunteerism, increase in leaders, financial health and community impact.

Process—a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.

Spiritual Health Assessment—an evaluation produced by Gospel Publishing House, which is adapted from the Spiritual Health Assessment and Spiritual Health Planner by Purpose Driven. It contains forty questions that gives a snapshot of an individual's spiritual health and pinpoints areas that remain out of balance in God's five purposes for a believer.

Transformational—a thorough and dramatic change in one’s spirituality, authentic connections, growth, and service within the church and community.

Description of the Proposed Project

Scope of the Project

I will develop a transformational process that will create a new lifecycle at Christian Life Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This process will analyze the current cultural and spiritual realities, which will inspire the strategic transitions necessary to create a new lifecycle. As I implement this transformational process, leaders will learn how to transfer the vision of CLC into their ministries and areas of leadership, thus utilizing effective principles and methods to create new growth at CLC.

To accomplish this, a thorough analysis of CLC must occur. This analysis will examine six missional values of the congregation: (1) leadership, (2) spiritual life, (3) spiritual community, (4) discipleship/ministry, (5) outreach, and (6) management.

To create an objective analysis of the current realities of the church, I will use the Church Life Function Assessment to determine restricting behaviors and current health in these six missional values. This 150-question assessment will help identify the strengths and weaknesses in these six missional values and vital functions of the church. I will have all CLC pastors, board, staff, and key ministry leaders take the assessment. Results will be compiled from all those taking the assessment.

Following the assessment, I will work with outside church consultants Wayne Lee, Mike Harper, and Dick Hardy, who will use the results of the assessment and onsite observations to give recommendations to be implemented into the transformational process. The assessment, consultants’ observations and recommendations, and my

objective analysis of CLC will all inform the necessary strategic methodologies for implementation. Because successfully creating a new lifecycle in the local church requires a comprehensive approach, this transformational process will focus simultaneously on six major missional values.

The implementation of the transformational process requires cooperation from the pastors, board, leaders, and congregants. As a result, a weekend spiritual retreat, weekly discipleship course, and regular meetings with the pastors and board will be offered in order to garner cooperation, build momentum, and work toward a new lifecycle.

The retreat will touch the missional value of spiritual life and deal with issues such as repentance, sanctification, Holy Spirit baptism, and vision for the future. The weekend retreat will take place on a Thursday night through Saturday morning.

The discipleship course follows immediately after the retreat to renew the mind and change old paradigms and mindsets with new vision and new methods to fulfill a new vision. The course will deal with four core missional values: spiritual life, spiritual community, discipleship/ministry, and outreach. This two-hour class will take place on Wednesday evenings for twenty weeks, from 6:30-8:30 pm, and will cover two lessons each evening. Research gathered for the biblical-theological literature review and the general literature review will inform the topics addressed for the spiritual retreat and discipleship school.

Simultaneously, I will work with the church board and pastoral team to address two other missional values: leadership and management. The comprehensive analysis and consultants' observations will provide the key issues the pastors and board need to

address as we determine the steps necessary to revitalize CLC. I will meet with the church board monthly and the pastors weekly.

At the conclusion of the project, I will evaluate the transformational process to determine whether it successfully established a new lifecycle within the church. This evaluation will assess the numeric, spiritual, and relational impact made by the project. Though the missional values remain transferrable, this project will not detail methods for other churches to use in creating their own transformational process. In addition, the project will not address the factors that led to decline at CLC over the past seven to ten years.

Phases of the Project

This project will consist of five phases: (1) research, (2) planning, (3) implementation, (4) evaluation, and (5) writing.

Research

The research phase of the project will focus on three key areas: (1) assessments and demographic studies, (2) research for the biblical-theological review, and (3) research for the general literature review.

The biblical-theological literature review will address the following themes: (1) the seven churches of Revelation, (2) Christ's call for spiritual renewal, (3) Christ's command to love, (4) Christ's concern for truth, (5) Christ's teaching about the Holy Spirit, and (6) the Church and the open door.

The general literature review will address a number of themes: (1) the lifecycles of an organization—lifecycle models, the definition of a lifecycle, major causes for plateau and decline, (2) revitalization for a Pentecostal congregation—transformation of

the leader, spiritual life of the congregation, spiritual community of the congregation, spiritual formation of the congregation, spiritual gifting released in a congregation, missional effectiveness of the congregation, and management/structure of the congregation, and (3) the creation of new lifecycles and the leading of the transformational process—the preparation for re-envisioning a church, the process for re-envisioning a church, and the practice of re-envisioning a church.

Planning

This project will include four important steps for creating a new lifecycle at CLC. The first step will include research in preparation for writing the biblical-theological literature review and the general literature review, which includes current research related to revitalization, turnaround churches, and creating a new lifecycle.

The planning phase also will include the administration of comprehensive assessments of the present realities of the church and its leadership. I will select assessments that will be used for the evaluation of the project's effectiveness and will also assist in the development of an advance plan.

Third, I will engage consultants who serve Assemblies of God districts, churches, and pastors to help identify strengths, weaknesses, and growth barriers in local churches. I will also engage a firm to assist in the development of a comprehensive facilities master plan. These consultants will give objective analysis and expertise as CLC faces a paradigm shift.

Fourth, I will use the assessments and recommendations by the consultants to develop an eighteen-month comprehensive strategic plan for transformation.

Fifth, I will design the courses and lessons for the Encounter Retreat and School of Discipleship. These materials will be developed to disciple and inspire congregants in vision, spiritual growth, ministry training, methodology, leadership, care, etc.

Implementation

Implementation will begin with the assessments given to the pastors, board, and other participants to evaluate the spiritual health of CLC. Demographic studies will also be included. The assessments, observations, and recommendations from consultants will be used to develop a comprehensive advance plan. Following the assessments, the Encounter Retreat and School of Discipleship will begin. The Encounter Retreat will be a two-day spiritual retreat at a local retreat center. School of Discipleship will be held for twenty weeks on Wednesday nights from 6:30-8:30 p.m., with dinner and childcare provided.

Evaluation

The evaluation of this project will be comprehensive and will include several matrices to gauge the spiritual health of CLC and whether the project led to the creation of a new lifecycle at CLC. At the launch of Encounter Retreat and School of Discipleship, I will give assessments to two groups: (1) pastors/board who will serve as the guiding coalition, and (2) participants beginning the transformational process. Following the conclusion of the School of Discipleship, I will again administer the same assessment. The pre and post assessments will evaluate the degree vision shifted to the six missional values.

Second, this project will employ quantitative measures to evaluate church growth and the creation of a new lifecycle. For quantitative measures, I will compare attendance

and financial data to measure projective effectiveness and reveal any need for adjustment and vision planning.

Third, I will gather quantitative data to measure the increase or decline in the six missional lanes of the church: (1) Encounter Retreat participation, (2) life group participation, (3) volunteerism, (4) School of Discipleship participation, and (5) facility renovation and upgrades. The scoreboard will clearly show at the conclusion of this project if a new lifecycle has been created at CLC.

Writing

The writing phase of this project will occur between June 2015 and September 2016. I will take several weeks off from ministry at Christian Life Center during this phase to ensure I have enough quality time to research and write the chapters of this project.

Conclusion

Churches naturally go through ups and downs, victory and defeat, joy and sorrow. Like every other type of organization, churches have a predictable lifecycle, one inclined to follow basic patterns of growth, plateau, and decline. When a church leader knows what stage of the lifecycle one's church is experiencing, the leader will develop a clearer understanding of the strategies involved in renewing the lifecycle of the church. While many churches experience the problem of plateau or decline, they also have the opportunity to create a new lifecycle. This project will demonstrate the necessary elements for creating a new lifecycle at CLC, elements that will assist other churches as they seek to create their own new lifecycle of growth and vitality

CHAPTER 2: BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In Christ's messages to the Seven Churches in Asia in Revelation 2 and 3, several themes emerge, showing important values and principles that Christ desires for His Church. The attention Christ gives to these themes enables the Church to see that which brings life and transformation in the local church. Then, "to whatever degree our lives or churches reflect symptoms analogous to any of the churches the risen Lord addresses in these letters, we must take heed to 'what the Spirit says to the churches.'"¹ God's power will transform the Church as believers know and obey His message.

Chapter 2 presents God's biblical mandates for His Church. It will examine the major aspects for creating a new lifecycle and church revitalization through the following topics: leadership, the call for spiritual renewal, the command to love, Christ's concern for the truth, and the Church and the open door. A theological reflection will follow each of these sections with application for the contemporary Pentecostal Church.

The Seven Churches of Revelation

From the island of Patmos, John introduces himself as the writer of Revelation (Rev. 1:9). "Traditionally the date of the book's writing has been set toward the end of

¹ Craig S. Keener, *The NIV Application Commentary: The Letter to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan House, 1999), 109.

the reign of Roman Emperor Domitian (the mid-90's),” a date corroborated by the testimonies of the Early Church Fathers, such as Irenaeus (AD 180), Clement of Alexandria (AD 200), Origen (AD 254), and Eusebius (AD 325).²

The Apostle Paul spent three years establishing the church in Ephesus on his third missionary journey in the late 50s. According to Acts 19:10, Paul evangelized Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae with his colleague Epaphras (Col. 4:12-13) and considered these cities as part of his appointed mission field (Col. 2:1). By the 90s, John’s writings indicate that there existed many more than seven churches in Western Asia Minor (Acts 20:5ff.; Col. 1:2; 4:13). The Seven Churches represent other churches in the region, such as Colossae, Hierapolis, Troas, Miletus, Magnesia, and Tralles.³ Gordon Fee calls the Seven Churches a “community of communities.”⁴ Likely, all the churches read the seven messages, which were not isolated letters to one particular congregation: “This is obviously purposeful on John’s part, since these churches are related geographically and each needs to know how the Lord feels about the others.”⁵ Craig Keener supports the belief that “John’s messenger probably carried a scroll from one congregation to another until all seven have heard the call to awaken that Christ had sent them.”⁶

² Fred B. Craddock, et al, *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1998), 514; Bruce M. Metzger, *Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 16-17.

³ James K. Bridges, *Letters to Seven Churches: The Timeless Message of Jesus Christ to His Church* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2005), 7.

⁴ Gordon D. Fee, *Revelation: A New Covenant Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011), 22.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁶ Craig S. Keener, *Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 188.

To each of the Seven Churches, Christ states, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (2:11, 17:29, 3:6, 13, 22). In this passage, the word *churches* indicates a timeless message for the body of Christ: “The fact that it is repeated to each of the seven churches, using the plural from ‘churches,’ shows the Holy Spirit is speaking to the whole Church, not just one single church, and that He is continuing to speak to the whole Church in every generation.”⁷ The exhortation applies to the Church of today.

William M. Ramsay, one of the authorities in the study of the Seven Churches of Asia, describes the circular route in which the Seven Churches existed:

The letter enclosing the Apocalypse with the Seven Letters was written in Patmos, and the messenger would naturally land at Ephesus, and make his round through the Seven representative Churches as they are enumerated by the writer. The route was clearly marked out, and the messenger could hardly avoid it. He would go north along the great road through Smyrna to Pergamum (the earliest Roman road built in the Province about 133-130 B.C, as soon as Asia was organized). Thence he would follow the imperial Post Road to Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, and so back to Ephesus, or on to the East, as duty called him, using in either case the great Central Route of the Empire. At each point, like the other messenger, he would trust to the local organization to complete the work of divulcation.⁸

With the establishment of the churches in the 60s followed by John’s writings in the 90s, the churches had begun to age and decline; however, “few doubt that John is dealing with particular churches towards the end of the 1st century, as those churches find themselves in various spiritual, doctrinal and moral conditions but on the verge of systematic Roman

⁷ Bridges, 16-17.

⁸ William M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 186.

persecution.”⁹ Each letter delivers a Word from Christ (e.g., Rev. 2:1) through the Spirit (e.g., Rev. 2:7), who inspires John to write (Rev. 1:10).

Christ’s Leadership for His Church

The Angel of the Church remains a highly debated issue among New Testament scholars. Robert Mounce holds the view that the Angel of the Church consists of a “prevailing spirit.”¹⁰ David Aune, on the other hand, says that it “is the alter ego of each congregation. The angel-church can be commended for acceptable behavior (2:2-3,6) but rebuked for unacceptable behavior (2:4-5).”¹¹ T. Scott Daniels views the angel as a “corporate personality created and formed by the members of the church and the surrounding culture but now operating in such a way that it in turn shapes, reinforces, and holds the collective life of that congregation in its grasp.”¹² Other scholars, however, consider the angel a herald and contend that the term (*aggeloz*) designates either a human or supernatural messenger.¹³ Aune, Hubbard, and Baker concedes that *aggeloz* “is occasionally used of human emissaries of God. According to Malachi 2:7, the Jewish priest is regarded as a ...messenger of the Lord Sabaoth.”¹⁴ In his commentary on Revelation, James Bridges brings out a compelling argument against the idea that John

⁹ Desmond T. Alexander and Brian S. Rosner, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 2000), 133.

¹⁰ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 66.

¹¹ David E. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, Word Biblical Commentary 52a (Waco, TX: Word, 1997), 109.

¹² T. Scott Daniels, *Seven Deadly Spirits: The Message of Revelation’s Letters for Today’s Church* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2009), 24.

¹³ Ben Witherington, *Revelation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University, 2003), 36.

¹⁴ Aune, 111.

speaks of literal angels, in that nowhere do “angels in the leadership of the Church [appear] anywhere in the Scriptures. And, Christ would not be using John to send His word to angels which in turn is to be relayed.”¹⁵ Though much debate occurs over this issue, it seems far more appropriate that Christ refers to the human messenger or minister and not a heavenly angel. Christ describes himself as “the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands,” which “symbolize the seven churches of Asia Minor.”¹⁶ Christ’s presence in the midst of the churches communicates His awareness of their every thought, intention, and motive, and demonstrates His care for their present and future well-being.

If one takes the view that the Angel of the Church figuratively refers to human ministers within the particular communities being addressed, then this figure represents the pastoral leadership of the congregation. Bridges asserts that “Christ’s message is addressed directly to the pastor who is responsible to see that the congregation received the blessing which belongs to those who read, hear, and obey the Word of God (1:3).”¹⁷ As the gospel spread and the churches became established, the historical record in the Book of Acts describe how Paul and Barnabas “appointed elders in every church” to serve as pastors (Acts 14:23).

Paul challenges the Ephesian elders concerning the responsibilities of leadership: “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you

¹⁵ Bridges, 8.

¹⁶ Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll’s New Testament Insights: Insights on Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 37.

¹⁷ Bridges, 9.

overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). In view of Paul’s exhortation, one can see the spiritual responsibility that God has entrusted to the spiritual shepherds of a congregation. It appears that Paul addresses a team of spiritual leaders, referred to as “elders,” who give spiritual leadership to the congregation. Interpreting the Angel of the Church as the lead elder of the congregation brings the spiritual responsibility of leading the local church back to where Christ had previously placed it—the spiritual elders of His Body.

Modern church governance often empowers a lead elder or pastor to be the corporate head of the local church, but many churches and dominations still use the governance of an elder team. Even so, most churches have adopted the corporate head model. Any other view that asserts that the Angel of the Church is not a lead elder or pastor removes responsibility from the pastor/elder and gives it to angelic messengers of God, which does not align with Paul’s writings of spiritual leadership.

The Apostle Paul clearly asserts that Christ gives ministry gifts to His Church to equip His people for service, to bring the Church to spiritual maturity in order to be sound in faith and practice, and to relate the Church to Christ as its head and to one another as members of the Body, resulting in spiritual and numerical growth (Eph. 4:11-16). Bridges contends that “we can be confident the pastors of the seven churches, to whom the letters were sent, were Christ’s chosen ministers, for He acknowledged them to be in a special relationship with Him as ‘He who holds the seven stars in His hand’ (Rev.2:1).”¹⁸

¹⁸ Bridges, 78.

Reflections for Today's Church

Spiritual leaders have the duty to faithfully declare the entirety of the Word of God to Christ's Church and to proclaim what Christ loves and values, as well as what He hates and condemns. The preaching and teaching must express the consequences of disobedience and spiritual neglect, as well as the rewards for faithfulness to Christ. Spiritual leaders also hold responsibility for guiding the body of Christ into His divine mission, which requires persistence and intentionality.

In Acts 20, Paul describes the characteristics for spiritual leadership. These traits include "serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials" (20:19). This constitutes the attitude in which one ministers, that of humility, tears, and trials. Many today see themselves as leaders rather than servants. Additionally, Paul encourages dedication and sacrifice to ministry in the work to build the kingdom of God: "None of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself" (v. 24).

Another trait includes recognizing the true ownership of ministry as one that belongs to the Lord. Paul acknowledges that "the ministry which I received [is] from the Lord Jesus" (Acts 20:24). Contemporary leaders need to remember that all ministry remains God's ministry. Ministers simply provide stewardship of that which God entrusts to them. Christ exists as the head of His Church, and leaders must continually come face-to-face with the One whose Church they serve.

Like Paul, spiritual leaders also affirm the faithfulness of their calling in the work of the ministry: "I have not shunned to declare... the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Additionally, Paul affirms that "the Holy Spirit has made you overseers" (v. 28). The source of one's ministry remains the Holy Spirit. Through the empowerment of the Spirit, spiritual leaders fulfill the work and ministry of Christ. Finally, the role of

ministers holds the obligation “to shepherd the church of God” (v. 28). Understanding the role of the shepherd will help leaders see that which Christ has entrusted to them.

Christ’s Call for Spiritual Renewal

The letters to the churches of Laodicea, Ephesus, Sardis, and Pergamos challenge them to renew, awaken, and strengthen their spiritual fervor, for they have grown complacent. Indifference and neutrality often characterize a church that has plateaued or experienced decline. A church like this remains “zealous for nothing but its own selfish pursuits and committed to nothing but its own level affair with the world in itself.”¹⁹

Jesus identifies the Church of Ephesus as having lost its first love (Rev. 2:4). Although the reader can deduce the idea of first love from this passage, this term does not explicitly appear in Revelation 2:4. Most scholars translate this verse as “departed from your first love.” Aune provides an alternative translation. He translates all of Revelation 2:4 as this: “But I hold this against you that you have lost your first love.”²⁰ Mart DeHaan observes that “to a busy church the Lord now changes the tone and says that this busy, laboring, persevering, evangelical church that hated what He hated had apparently forgotten how to love.”²¹

The Church of Ephesus stood in great spiritual danger. Ramsay explains that “they should continue to show their old character, yet a return to their earlier spirit was urgently necessary. The fault of the Ephesian church was that it no longer showed the

¹⁹ Bridges, 163.

²⁰ Aune, 146.

²¹ Mart DeHaan, *Let’s Talk Turkey: A Study of the Seven Churches in Asia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Radio Bible Class, 1979), 4.

same spirit: the intense enthusiasm that characterized the young church had grown cooler in their advancing age. That was the serious danger that lay before them.”²² According to Acts 19, the Ephesian church had begun in a powerful Pentecostal revival in which many believers were born again and were also baptized in the Holy Spirit:

In this initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit, believers experienced powerful manifestations of the Spirit as “God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul” (19:11) as the sick were healed, demons were cast out, great conviction was on the city causing the name of Jesus to be magnified and causing people to give up their idolatry, witchcraft, and magic. The city was greatly impacted by this move of the Spirit of God throughout the region (Acts 18:18, 19 26, 27).²³

Enthusiasm had once characterized the church, but after thirty years their love faltered. Stott connects the new Israel, the Christian Church, as married to Christ, just as the old Israel was married to Jehovah (2 Cor. 11:2-3). The complaint against Ephesus, like the one against the nation of Israel, concerned how they had fallen out of love—their first love—with Christ. Scott expresses that “first love is an experience in the power of God which puts an overwhelming love in the believer for God, for God’s work, for God’s people, and for the lost.”²⁴ This is exactly why Christ spoke to the Seven Churches and their need for revitalization. This begins by understanding that Christ was calling the church back to a state of vitality and spiritual renewal. They were losing their first love, and if they fall out of love, as Ramsay believes, “the penalty denounced against it is that it shall be moved out of its place, unless it recreates its old spirit and enthusiasm.”²⁵

²² Ramsay, 242.

²³ Bridges, 14.

²⁴ John R. Stott, *What Christ Thinks of the Church: Expository Addresses on the First Three Chapters of the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1958), 27; Bridges, 14-15.

²⁵ Ramsay, 42.

Likewise, Christ condemns the Church of Laodicea for being lukewarm (Rev. 3:16). According to Aune, the word *chliaros*, translates as “‘warm, tepid, lukewarm,’ [and] refers to the mean temperature between cold and hot.”²⁶ A lukewarm church lives complacently and apathetically, without zeal or intensity, and “Christ describes [those believers] as a church that is spiritually indifferent and smugly self-sufficient.”²⁷ BDAG says, “The word represents an ‘unpleasant state’ that causes vomiting.”²⁸ The Complete Biblical Library gives the reader a better understanding of the analogy: “the Laodicean Christians had allowed themselves to become so self-satisfied in the enjoyment of riches and the things of money can buy that they lost their desire for the things of God.”²⁹ They were not only self-satisfied, they were self-deceived. A lukewarm church cannot impact the world God calls it to reach. Therefore, the lukewarm church displeases the Lord. This church needs spiritual renewal and revitalization.

Due to their spiritual condition, the Laodicean Christians remain ineffective and useless. Their spiritual condition results from their situation in life. Because they are “rich, and increased with good” they “have need of nothing” (Rev. 3:17). William Barclay notes that “the Laodiceans were the people who were so well-off that they needed help neither from man or from God.”³⁰ This attitude of self-sufficiency can easily

²⁶ Aune, 258.

²⁷ Mitchell G. Reddish, *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary: Revelation* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2001), 81.

²⁸ Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (BDAG)*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1085.

²⁹ Stanley M. Horton, *The Complete Biblical Library: Revelation* (Springfield: MO.: R.R. Donnelley and Sons, 1986), 69.

³⁰ William Barclay, *Letters to the Seven Churches* (London: SCM, 1957), 111.

creep into every society and generation, causing Christians to absorb the attitudes of their culture and fail to critically reflect on their behaviors.

The letter to the Sardinian Church might reflect many of churches today, churches that have “appearance without reality, promise without performance, outward show of strength betrayed by a lack of watchfulness and careless confidence.”³¹ The Sardinian Christians differed from the other churches, for “Satan did not have to pressure them with persecution or temptation; their church was already dead. They had become comfortable with the world.”³² They had the reputation of having life, but they were in fact dead (Rev. 3:1). Christ begins the letter with “a series of urgent admonitions: ‘wake up,’ ‘strengthen what remains,’ ‘remember,’ ‘repent!’”³³ In Revelation 3:2, the word *wake up, ginou*, turns *grēgorōn* into a command, thus rendering it a directive to remain watchful, awake, and to guard something.³⁴ John uses wake up as a subjunctive; thus, hypothetically, if the church and believers do not watch or wake up, then Jesus will come to them like a thief. BDAG says that the reader should understand the need “to be in constant readiness” or “*be on the alert*.”³⁵ A variant of this same word or lexical form appears in 1 Peter 5:8:

³¹ Ramsay, 44.

³² Keener, *Revelation*, 146.

³³ Vine, 1213.

³⁴ William D. Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 771.

³⁵ Danker, 208.

“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8).³⁶ The usage is that of spiritual alertness.

This common theme appears throughout the pages of Scripture, and prophets such as Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and many others would call God’s people back to Him in repentance. As the prophet Isaiah says, “These people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me” (Isa. 29:13).³⁷ Stott points out that this hypocrisy can appear in the form of godliness and the trappings of religion, falling short of a true passionate spirituality.³⁸ The Sardinians must remain watchful and “shake off their apathy.”³⁹ According to Gordon Fee, the challenge to remember, *mnēmoneue*, means more than simply recalling the past; it exhorts believers to fully act on what they must remember. They are to “thus return to ‘holding fast’ the gospel that they had embraced a generation ago.”⁴⁰ This serves as a calling to mind, a calling to remember what the Lord taught and gave them so that they would again begin to do that which God had commanded. Aune expounds on the use of this call to remember:

Reminding an audience of the teaching they received in the past (whether or not a verb meaning “to remember” is present) was a device frequently used in early Christian texts to encourage those addressed to live up to or to recapture earlier moral and spiritual standards (see Rom. 15:15; 1 Cor. 15:1; Gal. 1:6-9; 3:2-3; 5:7; 1 Thess. 5-10; 2:13-14; 4:1-2, 9; 2 Pet. 1:12-13; 3:1-2). In the OT and early

³⁶ Moises Silva, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis, Volume I* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 609.

³⁷ Other places in Scripture where this theme appears are Matt. 6:1-6; 16-18; 23:5, 7, 28; and 2 Tim. 3:5.

³⁸ Stott, 87.

³⁹ Metzger, 39.

⁴⁰ Fee, 47-48.

Judaism, the motif of “remembering” was sometimes used in contexts where people were summoned to repentance.⁴¹

As people awaken to their true spiritual condition, through conviction, they return to the Lord through brokenness and surrender, and the Lord restores them. The Sardinians are being challenged to remember, shake off their apathy, and hold fast in their service to the Lord.

Jesus begins and ends His message to the church in Sardis with reference to the Holy Spirit because “they no longer possessed the spiritual life and power in which the church had begun. The Pentecostal revival, with manifestations of the Spirit which had spread throughout Asia (Acts 19:12-13), had no doubt given birth to the church in Sardis.”⁴² Years later, they now are being challenged to rekindle the fire they once had. Commenting on Revelation 2:5, G. K. Beale notes that the function of their remembering serves “to *rekindle* the zealous flame of their lamp by ‘remember[ing] from where [they] have fallen and to repent and to do the first works’ of their former faithful witness.”⁴³

The danger consists of a church dwelling on the memories of its past life without realizing its lack of vitality or ability to impact present culture. The church becomes more concerned with traditions, systems, or physical structures than its love and passion for Jesus Christ.⁴⁴ This challenge to the Sardinians is one that every leader must continuously

⁴¹ Aune, 147.

⁴² Stanley M. Horton, *The Ultimate Victory: An Exposition of the Book of Revelation* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1991), 47.

⁴³ G.K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 231.

⁴⁴ Barclay, 88.

keep before the church, pressing for a rich and vibrant spirituality fueled by present experiences with the Holy Spirit. Leaders of contemporary Pentecostal churches must wrestle with how to keep the power of the Holy Spirit alive within the lives of the believers.

The Meaning of Repentance

To all the churches except Smyrna and Philadelphia, Christ prescribes repentance to resolve their sin problem, not as a recommendation but as a command. Throughout Scripture, God calls His people to turn back from disobedience (Ezek.14:6) to a covenant relationship with God (Jer. 24:7).⁴⁵ The New Testament repeatedly echoes this call to repentance in the words of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:2), Simon Peter (Acts 2:38), and Jesus (Matt. 4:17). The call broadens to a universal appeal by the Church (Matt. 28:18-20). Since all have turned toward sin (Rom. 3:9-18), now all must turn from sin to God. Two words represent this turning: *epistrephō* and *metanoēō*:

Repentance, penitence, and conversion are closely linked. Whenever one chooses a new direction in life, it always involves a judgment on his previous views and behavior. The NT expresses this by three word-groups which deal with its various aspects: *epistrefho*, *metamelomai* and *metanoēō*. The first and third both mean turn around, and refer to a man's conversion. This presupposes and includes a complete change under the influence of the Holy Spirit. *Metamelomai* expresses rather the feeling of repentance for error, debt, failure and sin, and so it looks back. Which does not necessarily cause a man to turn to God.⁴⁶

Repentance serves as an integral part of the apostolic pattern that God has given the Church to proclaim: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus

⁴⁵ Colin Brown, "Conversion, Penitence, Repentance, Proselyte," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (NIDNTT)*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 1:353-54.

⁴⁶ Brown, 353-354.

Christ, for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). When Christ began His earthly ministry, His first recorded words speak of repentance: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). Repentance remains vital to the gospel of Jesus Christ (Mark 2:17, Luke 24:47, 2 Peter 3:9). Approximately six decades after His earthly ministry, He again calls His Church to repentance.

Repentance and the Kingdom of God

To the Church of Ephesus, the Lord’s solution consists of three exhortations: remember, repent, and do the first works. David Freedman says these words share a common theme, a “change of mind.”⁴⁷ Repentance in the New Testament provides the path to salvation and is always anchored to a change of one’s thinking. Repentance is to perceive afterwards (*meta*, after, implying change, *noeō*, to perceive; *nous*, the mind, the seat of moral reflection), in contrast to *proneō*, to perceive beforehand, hence signifies to change one’s mind or purpose. In the New Testament, repentance from sin signifies a change of mind that involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God. Christ’s parable of the prodigal son provides an outstanding illustration of repentance.

Spiritual life in the New Testament comes to those who turn to God and receive Christ as Messiah and Savior. Life comes by the same quickening Spirit, the Spirit of life, that raised Christ from the dead, and “if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you” (Rom. 8:11). Preaching repentance remains

⁴⁷ David Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:672.

important “because [the] morally lax and spiritually lazy, who abandon the faith journey for a self-satisfied dwelling place veneered with the pretense of religion, and who continue to be told how wonderfully perfect they are, tend to sink in the mire of their own lethargy and sin.”⁴⁸ The exhortations to the Church of Ephesus encouraged them to remember their “first love” experience and realize their fallen spiritual condition. They needed to recover their previous height in Christ and recapture their first love. They needed to again “experience the power of God, which puts an overwhelming love in the believer for God, for God’s work, for God’s people, and for the lost. When the church abandons its first love, it abandons the power of God and becomes satisfied with a form of religion.”⁴⁹ The safest way to avoid ever reaching this level of hardness comes through maintaining an attitude of godly sorrow, for “godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation” (2 Cor. 7:10).

Repent or Else

Christ issues a warning to the churches at Ephesus, Pergamum, Sardis, and Thyatira that if they do not change He will come to them “like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you” (Rev. 3:3), an image that “refers to Christ’s coming in judgment on the churches during the present situation.”⁵⁰ This warning indicates that these churches are “asleep.” It appears they have a lifestyle that no longer remains watchful. They do not look “forward with eagerness to Christ’s coming, but they

⁴⁸ Joseph R. Jeter Jr., “I Have This against You,” in *Preaching through the Apocalypse: Sermons from Revelation*, ed. Cornish R. Rogers and Joseph R. Jeter Jr. (St. Louis: Chalice, 1992), 71.

⁴⁹ Bridges, 14-15.

⁵⁰ Reddish, 71.

are ‘coasting,’ feeling secure and impregnable, and are no longer watchful.”⁵¹ That which is encouraged is a faithfulness that gives life. In their current condition, however, they risk removal, an action which “in lexical form *kinēsō* means, ‘to cause something to be moved from its customary or established place, *move away, remove.*”⁵² The verb used in this context is a future active indicative, first person singular, and means that Jesus will remove the Ephesian lampstand if they do not repent of their ways (Rev. 2:5). Beale asserts that “the actual wording ‘I will remove your lampstand *from its place*’ indicates removal of the church as a light of witness to the world.”⁵³ According to Aune, “This is nothing less than a threat to obliterate the Ephesian congregation as an empirical Christian community.”⁵⁴

Likewise, the Church of Sardis lives as a church in name only, but their reputation for being alive is false: “A church is alive only when it is moved by the life of Jesus Christ and, in concrete life experience, authenticates the salvation it has received. Christianity in name only falls under the judgment of the Lord to whose name it falsely appeals.”⁵⁵ Thus, Sardis exists as a dead church (Rev. 3:1). Christ warns that He will come on them as a “thief” (3:3), unexpectedly at night. This recalls Jesus’s words about the end times (Matt. 24:43; Luke 12:39), a warning often repeated by the early Christians

⁵¹ Fee, 47-48.

⁵² Danker, 545.

⁵³ Beale, 232.

⁵⁴ Aune, 147

⁵⁵ Jürgen Roloff, *Revelation*, Continental Commentary Series, trans. John E. Alsup (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 58.

(1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15), which would “also prove especially alarming to proud Sardinians schooled from youth in the history of their city. Conquerors had never overtaken Sardis by conventional ware, but had twice conquered it unexpectedly because the Sardinians had failed to watch adequately.”⁵⁶

The warnings to each of the churches remind believers “that the judgment of God is exercised constantly upon the church. The history of the Church is the history of judgments executed by God (as upon his people Israel).”⁵⁷ Paul challenges the Church to awake out of their sleep (Rom. 13:11). They also must watch and stand fast in the faith (1 Peter 5:8), stay alert against the wiles of the devil (Matt. 26:41), and guard against temptation (Mark 13:37) as they watch for the coming of the Lord and guard against false teachers (Acts 20:29-31). If there exists any hope for a dead church, it will come through the anointed preaching and teaching of Spirit-filled pastors and teachers: “In these last days, the Lord has raised up the Pentecostal movement as a restorationist church focusing upon the heavenly ministry of the risen Christ, baptizing believers in the Holy Spirit for empowerment (Acts 1:8) and for the manifestation of the Pentecostal gifts and ministries (1 Cor. 12-14).”⁵⁸

Spiritual Renewal for Today’s Church

The modern Pentecostal Church must heed the call issued to the Seven Churches of Asia. A call to repentance cannot lose its emphases in contemporary churches.

⁵⁶ Keener, *Revelation*, 144.

⁵⁷ Jacques Ellul, *Apocalypse: The Book of Revelation* (New York: Seabury, 1977), 127.

⁵⁸ Horton, 48.

Although the Church of Ephesus had a form of godliness, it lost its first love. To “remember the height from which you have fallen” does not mean returning to traditions of the past, former victories, and former methodologies (Rev. 2:5). Jesus’s response to the Pharisees in Matthew 22:37-40 provides a clear theology of first love: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Additionally, spiritual leaders need to find fresh ways to help God’s people develop and practice the spiritual disciplines, which lead believers and unbelievers to connect with God in both private and corporate worship experiences. Ministers must teach and lead the people of God to participate in worship, not just observe worship.

Finally, adopting a core tenant of passionate spirituality will combat the prevalent lukewarm condition of the Church and will emphasize the return to a relationship with God. Christ’s call to repentance in the first century remains valid today, Bridges notes, “Any church that will leave the vigor, zeal, freshness, and fervency of its ‘first love’ in Christ and its anointing for service through Spirit baptism, as did the Ephesian Church (Rev. 2:4), must hear Christ’s call to repentance.”⁵⁹The call for the renewal of one’s first love must again resound with the urgency prevalent in the call of Jesus to the churches of Revelation.

⁵⁹ Bridges, 84.

Christ's Command to Love

Several scholars contend that the idea of leaving her first love (Rev. 2:4) refers to a diminished lack of love for one another within the Church of Ephesus. Although commonly understood to refer to the Lord, the phrase “forsaken their first love” remains somewhat ambiguous. Fee believes that “John is referring to their love for Christ and their love for one another.”⁶⁰ The Greek word *agapēn* means “the quality of warm regard for and interest in another, esteem, affection, regard, love (without limitation to very intimate relationships, and very seldom in general Greek of sexual attraction).”⁶¹ Keener interprets the fatal flaw in their behavior as a lack of love for God and for another.⁶² The Apostle Peter uses the same word when speaking to believers: “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love [*agapēn*]” (2 Pet. 1:5-7).

In Revelation 2:4, “John was not purposefully ambiguous, considering that in his understanding of things (in the Gospel and First John) love for Christ and love for his people are so closely interrelated.”⁶³ In Johannine literature, “the whole of the Christian faith is a matter of experiencing God’s love for us through Christ and then returning that

⁶⁰ Fee, 25.

⁶¹ Danker, 6.

⁶² Keener, *The NIV Application*, 106.

⁶³ Fee, 25.

love to him by loving others.”⁶⁴ Prior to this judgment in his letter to the church, Paul calls the Ephesians back to unity (Eph. 4:3-6) and admonishes them not to sin but to walk in love and the light of the gospel (4:26). These same sentiments appear in Revelation 2:4, in which “love is simply a matter of attitude toward others; the only love worthy of the name from his perspective lies in their doing the things you did at first.”⁶⁵

The connection between that which was commendable about the Church of Ephesus is what Keener, Ramsay, Metzger and others see as the stage of disunity that was creeping into the church, provoking the admonishment, “Nevertheless, I have this against you, you have left your first love” (Rev. 2:4). William Barclay states, “It may be that a hard, censorious, critical, fault-finding, stern self-righteousness had banished the spirit of love.”⁶⁶ Perhaps hatred of heresy had “created suspicion and intolerance of each other’s differences and weaknesses.”⁶⁷ Ladd says, “the Ephesian converts had known such a love in their early years; but their struggle with false teachers and their hatred of heretical teaching had apparently engendered hard feelings and harsh attitudes toward one another to such an extent that it amounted to a forsaking of the supreme Christian virtue of love.”⁶⁸

The admonition that they “repent and do the things you did at first” would prove they live as disciples and “love one another” (John 13:35). Beale says their error did not

⁶⁴ Gordon Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1995), 27.

⁶⁵ Fee, 27.

⁶⁶ Barclay, 11.

⁶⁷ Metzger, 32.

⁶⁸ G. E. Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), 39.

come from a failure to love God but a failure to express that love “by witnessing to him in the world.”⁶⁹ Fee notes that “their failure at this key point means that the gospel as good news for sinners can no longer be heard for the good news that it is. Thus the call for repentance, and the threat that follows.”⁷⁰ The church must begin reflecting on their past history and return to that which they had done in their early years. To the Church of Thyatira, Christ says, “I know your works, namely your love, faith, service, and endurance” (3:19). The word for service, *diakonian*, “occurs only here in the book and refers to an active life of care and help, to charitable service and ministry to others.”⁷¹ Barclay believes that when one claims “to have Christian love in your heart, you can only prove it by showing that you have Christian service in your life.”⁷²

Keener asserts that “overcoming” or “conquering” (Rev. 2:7) requires more than the “vigilance of a theological watchman; it requires the internal unity of love.”⁷³ Noel Gesner connects this to Matthew 25:34-43 as proof of love demonstrated within the body of Christ through the following actions: providing a hungry person with food; providing a thirsty person with water; letting a stranger in; providing a person with clothes; visiting a sick person; or visiting a person in prison.⁷⁴ The Scripture remains an important lesson to

⁶⁹ G. K. Beale, 230-231.

⁷⁰ Fee, 25.

⁷¹ Osborne, 154.

⁷² Barclay, 73.

⁷³ Keener, *The NIV Application*, 107.

⁷⁴ Noel Gesner, “Church Hospitality: A Biblical Model for Growth Based on the Seven Churches in Revelation.” D.Min. diss., Liberty University, 2014, accessed October 10, 2016, <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/916/>, 35-36.

all Christians: while doctrinal purity remains important to the Christian faith, “in short, orthodoxy without orthopraxy is a false religion.”⁷⁵

Reflections for Today’s Church to Love

Contemporary churches need to examine whether they have moved away from the commands of Christ and failed to love one another. The modern church must flee from the temptation to mold itself to the culture, particularly that of individualism, self-centeredness, and isolation. Throughout the New Testament, the Scriptures emphasize loving God and fellow believers. The modern church should excel in love for each other because Christ first loved us. Since the triune God embodies love in His essential being, Christians will reflect that love as the Holy Spirit spiritually transforms them. When believers struggle to live obediently to this command, they strike a hard blow to the church’s efforts to implement commitment, responsibility, and conflict resolution. With the tensions that consistently arise in congregations over issues of values, goals, and methodologies, one questions if contemporary churches truly understand God’s desire for Christians to love one another.

To develop a theology and practice of spiritual community, a few concepts and methodologies need consideration. First, God’s people need to dwell together in His presence to bring oneness in the Spirit. Corporate prayer, more than any other activity, serves this purpose. When God’s people meet together and pray, they allow God the opportunity to visit and speak to them.

⁷⁵ Osborne, 117.

Second, churches need teaching and encouragement to live as the body of Christ. Members of the body do not only belong to God; they also belong to one another. To fulfill the great commandments to love God and love one's neighbor as oneself requires commitment, responsibility, and practical application. Leading the people of God to embrace spiritual community will prove challenging. To facilitate this, leaders must create a culture of care within the congregation. Believers must also constantly battle the cultural norms of individualism, self-centeredness, and isolation. Teaching the Christian community what love for one another looks like in modern culture will remain an endless task and responsibility for spiritual leaders. Aune says that the act of remembering in the Old and New Testaments served as a call to repentance to "recapture earlier moral and spiritual standards."⁷⁶

Third, developing a culture of care will require both formal and informal systems within the congregation. Christians sometimes mistakenly believe a few emails, postcards, or text messages demonstrate biblical love and care. Spiritual leaders desiring to lead the congregation will need to develop systems of care that include visitation to shut-ins and those hospitalized, conducting weddings and funerals, and discipleship, among other activities. This outreach occurs best through smaller networks of relationships within the congregation. It also should remain constant and selfless, thus challenging society's culture.

Returning to one's first love will activate Christ's love within the congregation, drawing those who live outside the faith to the transforming love of God. This attitude of

⁷⁶ Aune, 147.

Christ is one that the Church easily forsakes as the Body matures and develops, requiring the admonition to “repent and do the things you did at first” (Rev. 2:5). The Gospel of John provides the reason this failure calls for repentance: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35). The modern church must learn how to practically “love one another.” This love “concerns action more than affection. Its essence is self-sacrifice. The pagan notion of love is the desire to get; the Christian notion is the desire to give (1 John 3:17-18).”⁷⁷

Christ’s Concern for the Truth

The addresses to the churches of Pergamos, Thyatira, Laodicea, Ephesus, Sardis, and Philadelphia reference Christ’s concern for truth. The presence of false teachers in Ephesus, heresy in Laodicea and Pergamos, idolatry and fornication in Thyatira, disobedience to Christ’s commands in Philadelphia, and spiritual hypocrisy in Sardis all demonstrate the importance of upholding the truth of Christ’s commands. As Keener states boldly, “Revelation allows for no divided allegiance.”⁷⁸ The call of God on one’s life bids the believer to follow God instead of the world: “This allegiance to God impacts every decision and every action. The believer will face multiple temptations to give in to the world’s system, but radical discipleship means that the individual always acknowledges not only who sits on the eternal throne of the universe, but who sits on the throne of one’s life.”⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Stott, 31.

⁷⁸ Keener, *Revelation*, 366.

⁷⁹ Gerald L. Stevens, ed., *Essays on Revelation: Appropriating Yesterday’s Apocalypse in Today’s World* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010), 186.

Five churches have strengths as indicated by God's acknowledgment "I know your works" (Rev. 2:2, 19; 3:1, 8, 15). Osborne contends that this recognition refers "to the whole spiritual walk of the believer, as defined by the contents of the 'deeds' in the letters."⁸⁰ The overarching message of each letter concerns whether each church will compromise itself. Through the lens of the Seven Churches, T. Scott Daniels highlights the areas of compromise that damaged the Early Church and remain issues in the contemporary context: Ephesus's failure to love one another, Smyrna's lack of commitment, Pergamum's lack of accommodation, Thyatira's privatized faith, Sardis's apathetic faith, Philadelphia's fear, and Laodicea's reliance on self-sufficiency.⁸¹ Each letter asks, "Will these churches be faithful witnesses both to Jesus and like Jesus by refraining from participation in the cultural norm of pagan religion?"⁸² To the Church of Laodicea, the Lord says, "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. So because you are lukewarm I am about to spit you out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16). Charles Swindoll says that "he could have been referring to their hypocritical nature—they claimed to be a certain way, but their words and their deeds didn't match. Or Christ could have been saying that the Laodiceans were simply useless in their works."⁸³

The churches of Pergamum and Thyatira experienced internal doctrinal challenges that led astray the people of God. Those who once knew righteousness should

⁸⁰ Grant R. Osborne, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on The New Testament: Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 112.

⁸¹ Daniels, 15-32.

⁸² Michael J Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil Worship and Witness Following the Lamb into the New Creation* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 96.

⁸³ Swindoll, 80.

remember, repent, and return (Rev. 2:5; 3:3; Deut. 9:7; 16:3). The exhortation to “remember” serves as common biblical language for “moral exhortation.”⁸⁴ God calls the Church to recognize its condition, repent, and re-do what they had done when they first came to Christ. The churches that tolerate compromise merit Jesus’s rebuke since “the necessity of remaining faithful until the end fits historic Calvinist and Arminian belief; both concur that they will not be saved.”⁸⁵ The task of Revelation, in part, exists to “convince its hearers and readers that faithful discipleship has both costs and rewards. That is why the seven messages contain both words of challenge and promises drawn from the visions.”⁸⁶

Truth for Today’s Church

Pentecostal believers today need to understand the dangers of compromising with the values of the world. They must know what they believe and why, and they must practice what they say they believe. The Church, no matter how little or powerless it might feel, stands to guard the culture. Just as the presence of the righteous in Sodom had the opportunity to restrain judgment (Gen. 18:20-32), the fate of a culture may depend ultimately on the behavior of the believers within it. If the Church allows itself to assimilate the culture’s values, then it loses its voice within society. Pentecostal leaders cannot forsake preaching Christlikeness and growing into the image of Christ. Where an abundance of preaching today deals with issues of life and its dilemmas, it must lead

⁸⁴ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 147.

⁸⁵ Keener, *The NIV Application Commentary*, 141.

⁸⁶ Gorman, 97.

hearers to “be conformed to the likeness of His Son” (Rom. 8:29). Preaching must have the objective of inciting Christ-like convictions, character, and conduct. The deepest kind of preaching urges repentance. The central message of the New Testament concerns repentance (Matt. 3:2; 4:17, Mark 1:15; 6:12; Acts 2:38; 26:20; Rev. 2-3). Jesus told the disciples that He would “suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all the nations” (Luke 24:46-47).

The fruit of repentance demonstrates a change in the way one acts: “I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds” (Acts 26:20). Pentecostal leaders who proclaim His sovereignty will impact believers’ worship: “If God is indeed in control, then he above all ought to be worshipped. The message of Revelation is that crises is never the time to abandon worship. Rather, times of anguish ought to be the times that the person of faith embraces worship.”⁸⁷ Worship should lead to the surrender of one’s life and goals to Christ. As Pentecostal leaders encourage people to read the Scriptures, remember, and live what God’s Word says, they will inevitably change.

Christ’s Teaching about the Holy Spirit

Each of the seven letters to the churches of Revelation ends with an identical admonition: “Whoever has ears, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). With this, the Lord calls attention to those receiving the message, imploring them to listen carefully, stay alert, and not lose that which He shares.

⁸⁷ Mitchell G. Reddish, 44-45.

Many references in Johannine literature refer to the work of the Spirit (John 15:26; 16:13; 14:17; 16:18):

John was the longest-living apostle, having been with Jesus in His earthly ministry, witnessed Christ's death and resurrection, received Spirit baptism on the Day of Pentecost, and received the revelation of Christ, being in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. No one would have understood more about the work of the Spirit in Christ's Church and the need of the infilling of the Spirit by each believer.⁸⁸

Pentecostal Christians believe in a subsequent experience, a second baptism post-conversion that enables believers to grow spiritually and communicate more intimately with God. Pentecostals understand, in accordance with the Word of God, that they do not receive Holy Spirit baptism at the point of salvation, since Acts 1 describes the promise of the Holy Spirit as entailing a second baptism that will occur. Jesus states, "For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5).

The Holy Spirit is Christ's Representative

At the end of the first chapter in Revelation, Christ clearly speaks to the churches, which is given to Him by the Father. He does this through the Spirit, which Fee calls, "John's Trinitarian Understanding."⁸⁹ Russell Penney writes, "Though the Lord Jesus and God the Father remain ever present, in a unique way the Spirit is the functional presence of the Lord God throughout the generations."⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Bridges, 95.

⁸⁹ Fee, 28.

⁹⁰ Mal Couch, ed., *A Bible Handbook to Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2001), 114.

The admonition to “hear what the Spirit says” reflects the exhortations given by Jesus while among His disciples on earth. Six times He told them, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 11:15; 13:9; 13:43; Luke 8:21; Luke 9:35). Each of the messages in the gospels directly address the churches. Christ uses the plural to address the churches rather than the singular to indicate that the message is to all the churches, not just one. William Barclay observes that “seven is the number of completeness, suggesting that the Holy Spirit was speaking to the whole church in all its completeness. In speaking to the seven churches, He speaks to all the churches”⁹¹ John MacArthur adds that the use of the plural noun for churches “signifies the universal nature of the invitation each time that it appears.”⁹² D A. Carson expounds on this further by explaining that the “continuous action of the verb, *legei*, ‘says’ assures us that the Holy Spirit is communicating this message to every church of Christ in every generation who will listen.”⁹³

Christ’s Teaching about the Paraclete

Before Christ finished His earthly ministry, He had given a major discourse on the work of the Holy Spirit to His disciples. He assured them that He would not leave them orphans but would ask the Father to give them “another *parakletos*” (John 14:16). According to D.A. Carson, “The Greek term *paraklētōs*, rendered ‘Counsellor’ in the

⁹¹ William Barclay, *The Revelation of John*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 1:35-36.

⁹² John MacArthur, *Revelation 1-11: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: R.R. Donnelley and Sons, 1990), 64.

⁹³ Bridges, 93.

NIV, is the verbal adjective of *parakaleō*, lit. ‘to call alongside,’ and hence ‘to encourage,’ ‘to exhort.’ The verbal adjective has passive force, and is roughly equivalent to *ho parakeklēmenos*, ‘one who is called alongside.’⁹⁴ William Barclay refers to this as “calling someone in as an *ally*, as a *counselor*, or inviting someone to *lend his assistance* with some great task,” whereas “*parakalein* is used of calling in someone as a *witness* to one’s favor, and as an *advocate* in one’s cause.”⁹⁵ Just as Jesus had been all these to the disciples—ally, counselor, witness, and advocate—He assured them the Father would send another Paraclete to take His place. The Greek word for “another,” *allo*, can be translated as “another, some other.”⁹⁶ The coming Paraclete would be of the same kind, likeness, and substance of Jesus to “abide with you forever” (John 14:16). Now six decades later, Christ encourages His Church to continue to “hear what the Spirit says!”

Reflections for Today’s Church

Christ wants His Church to experience all dimensions of the Spirit of Truth. Christ promises that the Holy Spirit will dwell “with you and will be in you” (John 14:17). In Acts 1:8, Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will “come upon you, and you will receive power.” That which began on the Day of Pentecost continues today. For two thousand years, Christ has continued to pour out His Spirit upon His Church. Spiritual

⁹⁴ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991), 499.

⁹⁵ William Barclay, *The Promise of the Spirit* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 26-27.

⁹⁶ John R. Kohlenberger, *NIV Greek and English New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 821. The text uses a condensed version of Mounce’s *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*.

leaders must continue to lead the body of Christ to receive the promise of the Father and allow the Spirit of Truth to guide the Church into all truth.

Pentecostal leaders of the twenty-first century must design strategies in the local church to lead its members into a holistic Pentecostal experience. If Pentecostal leaders do not develop a plan, then future generations will lose their Pentecostal values. Young people who do not experience the power and work of the Holy Spirit will see no need to seek the infilling of the Spirit. Pentecostal leaders must realize the need to develop a spirituality that differs from their evangelical colleagues. Pentecostal leaders depend upon the power and work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. They expect a move of the Spirit and have a renewed sense of the presence of God. They depend upon the empowerment and gifts of the Spirit and hold fast to the conviction that the gifts of the Spirit remain fully operational in the Church. A church that develops its ministry to enable people to fulfill this mandate will see the Pentecostal power of the Spirit moving in and through ministries that transform lives and the community.

The Church and the Open Door

Beginning with the Book of Acts, an eschatological urgency accompanies the Early Church's participation in God's mission. This holds especially true for the Pentecostal movement: "Part of the reason why the Pentecostal movement has emphasized evangelism, is because Pentecostals believe that Jesus is returning soon. Thus, it appears that the eschatological urgency that is accompanied with the belief that Jesus is coming soon plays an integral role in a community's missional faithfulness."⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Peter Althouse and Robby Waddell, *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies: World without End* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010), 157.

To the Church of Philadelphia, the Lord has given an “open door which no one can shut” (Rev. 3:8). William Ramsay observes that “there is no doubt what the ‘opened door’ means. It is a Pauline metaphor that had passed into ordinary usage in the early church.”⁹⁸ Paul says that at Ephesus, “a great door for effective work has opened to me” (1 Cor. 16:9). In Troas, “a door was [also] opened” for him (2 Cor. 2:12). He asked the Colossians to pray that “God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ” (1 Cor. 4:3). These three Pauline expressions mean that a good opportunity for missionary work exists in Philadelphia. Ramsay concurs that the usage of the word *door* became fixed as a technical term, one that was familiar and almost stereotyped.⁹⁹ Paul found that wherever he went, “many thirsty souls were panting for the water of life.”¹⁰⁰ To fulfill the Great Commission given by Christ in Matt. 28:19-20, one can agree with Metzger that the Christian’s understanding of “‘the door’ was an opportunity for spreading the gospel. The church, though small, had a great missionary task to perform.”¹⁰¹ As a result, the Church of Philadelphia “became the ‘beloved’ church because they turned their various challenges into open doors for evangelism.”¹⁰²

Swindoll believes that the Church of Philadelphia didn’t realize the open door they had in a missional context. The city of Philadelphia provided a “geographic gateway

⁹⁸ William M. Ramsay, *Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia and Their Place in the Plan of the Apocalypse* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1904), 404.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Stott, 103.

¹⁰¹ Metzger, 41.

¹⁰² Daniels, 110.

to the East; Philadelphia sat at the crossroads of several languages, cultures, and people groups. From an evangelistic and missionary perspective, this dynamic, diminutive church had great opportunities for ministry.”¹⁰³ The presence of open doors does not mean obstacles do not exist. Paul told of the great door to effective work that opened for him in Ephesus, but in the next breath says that “there are many who oppose me” (2 Cor. 16:9). Christ encourages the Church of Philadelphia because He knew they had “little power” (Rev. 3:8). The opportunity proved beyond their resources, so they would have to depend on Him and overcome “a spirit of fear.”¹⁰⁴

Reflections for Today’s Church: Embrace Christ’s Open Door

Modern contemporary churches most embrace the imminent return of Christ. The urgency seen in the early Pentecostal practices of preaching, praying, witnessing, and global missions issued from a firm conviction that the souls of their fellow humans depend upon their immediate actions of obedience to God’s commission given by Jesus before He ascended. Modern churches in decline and plateau must engage in serious dialogue concerning the attitude, actions, and lack of passion over Christ’s Great Commission. Churches often spend too much time staring at closed doors. Pentecostal leaders must challenge their congregations to live as “witnesses” who carry a message of hope in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit.

Second, although Pentecostals live in a culture of radical change, a culture that poses all kinds of obstacles to the faith, with God’s help they can overcome and advance

¹⁰³ Swindoll, 73.

¹⁰⁴ Daniels, 110.

the Kingdom. When faced with an opportunity that requires great faith or comes with much opposition and persecution, leaders must not yield to the temptation to retreat and isolate themselves from the world God calls them to reach. The doors of opportunity remain open.

Philadelphia was a city of influence and offered profound missionary opportunities. The Greeks founded Philadelphia in 140 B.C. to provide “a base from which to launch a campaign to Hellenize the world—to be a base from which to spread the Greek language, worldview and way of life to the whole world.”¹⁰⁵ While circumstances may obscure the view of God, believers must move beyond their limited perspectives and remember that God often works beyond the comprehension of what one can see in the natural. They must turn their attention from their own efforts to His all-sufficient provision. This prompts a firm faith that can overcome any obstacle. When leaders remain faithful to Him and commit to follow Him wherever He leads, He will not only open doors of unbelievable opportunity, but He will also give the strength to overcome the challenges that come.

Conclusion

Each of the Seven Churches likely would have read each other’s letters, thus receiving the call to hear what the Spirit says to all churches. The conclusion of the letter to the believers of Laodicea provides the image of Christ knocking at the door (Rev. 3:20). To that specific church, He desires fellowship with the lukewarm believers. To all

¹⁰⁵ Darrell W. Johnson, *Discipleship on the Edge: An Expository Journey through the Book of Revelation* (Vancouver, BC: Regent College, 2004), 111.

the churches, however, Christ knocks, seeks, and desires to bring life that will establish His Kingdom.

God desires to revitalize a church that is declining and dying. He challenges the Seven Churches to return to their former love and do what they did at first, and He seeks to revitalize the contemporary church to do the same. Spiritual leaders have the responsibility to engage in Christ's divine mission; this requires persistence and intentionality. One must lead the church to discover God's divine urgencies and heed Christ's call for spiritual renewal as fulfilled through the empowerment of the Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit awakens renewal for the spiritually lost and apathetic. He calls the Church to renew, awaken, and strengthen their spiritual fervor. Christ's command to love enables the body of Christ to exist as an authentic spiritual community that loves in spirit and in deed. Christ's concern for the truth embraces the mandate to make disciples. Believers find empowerment from the Holy Spirit to serve and minister in the gifts of the Spirit, bringing growth and edification to other believers as they fulfill the Great Commission. The contemporary church is called to be a missional church driven with the passion to win the lost and see God's Kingdom expand. Believers must walk through the doors God has opened and live as witnesses who carry a message of hope to the world.

CHAPTER 3: GENERAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In 2014, Thom Rainer, an expert consultant on the state of the church in North America, says 80 percent “of the approximately 400,000 churches in the United States are declining or have plateaued,” and as many as 100,000 churches show signs of decline toward death.¹ David Olson’s research in *The State of the American Church*, estimates that 84 percent of churches experience growth below the population growth rate, which indicates a plateaued church.²

Although church involvement once stood as a cornerstone of American life, U.S. adults today remain evenly divided on the importance of attending church. While half (49 percent) say attendance is “somewhat” or “very” important, the other 51 percent maintain that it is “not too” or “not at all” important.³ The divide between the religiously active and those resistant to churchgoing impacts American culture, morality, politics, and religion.

¹ Thom S. Rainer, *Breakout Churches: Discover How to Make the Leap* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 45; Thom S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 7.

² David T. Olson, *The American Church in Crisis: Groundbreaking Research Based on a National Database of over 200,000 Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 179.

³ David Kinnaman, “Americans Divided on the Importance of Church,” Barna Research Group, accessed February 12, 2016, <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/culture/661-americans-divided-on-the-importance-of-church#.Vs0p785VVKM>.

Olson's research indicates that on any given weekend, only 17 percent of the US population attends church; this figure includes Catholic, Evangelical, mainline, and Orthodox churches.⁴ In comparison to the population of the United States, which increased 24 percent from 1990 to 2010, church attendance remained virtually unchanged during this same time period.⁵ According to the Assemblies of God, worship attendance has increased only .5 percent since 2004.⁶ In numerous studies by the Barna Research Group, fewer Americans than ever attend church; however, many of these people do not reject spirituality, they reject the contemporary church.⁷ In their recent book *Re:Vision*, Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold claim that "the church in America faces great challenges. Most churches are plateaued or declining in worship attendance. The percentage of people attending church is shrinking, and young people eighteen to twenty-nine are abandoning the faith."⁸

David Kinnaman agrees with these findings:

The ages of eighteen to twenty-nine are the black hole of church attendance; this age segment is "missing in action" from most congregations. ... Overall there is a 43% drop-off between the teen and early adult years in terms of church engagement. These numbers represent about 8 million twenty something's who

⁴ The American Church Research Project, "The State of the American Church," The American Church, accessed February 22, 2016, <http://www.theamericanchurch.org/>.

⁵ Olson, 35.

⁶ General Council of the Assemblies of God, *Index to 2015 AG Statistical Reports*, General Council of the Assemblies of God, accessed July 14, 2016, [http://agchurches.org/Sitefiles/Default/RSS/AG.org%20TOP/AG%20Statistical%20Reports/2015%20\(year%202014%20reports\)/2014%20Full%20Statistical%20Report.pdf](http://agchurches.org/Sitefiles/Default/RSS/AG.org%20TOP/AG%20Statistical%20Reports/2015%20(year%202014%20reports)/2014%20Full%20Statistical%20Report.pdf)

⁷ David Kinnaman, "10 Facts About America's Churchless," Barna Research Group, accessed February 12, 2016, <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/culture/698-10-facts-about-america-s-churchless#.Vs0mR85VVKM>.

⁸ Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon E. Penfold, *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014), 26.

were active churchgoers as teenagers who will no longer be a part or currently engaged in church by their thirtieth birthday.⁹

The decline has occurred in churches of every denomination in the past twenty years.¹⁰

The statistics remain alarming, prompting many to explore the issue of church renewal, church growth, church health, revival, and awakening—simply, the American Church has sounded the call for revitalization. This literature review examines issues relevant to creating new lifecycles within the contemporary church. The research focuses on the following topics: (1) lifecycles of an organization, (2) the revitalization of the Pentecostal Church, and (3) the transformational process to creating a new lifecycle.

The Lifecycle of An Organization

Defining Various Lifecycle Models

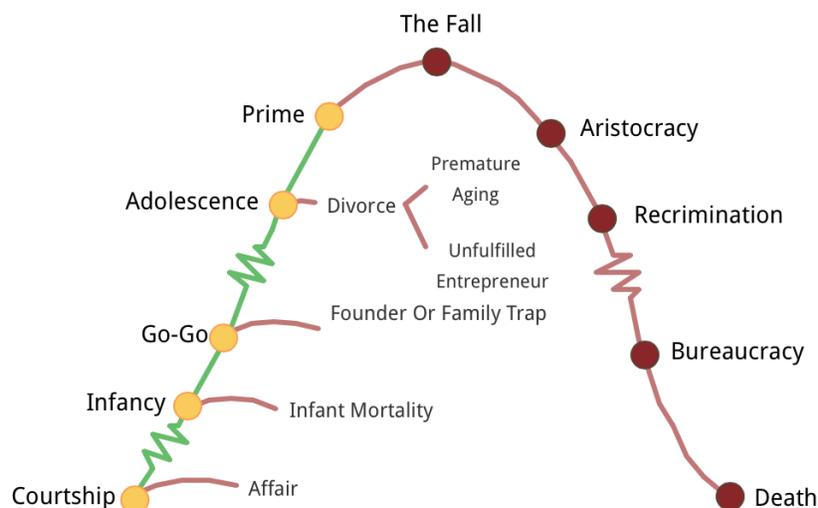
A lifecycle is the discernable pattern to life. The lifecycles of organizations and churches comprise four stages: birth, development, maturity, and decline. Ichak Adizes popularized the concept of organizational lifecycles in his book *Corporate Lifecycles: How and Why Corporations Grow and Die and What to Do about It*. Much like the human lifecycle, Adizes identifies four stages of growth within an organization and four stages of decline: growth includes courtship, infant, go-go, and adolescence, while decline includes aristocracy, early bureaucracy (Recrimination), bureaucracy, and death. In addition to these eight stages, he identifies two other stages of being: prime and stable.

⁹ David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving the Church and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011), 22.

¹⁰ Ed Stetzer and Mike Dobson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007), 25-26.

He places stable (also referred to as the “fall”) at the top of the bell curve and places prime just before the top. Stable describes the beginning of a plateau in the lifecycle, which results in the movement toward decline. During stability, an organization loses vision, creativity, and innovation and it begins its decline.

Figure 1: Adizes's Organizational Lifecycle Model



Adizes identifies prime as the ideal stage of an organization:

In Prime, the organization knows what to do and what not to do. They know when to pass up an opportunity and why to pass on it. The organization has both talent and discipline. It has vision and self-control. It is oriented toward quantity and quality. Both the form and function are balanced, and they are functional. The organization can grow profitably.¹¹

The major goal of any organization, according to Adizes, consists of achieving prime; the second goal strives to stay or return to prime.

Robert D. Dale popularized the lifecycle concept among church leaders. Dale models his church lifecycle on that of human development. His nine stages of the

¹¹ Ichak Adizes, *Corporate Lifecycles: How and Why Corporations Grow and Die and What to Do about It* (Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988), 202.

church's life include beliefs, goals, structure, ministry, nostalgia, questioning, polarization, and dropout.¹² Martin Saarinen and George W. Bullard Jr. used Adizes's research to develop similar congregational lifecycle models that inform growth and decline. Saarinen focuses on the points and risk factors for congregations at each stage.¹³ This is helpful for evaluating a church's current lifecycle. In addition, George Bullard's model of congregational development provides the tools and identifying questions that assess factors contributing to a church's decline.¹⁴ He breaks down the constant change of a church's lifecycle into ten stages of congregational development, which occurs within five lifecycle phases: early growth, late growth, prime/plateau, early aging, and late aging.¹⁵

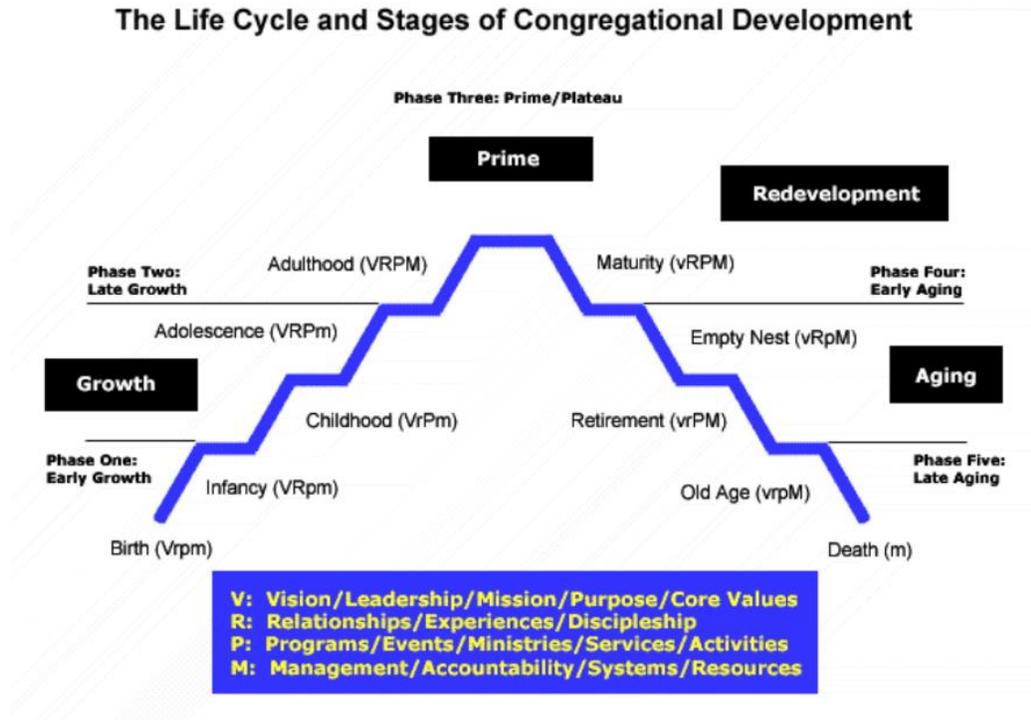
¹² Robert D. Dale, *To Dream Again* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981), 8.

¹³ Martin F. Saarinen, *The Life Cycle of a Congregation* (Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 1986).

¹⁴ George Bullard, "The Life Cycle and Stages of Congregational Development," Evangelical Free Church of America, Southeast District, accessed February 12, 2016, http://sed-efca.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/stages_of_church_life_bullard.pdf.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Figure 2: Bullard's Model of Congregational Development



Bullard's model offers the most helpful grid for analyzing the current status of a church's lifecycle. As he describes how churches pass through each stage, he describes each stage's characteristics and agendas. In particular, his explanation of old age and death remain highly informative as it pertains to the current state of the American Church. In the description of his model, Bullard explores a stage not identified in the diagram—resurrection—a stage he entitles “organ donation.”¹⁶ This is what takes place when a congregation has experienced death, yet they find new life in a different format. Bullard says this can occur in a variety of situations, such as

1. Another congregation can purchase the facilities and provide Christian ministry to the community targeted by the former congregation.
2. The resources of the former congregation can be used to give life to another congregation.

¹⁶ Ibid.

3. A remnant from the former congregation can be part of the Birth of a new congregation.
4. Their denomination can use the financial asset of the former congregation to start new congregations.¹⁷

Both Saarinen and Bullard borrow largely from Adizes in their work but present fresh ideas and label stages to fit congregations while remaining aligned with Adizes's perspectives.

Bullard's model also incorporates helpful characteristics represented by letters to indicate church status: vision (V), relationship (R), program (P), and management (M). Capitalized letters indicate strong development of a characteristic at any given stage; lowercase letters indicate weaker development. In Bullard's model, adulthood remains the ideal stage within the lifecycle.¹⁸

Gary McIntosh, a nationally known church growth expert, also asserts that churches follow similar patterns of corporate growth and decline. He notes that

congregations tend to traverse a predictable life cycle that is similar to a bell curve. A church is prone to rapid growth in the first fifteen to twenty years of its existence, followed by a leveling off of growth onto a plateau for another twenty to forty years. Then follows a slower decline over the next thirty to forty years until the church either closes its doors (dies) or eases into an unhealthy period of stagnation.¹⁹

David O. Moberg, the first to popularize lifecycle thinking for churches, notes that "the process by which an institution develops may be called its natural history and has a typical pattern through which they pass as they emerge, grow, decline, and

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Gary L. McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2012), 30.

ultimately die.”²⁰ He calls this unhealthy stagnation “institutionalization;” as an organization grows it moves through phases, which is characterized by mounting bureaucracy, eventually becoming less effective and collapsing under its own weight.²¹

While Dale, Saarinen, Bullard, McIntosh, and Moberg all describe the lifecycle of the church in various and informative ways, all ultimately do agree that local churches experience a predictable lifecycle of growth and decline. Most conclude that a church’s lifecycle, which Arnold Cook calls the historical drift, encompasses approximately fifty years.²² Although some travel along the lifecycle faster or slower, eventually all follow the same basic pattern and have similar causes for plateau and decline.

Major Causes for Plateau and Decline

Churches share common characteristics as they pass from one stage to another. These characteristics, which describe their internal cultures, behavior, and processes, offer clues into assessing how long an organization will likely thrive. The lifecycle models of Adizes, Dale, Saarinen, Bullard, Moberg, and McIntosh, all illustrate how organizations and churches remain inclined to follow a basic pattern of growth, plateau, and decline. McIntosh clarifies that in seeking to assess the health of a church, leaders must understand that what brings

a church to its current level of ministry fruitfulness will not get it to the next level of growth and vitality. Leaders learn quickly that as a church grows and ages, it becomes increasingly difficult to keep it healthy and vibrant. Over time, people

²⁰ David Moberg, *The Church as a Social Institution: The Sociology of American Religion* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1962), 118-119.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Arnold L. Cook. *Historical Drift: Must My Church Die?* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publication, 2000), 12.

change, conflicts build, and programs peak in effectiveness. Long-term excellence is always the result of continual improvements over time.²³

Without such long-term excellence and continual improvement, most decline in churches eventually leads to closure. Churches lose members, income, energy, vision, and the ability to minister in a changing world. Unless they reverse those dynamics, death will inevitably occur. George Barna lists several symptoms that may indicate a church in decline: demographic changes, inadequate leadership, poor management, old blood, building campaigns, the ingrown family, resistance to change, and spiritual health.²⁴ These symptoms, discussed later in this chapter, can be placed into six major categories: leadership/vision, spiritual life, spiritual community, ministry/discipleship, outreach, and management/structure.

Two primary reasons contribute to church decline: 1) leaders do not know what a disciple looks like, nor do they have a clearly defined picture of God's purpose for their churches and what God calls them to produce; 2) leaders do not know how to intentionally produce disciples with a clear purpose.²⁵ Understanding a church's purpose (or mission) provides a biblical reason for church ministry; its vision provides energy, hope, and passion. McIntosh believes that "when a church and its leaders lose a sense of vision, the ministry starts winding down."²⁶ This lack of visionary leadership and lack of clear purpose remain primary issues for many churches in decline today.

²³ Gary L. McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), 16.

²⁴ George Barna, *Turn-Around Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 33-38.

²⁵ Stetzer and Dobson, 128-129.

²⁶ McIntosh, *There's Hope for your Church*, 45.

Malphurs and Penfold also link the major cause of decline to pastoral leadership, poor pastoral preparation, and too-high expectations placed on pastors by the church membership.²⁷ Believing that many pastors lack the proper preparation for pastoral leadership, they note that typical pastoral training programs prepare pastors “to do project management and perform religious rights, instead of developing people. This shift will lead to a lower involvement in the local church by church membership, who will shift their commitments to people and causes beyond the church.”²⁸ Since visionary leadership remains at the core of church life, an emphasis on leading healthy congregations is necessary for church revitalization. In this context, Malphurs and Penfold have developed four critical questions pastors can ask themselves to help them determine whether to have a role in leading a church through revitalization: “What if I’m a re-envisioning pastor? What if I’m a non-re-envisioning pastor? Can a non-re-envisioning pastor become a re-envisioning pastor? ... [and] Should a non-re-envisioning pastor become a re-envisioning pastor?”²⁹ Malphurs and Penfold conclude that God does not divinely design all pastors with the gifts, passion, and temperament to lead a church to revitalize.

The need for church revitalization remains enormous, especially since many young people are not responding to the call of God. A shortage of visionary pastors exists, those capable of leading a church to embrace the necessary change that will create a new lifecycle. Pastors must learn the skill of developing and casting a vision that others

²⁷ Malphurs and Penfold, 26.

²⁸ Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 11.

²⁹ Malphurs and Penfold, 119.

will embrace. Churches without a clear, God-inspired vision will remain fruitless because they will fail to articulate what God has called the Church to do. Those who sense a call and desire to embark on the journey of church revitalization will find Malphurs's and Penfold's re-envisioning curriculum beneficial.³⁰

Complicating this problem is a change in society, which adds to the decline in churches. Congregants “no longer look to or rely on the clergy and church leaders to script or dictate their spiritual and personal development.”³¹ With the ease of Internet streaming and archiving of messages, spiritual development becomes increasingly disconnected to any one spiritual leader, pastor, or church. Many people receive their spiritual growth daily through blogs, emails, podcasts, and online media.

As noted earlier, the American Church continues to lose members, especially young adults, at an ever increasing rate. One major reason for this loss concerns the church's lack of relevance to modern culture. Olson notes that churches that do not adjust to changes in the culture will struggle:

Although the gospel message should not change, a church needs to find new methods and styles of communication—in art, music, dialogue, and preaching—that truly engage people in the community . . . Many churches mistake culturally bound ministry styles for core theology. For many churches, their music, stories, programs, and means of community outreach no longer resonate with those outside of their church. A generation can become “culture-bound” and not notice they are increasingly out of touch with the changes. It is always easy for a generation to see the flaws in the previous generation yet miss their own shortcomings.³²

³⁰ The re-envisioning curriculum can be found in chapters 9 through 14, the practical application portion of Malphurs's and Penfold's book, *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church*.

³¹ McNeal, 42.

³² Olson, 134-135.

Many churches do not know or realize the danger they face until it is too late. Before hitting their plateau, they operate on autopilot, “coasting and admiring past victories, which lead to organizational inertia.”³³ This organizational inertia characterizes the fall, in Adizes’s model, which begins when the church passes prime and enters stable (plateau). Since plateau sits at the apex, the institutional situation appears secure; however, this “quiet time and organizational life is really the lull before the storm.”³⁴

Malphurs and Penfold assert that the first step to addressing a decline is to examine the reality of the current situation in the local church. This examination begins by checking the vital signs of the church, basic things such as worship attendance, giving, strengths, and weaknesses.³⁵ A helpful tool used by the Malphurs Group to help churches see their need for revitalization consists of sixteen make-or-break questions:³⁶

1. Do you have your finger on the church’s pulse so that you can regularly read your critical vital signs?
2. Do you have a contagious, memorable mission that serves as a compass to navigate your church through whitewater change? Does it roll off your tongue with clarity and conviction?
3. Do you habitually consult your mission statement when making any and all decisions that affect the future direction of your church?
4. Have you carefully identified your actual core values so that you understand why you are successful in some areas and struggle in others, such as evangelism?
5. Has your church’s impact in your community been such that if you were to suddenly disappear, it would leave a serious hole in your community?
6. Do your people view themselves as merely the church’s members or Christ’s missionaries?
7. Do you have a clear, simple pathway for making disciples that most in your church understand and know where they are on that path?

³³ Lyle E. Shaller, *Hey, That’s Our Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), 39-50.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Malphurs and Penfold, 179.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 255-256.

8. Does your staff team enthusiastically align with your core values, mission, vision?
9. Do you have an intentional process for increasing and empowering lay volunteers to lead and do the church's ministries?
10. Do you have a staffing blueprint that provides crystal clarity about the next ministry to launch and who will lead it?
11. Do your facilities contribute functionally to the realization of your vision in the community?
12. Do you have a biblical strategy in place for raising finances that has resulted in an increase in giving over the last few years in spite of the recession?
13. Does your church's vision cast a clear, compelling picture of your future? In the last thirty days have you overheard a church member articulate or discuss your vision?
14. Do you have an intentional process for developing key leaders at every level in your church? Can you outline it on a napkin over a cup of coffee?
15. Have you crafted a personal, individualized leader development plan for your own growth as a leader in your church?
16. Has your pastor or anyone on staff identified and enlisted a coach to help him or her grow and stay fresh as a leader?

These questions are articulated in such a way that most leaders will realize that they have substantial work to do in order to keep the church in prime and out of plateau.

Every church experiences times in their lifecycle when God intervenes with opportunities for the church to seize. These "divine interruptions" are easy to recognize when a church remains alert and understands its vision and mission in Christ.³⁷ Malphurs and Penfold list five possible interruptions: (1) a crisis, (2) a change of pastors, (3) a renewal of the pastor, (4) a renewal of lay leadership, and (5) the expertise of a church consultant or mentor.³⁸ Ultimately, a variety of opportunities and factors impact the revitalization of a Pentecostal congregation, but more importantly, the process of creating a new lifecycle begins with the transformation of the leader.

³⁷ Ibid., 180.

³⁸ Ibid.

The Process of Transformation for a Pentecostal Congregation

The process of transformation for a Pentecostal congregation involves the transformation of the leader, the congregation's spiritual life, spiritual community, spiritual formation, development and release of spiritual gifts, missional effectiveness, and the management/structure within the church. This process of transformation will effect change that leads to paradigm shifts and revitalization of a congregation.

Transformation of the Leader

The most important aspect of revitalization for a congregation is the transformation of the local pastor. Transformation affects character, leadership qualities, traits, characteristics, personality, gifts, calling, and passions.³⁹ Stetzer and Dobson research indicates that churches that have experienced revitalization first experienced some type of change or transformation within the pastoral leadership. They note, "the reason for a change in pastoral leadership is that these churches needed change in general, ... [and as these churches persist] in a pattern of plateau and decline," only those pastors who willingly change or renew themselves will successfully lead a church in revitalization.⁴⁰ Olson agrees on the importance of the transformation of the leader: "Pastors are severely limited in their leadership effectiveness unless they know how to lead authentically."⁴¹ This leadership authenticity comes from learning how to lead effectively, which then becomes part of the transformational path for the revitalization of

³⁹ Wayne and Sherry Lee, *The Church Life Model: A Biblical Pattern for the Spirit-Filled Church* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2011), 7.

⁴⁰ Stetzer and Dobson, 180.

⁴¹ Olson, 138.

the church. Transformation begins with the pastor, which then impacts the church.

Unfortunately, many pastors do not realize the integral role they have and simply believe that the plateau or decline of their churches stem from reasons other than themselves.

Most often, however, the reality is that the pastor/leader remains a core part of the issue.

A leader's transformation begins with spiritual renewal through prayer, renewed devotion, waiting, and discerning. The leader must experience God in authentic moments in His presence while reading Scripture, praying, practicing solitude, fasting, contemplation, intercession, and meditation. Brian McLaren says the church needs "leadership by personal authenticity ... [from leaders who] look at the tasks and qualities demanded."⁴² Personal spiritual renewal remains the key to creating a new lifecycle.

Transformation in the pastor leads to church transformation, which empowers the pastor to lead the congregation to spiritual health and vitality. Fresh experiences, new encounters, and a spiritual renewing of one's calling comes through these divine encounters with the living God. Learning to replenish spiritually is a necessity.

Revitalization also requires strong visionary leadership. A pastor who can turn around a church learns to "make the right decisions for the right reasons. They're able to design a plan for the comeback that makes sense and the people will accept."⁴³ The challenge, however, is that few churches have this type of strong visionary leadership. Malphurs and Penfold claim there is "not necessarily a lack of leaders. Churches are

⁴² Brian D. McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 14.

⁴³ Barna, *Turn-around*, 114-115.

rarely developing visionary leaders.”⁴⁴ Visionary leaders understand the biblical nature, tasks, and responsibilities of leadership, and the need for constant intentional focus on the mission of Christ. Visionary leadership develops in churches, training programs, seminars and conferences, seminaries and Bible schools, and through mentorship and coaching. Pastors need a development plan that addresses key areas: character, personality, calling, abilities, knowledge, emotional intelligence, skills, and roles.

Wayne and Sherry Lee of Church Life Resources have developed a useful diagram for understanding the process of developing strong leaders. They identify three main components of strong leadership: personhood, roles, and execution. The first component, personhood, addresses the development of a leader’s personal and spiritual life. Personhood stresses the importance of character, personality, calling, passion, mission, and vision. The second component, roles, addresses the functions and responsibilities of leadership. Roles include providing visionary leadership, supplying spiritual leadership and communication, being the spiritual community developer and caregiver, directing ministry and discipleship, overseeing outreach, and managing resources. The third component, execution of leadership, requires the ability to discern urgencies and realities, formulate teams and strategies, empower team implementation, and recognize the transformational activity of God.⁴⁵

Undergirding these three main components are strong personal and spiritual formation, the continual pursuit of knowledge, healthy practice, and accountability with

⁴⁴ Malphurs and Penfold, 29.

⁴⁵ Wayne Lee, “Leadership Development” (class lecture for PTH 900: Issues in Church Life at Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO, October 25-30, 2010).

mentors to provide continual reflection, along with God-given anointing, authority and influence. Finally, all of these characteristics, roles, and components must remain continually informed by an acute awareness of personal and spiritual weaknesses, the dark side of leadership.⁴⁶

Visionary leaders also understand the need for clear and compelling vision in transformation and revitalization. They do this by “understanding what vision is, why we need it, when to share it, how to paint the picture, how to persuade, counting the cost, and keeping the vision before the people.”⁴⁷ Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger define leadership as helping “place people in the pathway of God’s transforming power. To design a process that partners with the transformation process revealed in Scripture.”⁴⁸ Pastors returning to God’s process for making disciples “have designed a ministry process that puts people in the place for God to transform them.”⁴⁹ Visionary pastors have the ability to see what God wants in a given situation and through a group of people, and are able to articulate the necessary course of action to see the vision fulfilled. Mark Rutland asserts that the “turnaround leader is the Chief Culture Officer in an organization, ... [the person who will] create a vision and communicate that vision at every opportunity to every person who will stand still or walk slow.”⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Stetzer and Dobson, 45-50

⁴⁸ Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church: Returning to God’s Process for Making Disciples* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 139.

⁴⁹Ibid., 139.

⁵⁰ Mark Rutland, *Relaunch: How to Stage an Organizational Comeback* (Colorado Springs: David C Cook, 2013), 128.

The missional thrust of the Church comes as God releases the impulses of divine mission and vision to His body. God charges pastors with facilitating the mission of Christ through the church while vision is a statement of what God will do. Rutland describes how vision takes root in the heart of God's people:

When leaders first can see possibilities for the future, they are like everyone else—dreaming of a better tomorrow. But somewhere along the line, something more happens. God begins to impart faith to the leader. The dream matures and becomes more culture. Through prayer, the leader gives God access to the dream he holds in his heart. God then speaks to the leader by breathing faith into those parts of the dream that reflect God's plan for the local church he leads. This faith makes the vision seem real, attainable. To those looking on, the vision seems unreachable at first, but when the leader speaks and shares his heart on the matter, faith acts like a contagion—others begin to believe that the impossible is now possible.⁵¹

According to George Barna, people want a leader, but will only follow someone they deem worthy: “In essence, they will refuse to place their trust and future in the hands of an alleged leader who does not possess vision.”⁵²

The key to revitalization is not just shared vision; it is “the connection between the dream, its proclamation, and making the dream the driving force of everything that is done.”⁵³ Transformational leaders learn to discern the divine impulses of that which is to be activated in the local church. God speaks, and Pentecostal leaders must understand and communicate His divine message to the church.

⁵¹ Michael Fletcher, *Overcoming Barriers to Growth* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2003), 25-26.

⁵² Dave Earley, *Turning Members into Leaders: How to Raise Up Your Group Members to Lead New Groups* (Houstons: Cell Group Resources, 2001), 58; George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 48-49.

⁵³ Rutland, 23.

Malphurs and Penfold have found, however, that many pastors lack the ability to articulate a vision for the church. They have not been trained to see the dream, save the dream, or share the dream; they remain “bricklayers rather than architects.”⁵⁴ The leader must consistently reinforce the vision for the people, making it easier to remember and live it, by “continually reminding them in creative, appealing and meaningful ways.”⁵⁵

John Kotter, in his classic work, *Leading Change*, stresses that leaders must communicate vision in order to see transformation: “The people will not make sacrifices, even if they are unhappy with the status quo, unless they think the potential benefits of change are attractive and unless they really believe that a transformation is possible.”⁵⁶ Rutland reinforces this point: “The vision gets fractured, scattered, and twisted as it goes down through the ranks. It loses power and focus. You have to gather all those pieces up and speak them again with fresh energy. Speak the vision with enthusiasm and vitality every time, as if it’s the most fascinating thing you’ve ever said.”⁵⁷ Rutland, having led several turnaround organizations, understands how vision sticks and what it takes to create renewed momentum.

The revitalization of a local church requires focus and commitment of leaders who serve as agents of change and transformation. “If a church is to capture the heart of

⁵⁴ Malphurs and Penfold, 31.

⁵⁵ George Barna, *Turning Vision Into Action* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1996), 149.

⁵⁶ John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 1996), 9.

⁵⁷ Rutland, 99.

its community, Christ must first capture the heart of the pastor. Revitalization leaders live the mission.”⁵⁸ This transformation always begins with the pastor.

Transformation of the Spiritual Life of the Congregation

Balanced spiritual vitality thrusts a congregation into its mission and vision. Revitalization primarily remains a spiritual issue, and it occurs when the body of Christ engages in activities that bring them into an awareness of the presence of God. Churches create a new lifecycle by prioritizing the spiritual life of the congregation through emphasizing spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, corporate worship, and private devotions. Richard Foster categorizes spiritual disciplines into 1) the inward disciplines, which include meditation, prayer, fasting, and study, 2) the outward disciplines of simplicity, solitude, submission, and service, and 3) the corporate disciplines of confession, worship, guidance, and celebration.⁵⁹ Practicing these disciplines both individually and corporately maximizes spirituality within the church. In his research, John Larue discovered that 75 percent of revitalized churches reported starting such spiritual discipline initiatives in their congregations.⁶⁰

Churches that revitalize by creating new lifecycles understand that the spiritual health and life of a congregation remain multi-dimensional; they nurture the people of God to experience His presence both privately and corporately. This gives a deep awareness of the presence of the Lord and brings a vitality that meets the church’s needs,

⁵⁸ McIntosh, *There’s Hope for your Church*, 38.

⁵⁹ Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (New York: Harper Collins, 1998), 5.

⁶⁰ John C. Larue Jr., “Back from the Brink,” *Your Church*, September/October 2006, 10.

enlarges its vision, and enables it to accomplish its God-given mission. These churches remain praying churches. Revivals take place when God's people pray and when they obey God's Word. The Holy Spirit's presence and power releases through intentional prayer: "There simply is no more important principle in church growth than prayer. The prayers of the early church unleashed the power of God to add thousands to the church."⁶¹ Prayer changes circumstances and releases the supernatural. As leaders increase the spiritual fervor of the congregation, "the church has an innate ability to renew itself spiritually."⁶²

Spiritual renewal begins with the leader through prayer, renewed devotion, waiting, and discerning. As the church embraces God's call to return to their first love, it generates movement and arouses passion to see and know God, to connect one's heart with the Holy Spirit's present work in the earth. The believer's spirituality forms in the continuous encounter with God, which comes only through participating in the Christian disciplines: "Biblical spirituality ... is concerned with bringing our body and soul into an intimate relationship with the heart of God. It is concerned with holiness, which means that it relates to every aspect of life, as lived from day to day."⁶³

The leader of revitalization needs to experience renewal before leading others to spiritual health and vitality. The pastoral leaders and a sizeable core of lay leaders must experience, model, and teach spiritual health before revitalization permeates the

⁶¹ Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles* (Nashville: B & H Publishers, 1993), 183-84.

⁶² Cook, *Historical Drift*, 34.

⁶³ Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 12.

congregation. This spiritual renewal gives leaders vision and provides focus, helping them develop practical and powerful plans.

God uses preaching and teaching to bring life change, forming the believer into Christ-likeness and inspiring transformation: “the best way to revive the church is to build a fire in the pulpit.”⁶⁴ This “fire in the pulpit” brings Christ-like convictions (the way believers think), Christ-like character (the way they feel), and Christ-like conduct (the way they act). Preaching shares the “authentic revealed Word of God” in a way that changes lives and prepares God’s people to build up the body of Christ.⁶⁵ The goal is to lead people to live as doers of the Word, not just hearers.

This spiritual renewal and revitalization requires a reliance on the Holy Spirit to make the planted seed grow: “Fruitful ministry is a remarkable combination of God-directed human effort converging with the work of the Holy Spirit to manifest the touch of God himself ... transformation is solely the work of the Holy Spirit.”⁶⁶ This spiritual empowerment remains one reason churches are able to revitalize and thrive again.⁶⁷

According to Rainer and Geiger, church leaders must be designers, not programmers: “Church leaders who are designers are focused on the end result, the overall picture. They are as concerned with what happens between the programs as with

⁶⁴ Carl George, *Prepare Your Church for the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1993), 28.

⁶⁵ Wayne H. Lee, *Church Life* (Chatom, AL: Church Life Resources, 2004), section 5, 1.

⁶⁶ Olson, 137.

⁶⁷ Stetzer and Dobson, 15.

the programs themselves.”⁶⁸ A challenge for many Pentecostal leaders lies in recognizing the true spiritual condition of the church. Without this recognition, they cannot develop a transformation process that moves people towards spiritual maturity.

Transformation of the Spiritual Community of the Congregation

A major characteristic of the body of Christ is spiritual community, often called fellowship, care, connection, bonding, brotherly love, or *koinonia*. Spiritual community provides the “development of meaningful relationships where every member carries a significant sense of belonging.”⁶⁹ The spiritual life of a congregation connects people to God, while the spiritual community connects people to one another. Spiritual community conserves the fruit of evangelism and draws believers to become members of the community, where they will receive care and fellowship. Lee and Lee contend that belonging to this “family of God” meets emotional and spiritual needs and allows the individual to “participate in the *koinonia* presence of God.”⁷⁰ This belonging offers not only the presence of God as “real and wonderful,” but it also “surrounds, envelops, and acknowledges the individual uniqueness of each person” and “makes the body one in Christ’s love.”⁷¹

⁶⁸ Rainer and Geiger, 26.

⁶⁹ Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church: Beyond Small Groups to Authentic Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 35.

⁷⁰ Lee and Lee, *The Church Life Model: A Biblical Pattern for the Spirit-Filled Church*, 51-52.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

People come to church for a variety of reasons, but they primarily stay for relationships. Growing churches remain highly intentional in designing assimilation strategies and systems that start before someone even steps foot in the church. Nelson Searcy believes assimilation can transform lives by helping people become mature Christ followers.⁷² He defines this assimilation as “the process used to encourage your first-time guests to continue coming back until they see and understand God’s power, accept Jesus as their Savior, and commit themselves to the local church through membership.”⁷³ These meaningful relationships are essential “to what it means to be the church. This is a God ordained gathering of people that is so strong that even ‘the gates of hell will not overcome it.’”⁷⁴

Genuine caring best takes place in small groups, “the engine in each local church that propels its growth.”⁷⁵ When people see and experience a care-giving environment, their lives change, impacting their friendship network. Everyone needs a relational network of believers; however, the relational network remains critical for new believers. Shepherding, the biblical model of caring, involves modelling, nurturing, feeding, and protecting.

⁷² Nelson Searcy, *Fusion: Turning First-Time Guests into Fully-Engaged Members of Your Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2007), 27-28.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Randy Frazee, *Making Room for Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 33.

⁷⁵ George, 85.

Church members will disengage without consistent care.⁷⁶ The easiest way to care for everyone is to connect each person to a life group, ministry group, serving group, or outreach group that provides care by “extending friendliness, kindness, encouragement, comfort, warmth in relationships, practical assistance, companionship, and prayer for others.”⁷⁷ This kind of pastoral care remains the responsibility of the entire church, not just the pastor: “If a church relies solely on the pastoral staff to provide care for all church members, it will fail. The only practical way to provide care is to give every person in the church this responsibility. If everyone is involved in caring for each other, there is high probability that the care provided will be good and consistent.”⁷⁸

A church must have a deep commitment to fulfilling the great commandment to create a new lifecycle. Congregants will build relational, transforming communities where people experience oneness with God and oneness with one another, “communities that are so satisfying, so unique, and so compelling that they create thirst in a watching world.”⁷⁹ As a biblical mandate, spiritual leaders must connect people in community in such a way as to “unwrap God’s gifts of oneness among his people.”⁸⁰ People need connection, and churches that revitalize use strategies that help people stay and grow.

⁷⁶ Jonathan Gainsbrugh, *Winning the Backdoor War* (Elk Grove, CA: Harvest Church, 1993), 25.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 166.

⁷⁹ Andy Stanley and Bill Willits, *Creating Community: 5 Keys to Building a Small Group Culture* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2004), 45.

⁸⁰ Stetzer and Dobson, 152.

Getting people to come and visit is one thing, but getting them to stay is another challenge altogether. Neither is easy, but both remain necessary.

Transformation of the Spiritual Formation of the Congregation

In His final words to the disciples Jesus says, “Go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to do everything I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:18-20). Churches that create new lifecycles develop a system of discipleship, giving prominent attention to the growth and maturity of members. This process, often referred to as spiritual formation, promotes growth and establishes strength within the members, so the body moves, grows, and fulfills the vision and mission of God. The goal or mission of discipleship is to make disciples—teach, train, and equip them—so they in turn can fulfill the Great Commission.

Churches should ensure that each member receives teaching on the key habits of discipleship: reading Scripture, prayer, small groups, tithing, witnessing, and other disciplines. While numerous topics seem more desirable to learn (e.g. end times, spiritual warfare, etc.), believers must first learn the basic disciplines of the Christian life.

Maturity in Christ occurs through encounters with God, hearing and receiving the Word, exercising spiritual gifts, becoming involved in ministry, and evangelizing others. The goal of every Christian must be to become like Christ, a goal the church must support.

Despite this need, Geiger and Rainer have found that most churches “have not designed a

simple process for discipleship. They have not structured their church around the process of spiritual transformation. And they are making little impact.”⁸¹

Spiritual formation requires an intentional strategy designed around a straightforward and strategic process that moves people through the stages of spiritual growth. A major barrier to growth in many churches comes from the lack of a simple discipleship process. Growing churches not only have a clear discipleship process, they ensure the process is streamlined.⁸² Spiritual leaders who revitalize churches help the church understand goals and remain clear about the process.

Andy Stanley affirms that revitalizing leaders are “clear about the process” and “are committed to executing it;” they make sure the “process flows logically,” is “implemented in each area of the church,” and they make sure the church remains focused.⁸³ This process yields the power of transformation. Leaders must answer the question of where people should go, which clarifies the win for the organization: “Regrettably, many churches are not clear on what a win looks like for them, so they don’t know how to go about achieving the win.”⁸⁴

Geiger and Rainer found that 54 percent of vibrant churches intentionally place programs to work in conjunction with ministry process, compared to 30 percent of non-growing churches; however, the “sequential programming is vital.”⁸⁵ Offering a clearly

⁸¹ Rainer and Geiger, 62.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 63.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁸⁴ Stanley and Willits, 72.

⁸⁵ Rainer and Geiger, 142.

defined next step to the spiritual transformation process proves essential: “Vibrant churches are more than twice as likely as the comparison churches to offer a clear next step to new believers”⁸⁶ With regard to implementation, Geiger and Rainer suggest beginning with a clearly defined process, choosing one program for each phase, defining each program for a specific aspect of the process, and placing the programs in sequential order.⁸⁷

This process of spiritual formation must begin with new believers learning to become a disciple since 70 percent of vibrant churches require classes for new members and new believers, but only 38 percent of the comparison churches require these classes.⁸⁸ Commenting on the importance of new member courses in reaching the unchurched, Thom Rainer says new member classes lead to a higher retention rate.⁸⁹ The church cannot expect new believers to demonstrate good spiritual habits immediately, but they must help them make a commitment to develop habits displayed by the mature in Christ.⁹⁰ This basic level of spiritual formation will lead new believers to make commitments to Christ, to spiritual community, to ministry, and to the church and its mission.

The process of discipleship does not end with the initial new believer; instead it moves the believer to become a disciple maker through encouraging full devotion to

⁸⁶ Ibid., 155.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 142.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 158-159.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 158.

⁹⁰ Stetzer and Dobson, 127.

Christ and His Mission. Those who become disciples themselves become disciple makers. In John 15:8, Jesus says, “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” Christ’s goal of discipleship is fruitfulness. Spiritual leaders who create new lifecycles will utilize a process that develops spiritual fruit of Christ’s own nature (maturity) and the spiritual fruit of “making disciples” (multiplication). This level of discipleship will help individuals grow in their relationships with Christ, ministry influence, ministry effectiveness, and in Kingdom fruitfulness.

Releasing Spiritual Gifts in the Congregation

Churches that create new lifecycles provide opportunities for believers to receive and give ministry. Spiritual gifts provide the service and ministry of the church. When spiritual gifts operate in the church as intended, they yield edification, growth, and unity in the church (Eph. 4:11-16). Churches that revitalize build a strong infrastructure of ministries that mobilize the laity to fulfill the mission of the church, led by a combination of trained staff and lay leadership teams. In *Equipping for Ministry*, John Palmer lists several basic principles that remain biblically foundational in recognizing the role of laity in the church: “all members of the local church are necessary; there is diversity of ministry within the church; there is unity in the church; and members of the church need each other.”⁹¹

Leaders must encourage members to serve, assist them in identifying their gifts, equip them for service, and place them in meaningful ministry. Spiritual leaders carry the

⁹¹ John Palmer, *Equipping for Ministry* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1990), 16.

responsibility to create a system that equips the body of Christ to serve God by serving one another with their spiritual gifts. To determine one's spiritual gifts, an inventory assessment helps match gifts with the ministry: "While spiritual fruit defines what a Christian is, revealing the character and nature of Christ within the believer (Galatians 5:22-23), spiritual gifts determine what a Christian does, revealing the power of Christ working through the believer in service to others (1 Peter 4:10-11)."⁹²

Christian Schwarz describes this kind of empowering leadership as a process of motivating and mobilizing the people, providing them opportunities to discover and utilize their unique giftedness and serve in the power of the Holy Spirit⁹³ Schwarz notes that "when Christians serve in their area of giftedness, they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus ordinary people can accomplish the extraordinary!"⁹⁴ Effective church leaders provide the coaching, mentoring, training, and opportunity to develop the gifting and anointing of the people of God. Wayne Lee sees ministry as both an art and a science: "Spiritual leaders build 'laboratories' for creativity, experimentation, practice, and mistakes."⁹⁵

One barrier that keeps some churches from growing is an inadequate structure for growth. When most of the ministry centers on the pastor, the church's growth potential remains limited to the number of ministry areas the pastor can oversee. A change has to

⁹² Lee, Section 10, 4.

⁹³ Christian C. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2003), 22-23.

⁹⁴ Schwarz, 24.

⁹⁵ Lee, Section 10, 3.

take place in the role of the pastor for churches to grow effectively and reach their full potential, and the people have to step up and use their spiritual gifts.⁹⁶ Pastors who create new lifecycles lead their churches to a renewed attitude for service, a passion to serve, and a desire to see the impact of their service. These churches reap the harvest because they have harvest workers. As Joel Comiskey notes, “churches that have no plan to develop leaders have, by default, planned to lose the harvest.”⁹⁷ Leaders create opportunities for laypeople to release their spiritual gifts.

James R. Clinton provides valuable insight to help leaders discover and develop the gifts of laity.⁹⁸ He begins with evaluation, exploration, examination, and experimentation. He offers a four-step process for developing the spiritual gifts: (1) provide new knowledge, (2) model (mentor), (3) offer opportunities for practical use, and (4) provide on-going training.

Ministry is best performed by teams with members working and communicating together to reach a common goal. A team approach allows individuals to use their unique skills and talents, capitalizing on the strengths and spiritual gifts of each person. When team members align their personal goals with the church’s missional goals, they release a powerful anointing. Team ministry requires loyalty, commitment, respect, and trust, especially when conflicts and disagreements arise. Effective team ministry will incorporate coaching and mentoring, two-way communication, and ongoing development.

⁹⁶ Stetzer and Dobson, 132.

⁹⁷ Joel Comiskey, *Leadership Explosion* (Houston: Touch Publications, 2000), 16.

⁹⁸ Robert James Clinton, *Spiritual Gifts* (Alberta, Canada: Horizon House, 1985), 37, 125.

Transformation of the Missional Effectiveness of the Congregation

As part of the great commission, evangelism provides the process through which new believers are won to Christ. In order for a church to fulfill its purpose, it must reach people not actively following Christ and help them start doing so. Creating a new lifecycle requires a renewed commitment to reach and serve the community. This type of outreach remains service-oriented and is frequently called missional service. Serving the community through social action projects, working in partnership with local public schools, and other such activities provide the means for reaching the community. McIntosh notes the importance of this outward focus: “When leadership focuses from those already in the church to those in the community, the church is revitalized and the people in the church experience spiritual growth.”⁹⁹ The mindset of the congregation shifts from the internal to the external. The church becomes visible and engages the community outside the walls of the church, believing the church exists for this reason. McNeal helps contemporary leaders understand how this shift in thinking redesigns the target of ministry: “Internally focused churches” use their resources on what benefits those already in the church while “externally focused ministry leaders ... look for ways to serve the communities where they are located.”¹⁰⁰ This shift in focus releases excitement, energy, and life within the church and its people.

Revitalizing pastors help their congregations embrace missional living as a way of life. When this happens, evangelism becomes a process more than an event, and churches

⁹⁹ McIntosh, *There's Hope for your Church*, 63.

¹⁰⁰ McNeal, 6-7.

embrace incarnational ministry, just as the Early Church did as they were entrenched in their communities. Like the Early Church, the revitalizing church must focus on living, demonstrating, and offering biblical community to a lost world. Stetzer calls this “incarnational living,” the way to live the mandate of Christ in one’s context of life.¹⁰¹ Wayne Lee uses the term “Jerusalem Harvest.”¹⁰²

In contrast, the traditional church emphasizes reaching people through church outreach efforts and then assimilating them into the church. The missional church, however, sees itself as a Kingdom agent deployed in its everyday, natural setting. McNeal says that “the missional church views the church's position in society as one where God has his people—his missionaries—deployed across all domains of culture. After all, since the mission is redemptive and the world is God’s target, does it make sense that he would take this approach?”¹⁰³ This shift in philosophy turns members into missionaries, as a “genuine mission impulse is a sending one rather than a fractional one.”¹⁰⁴ The church does not merely house the missions program or send missionaries into the world; it exists as the missions program of God: “The existence of the church is the embodiment of Christ's mission.”¹⁰⁵ As missionaries study their cultures to be relevant, so does the missional believer work to build bridges for the sake of gaining an opportunity to share the message of salvation.

¹⁰¹ Stetzer and Dobson, 6.

¹⁰² Wayne Lee, Section 12, 5.

¹⁰³ McNeal, 55.

¹⁰⁴ Mike Erre, *Death by Church* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2009), 137.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 124.

A missional church evaluates its effectiveness differently than how most others measure it. Leaders of missional churches, those creating new lifecycles, acknowledge their responsibility for fulfilling the missionary purpose of the local church. McNeal describes them as “visionaries who are energized by a vision of the preferred future, not just informed by denominational program with the latest methodological book.”¹⁰⁶ He describes them as “entrepreneurial,” taking calculated risks to create markets for the gospel, and “apostolic” with a genuine spirituality, ones who have the ability to develop “great teams” with the core value of “cultural relevance.”¹⁰⁷ Revitalization pastors employ these powerful approaches: they are entrepreneurial, apostolic, spiritual, team oriented, and culturally relevant.

Pastors of revitalization learn to engage the whole church and lead them in embracing the mandate for evangelism. They remain more intentional in their evangelistic efforts, and they prepare for outreach with prayer and training. For a church to create a new lifecycle, it must regain a passion for evangelism and a passion for the lost.

Transformation of the Management/ Structure of the Congregation

The creation of new lifecycles involves many management and structural realities that include decision-making, finances, facilities, and personnel. Each of these can impact the church’s mission. Management systems of the local church aim toward efficiency, giving priority to quality: “The first step in leading a turnaround in an organization is

¹⁰⁶ McNeal, 126.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

simply to take a good long look at the stark realities—and then to communicate those realities to everyone involved in a way that avoids panic.”¹⁰⁸ This involves leadership decisions and management execution. Effective turnaround requires the successful management of tensions and seeks to solve problems.

Revitalizing the church’s structure must begin with decision-making. The local church needs a process of decision-making to ensure sound and wise decisions, manage potential conflicts, and initiate needed change. Rainer and Geiger call for a simple and crystal-clear structure.¹⁰⁹ Leaders that develop such structures will “know their church’s process and are able to articulate it to others with conviction. They are able to do so because they own the process.”¹¹⁰ The best process for today’s church is both streamlined and participative. In this kind of environment, the church can make quality decisions, which will lead to greater satisfaction among members. It will solve problems before they escalate to a crisis, which prevents disengagement by members. A sound decision-making process also helps in the strategic planning of the church, which is “the process of thinking and acting.”¹¹¹ The emphasis here should center on enabling leaders to discover and rediscover the God-given mission and strategy.

Without a commitment to embracing biblical values that lead to revitalization and new lifecycles, an unhealthy culture within the church will impede its growth and will

¹⁰⁸ Rutland, 73.

¹⁰⁹ Rainer and Geiger, 72.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 11.

fail any strategic plans put into place since “culture eats strategy for lunch.”¹¹² Samuel Chand extensively covers the importance and impact of principles upon organizational culture. He believes that culture remains the most important factor in any organization, but it typically goes unnoticed, unspoken, and unexamined; yet it determines how people respond to vision and leadership.¹¹³ At the same time, culture most often surfaces and is addressed through negative experiences. It remains hard to change, but change results in multiplied benefits.¹¹⁴

Learning to navigate the terrain of revitalization requires leaders to develop the art of decision-making, which is the skill of flexibility, according to Rutland. He says leaders must be willing to “move and respond according to changing circumstances.”¹¹⁵ This skill is not easily developed and is best accomplished with mentors helping the individual to process the change. Pastors leading change will face resistance from those who desire to protect the status quo, and often these individuals hold the power positions of the church. Wayne Lee has developed a problem-solving process that assists leaders with making decisions. Following his sequential process will help leaders avoid a breakdown in cooperation. The process involves isolating the issue or issues, identifying the participants, gathering and analyzing essential related information, determining possible options, changes, and risks, securing action agreements, and testing, implementing, and

¹¹² Malphurs and Penfold, 168.

¹¹³ Samuel R. Chand, *Cracking Your Church's Culture Code: Seven Keys to Unleashing Vision & Inspiration* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 9-16.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Rutland, 60.

communicating the decisions made.¹¹⁶ This process helps churches that must make many difficult decisions during revitalization.

The church with limited resources will not be able to continue doing church as it has been doing it. Stetzer's research shows that churches that make a comeback and revitalize often required a change in their facilities to help facilitate the growth, which "included remodeling facilities, building children and youth facilities, but also included marketing."¹¹⁷ A new building brings excitement and growth to the church. People see the vision for the new building and what the church is trying to accomplish and they want to be a part of it. However, "build it and they will come" will not bring transformation by itself. Beautiful facilities do not replace an unhealthy culture. While church facilities do not raise the satisfaction level of the church or community, they do tend to lower dissatisfaction.¹¹⁸ The best guide is to let the vision determine the facilities. As the church catches, embraces, and fulfills the vision, God's resources will follow.

The financial system of the church provides the resources to maintain adequate personnel, ministry programs, and facilities. Lee asserts that "financial resources must convert into the fuel required to maintain the health and growth of the church."¹¹⁹ Pastors creating new lifecycles will need sufficient financial resources to stimulate and maintain

¹¹⁶ Lee, Section 13, 2.

¹¹⁷ Stetzer and Dobson, 71.

¹¹⁸ Kenneth L. Callahan, *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1983), 163.

¹¹⁹ Lee, 71.

growth. The development of good principles and processes will enable the church to properly cultivate and manage financial resources.

Creating New Lifecycles: Leading the Transformational Process

Leading a church to create a new lifecycle takes skills and the art of leadership. McIntosh has identified the various leadership styles needed for the different stages of congregational development.¹²⁰ They include the following five styles: (1) the Catalyzer, who is needed in the emerging stage of the congregation, has the ability to bring something into being that did not formerly exist; (2) the Organizer, needed in the growing stage of the congregation, has the ability to bring together that which is disorderly because of growth; (3) the Operator, needed in the consolidating stage, has the ability to manage the organization when it is stable; (4) the Reorganizer, needed as the church enters the declining stage, has similar skills as the Organizer but with the added ability to work with a declining church by keeping long-term members happy while building new vision and strategy; and (5) the Super-Reorganizer, needed as a church is in the dying stage, has the ability to bring about radical changes that result in the rebirth of the congregation. These five styles of leadership are crucial at different phases of revitalization and renewal. A style that works at one phase does not always work at a different phase of growth and development. Learning the appropriate styles to use at certain phases encompasses the art of leadership.

¹²⁰ McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 90-95.

Re-Creating Growth Points

For a church to create a new lifecycle, an interruption must occur. A church's current developmental stage determines the level of difficulty that exists in creating momentum and a new lifecycle. McIntosh calls the re-creating point of a lifecycle "choice points."¹²¹ Churches must choose between life and death because at the "point of transition between stages in the life cycle there is an opportune time for the church to decide to move forward and birth a new cycle of life and vitality or stay on the pathway to plateau and eventual decline and death."¹²² During these choices, churches must remain cognizant of the preferred future, which is very difficult when all is going well in the church. Ideally, churches determine "choice points" before decline occurs. It is in these moments that leaders identify new vision, opportunities, and structures for the church: "Churches that have an effective and fruitful ministry for many years actually go through several cycles of birth, growth, and renewal. At each peak of the growth cycle, the church leaders face another choice point."¹²³ For continuous renewal and growth, it remains critical for leaders to recognize choice points and lead the church to a new growth point, when a congregation experiences "maximum ministry ... both inside (spiritual growth) and outside (spiritual birth). Whenever a church finds itself in the balanced position of seeing a significant number of new people coming to faith in Christ and believers already in the church growing in their spiritual lives, it is at its growth

¹²¹ Ibid., 99.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

point.”¹²⁴ Pastors that learn to keep the church at its growth point will see the church enjoy its greatest level of joy, excitement, and energy. Returning a church to its growth point is also the point when a new lifecycle begins. The art of leadership consists of walking through this change process.

The Change Process

In the human lifecycle, decline remains inevitable. No matter how much a person exercises, eats healthy food, and visits the doctor, physical decline eventually sets in, leading to death. In organizations, lifecycle decline is not certain, only probable. Organizations of any kind have the potential for renewed growth and vitality. With 70 percent of American churches stagnant or slipping into decline, established churches must find ways to stay focused and effective.¹²⁵ While the process remains difficult, some churches can reverse the decline by creating new lifecycles. Values must guide the new lifecycle in creating the program and ministry, fostering behaviors that reflect those values, and cultivating leaders to guide the entire process.

When it comes to creating new lifecycles and leading necessary change, Andy Stanley emphasizes the need to ask the right questions: “Asking the right questions (and asking them over and over) will ensure that the vision of your church remains paramount while your programming remains subservient.”¹²⁶ Questions that give clear definition to vision, values, strengths, and weaknesses will help define the needed implementation

¹²⁴ Ibid, 197.

¹²⁵ Stetzer and Dobson, 27.

¹²⁶ Andy Stanley, *Deep & Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 302-306, Kindle.

strategies and systems. The implementation of a change process provides the crucial component needed to bring about a new lifecycle in the church. Michael A. Beitler brings clarity to the process of change: “Change is a process that follows a relatively predictable pattern.”¹²⁷ Unfortunately, few have experience or training in how to bring about the change process.

Many church growth models utilize components from business and organizational literature, but John Kotter’s eight-stage change process serves as a particularly useful classic:

1. Establish a sense of urgency.
2. Create a guiding coalition.
3. Develop vision and strategy for the specific change.
4. Communicate the change vision and strategic plan.
5. Empower employees for action.
6. Generate short-term wins.
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change.
8. Anchor the new changes in the culture.¹²⁸

In addition, one of the more recent church revitalization models comes from Malphurs and Penfold, who encourage pastors to “pursue a process that results in a model.”¹²⁹ They suggest three stages—the preparation for re-envisioning a church, the process for re-envisioning a church, and the practice of re-envisioning a church.¹³⁰ These three stages

¹²⁷ Michael A. Beitler, *Strategic Organizational Change: A Practitioner’s Guide for Managers and Consultants*, 3rd ed. (Greensboro, NC: Practitioner Press International, 2013), 39.

¹²⁸ Kotter, 22.

¹²⁹ Malphurs and Penfold, 207.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

serve as a guide to leading and developing the processes for organizational change in the local church.

The Preparation for Re-Envisioning a Church

The first stage of Malphurs's and Penfold's model, the preparation stage, prepares for the re-envisioning process using seven steps (see Table 1). Without preparation, the effort will likely fail.

Table 1: The Preparation for Re-Envisioning a Church

STEP 1	GAIN SUPPORT
STEP 2	DRAFT A STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM
STEP 3	COMMUNICATE CONSTANTLY
STEP 4	EMBRACE A THEOLOGY OF CHANGE
STEP 5	CONDUCT A CHURCH ANALYSIS
STEP 6	RECRUIT A COACH OR MENTOR
STEP 7	LAY A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

Gaining support and communicating change enables others to adopt the vision and plan. Creating a sense of urgency builds motivation and momentum. Leaders are charged with challenging the status quo. This process remains necessary for re-formation and transitioning God's people to alignment with God's purposes.¹³¹ Kotter's model

¹³¹ Erwin Raphael McManus, *An Unstoppable Force: Daring to Become the Church God Had in Mind* (Orange, CA: Group Publishing, 2001), 23.

begins by establishing a sense of urgency: “With urgency low, it’s difficult to put together a group with enough power and credibility to guide the effort or to convince key individuals to spend the time necessary to create and communicate a change vision.”¹³² Without a sense of urgency, people will drift toward complacency without knowing an issue exists. Thus, the downward slope toward death begins. Revitalization begins with leaders confronting a complacent culture with a sense of urgency that calls for a renewed commitment to the mission of Christ. If those in empowered positions do not support the process, change will not occur. The change leader should not proceed forward with the vision until key leaders and others in power give their support; otherwise, much time, energy, and money will go to waste.

This guiding coalition includes key leaders who know the church and have favor with the congregation: “When congregants know that their leaders are on the team, they recognize the other leaders besides the pastor are a part of the process. This encourages them to be supportive of the team and its work.”¹³³ Kotter recommends pulling together a team that possesses four characteristics: first, they must have position power. It is important that the leader include enough board members and key leaders on the guiding team so progress cannot be easily blocked. Second, leaders must find people with expertise in the various systems of the organization. Third, leaders must build a credible team so the entire constituency takes seriously the plans and vision. Fourth, the leader must find other proven leaders to help bring about the change process.¹³⁴ A guiding

¹³² Kotter, 37.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Kotter, 58.

coalition remains important. The greater the change to the culture of the church, the more the team needs people of substantial influence.

Another important step in this stage involves communicating the mission to everyone in the organization. It is easy to falsely assume everyone has bought into the vision. Communication builds trust; without trust, a leader cannot lead. Communicating the vision requires solid statements, metaphors, media, visuals, and slogans. Clear direction is charted through clear communication. This will include both written and spoken communication. The success of implementation depends on clear communication.

The Process for Re-Envisioning a Church

Stage two begins the re-envisioning process. Malphurs and Penfold focus on five biblical core values (worship, fellowship, biblical instruction, evangelism, and service) that enable a church to re-envision itself. They have a four step process to help a local church define and develop its specific vision and strategy (see Table 2).

Table 2: The Process for Re-Envisioning a Church

STEP 1	DEVELOP THE CHURCH'S BIBLICAL MISSION
STEP 2	DISCOVER THE CHURCH'S CORE VALUES
STEP 3	DEVELOP THE CHURCH'S VISION
STEP 4	DESIGN THE CHURCH'S STRATEGY

This process of re-envisioning is best done in a collaborative environment that includes the pastors, board, staff, and congregation.

The Practice of Re-Envisioning a Church

Stage three involves the practice of re-envisioning a church, which requires evaluation and implementation. This stage consists of five core concepts: “reaching the community, making disciples, building a team, analyzing the setting, and raising the finances.”¹³⁵ These five concepts enable the church to fulfill its mission.

Kotter describes three steps necessary for the practice of re-envisioning: (1) generate short-term wins, (2) consolidate gains and produce more change, and (3) anchor the new change in the culture.¹³⁶ Concerning short-term wins, Rutland notes that “nothing is more important to a turnaround than rolling up small, quick victories that build positive momentum and give everybody the feeling that things are indeed looking up. That change in attitude lays the foundation for bigger victories later on.”¹³⁷ Leaders cannot ignore this step when attempting to change culture. Celebrating short-term wins builds credibility throughout the process. When celebrating short-term wins, Kotter asserts that the wins must be visible, unambiguous, and clearly relate to the change agent: “The more cynics and resisters, the more important are short-term wins.”¹³⁸ The key is to generate momentum while bringing about change.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 211.

¹³⁶ Kotter, 22.

¹³⁷ Rutland, 153.

¹³⁸ Kotter, 125, 127.

Once leaders make organizational changes, they must make those changes part of the behavioral norms and shared values of the people.¹³⁹ Kurt Lewin calls this step “refreezing.”¹⁴⁰ Table 3 provides important instructions for anchoring change.¹⁴¹

Table 3: Anchoring Change

<i>ANCHORING CHANGE</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
COME LAST, NOT FIRST	MOST ALTERATIONS IN NORMS AND SHARED VALUES COME AT THE END OF THE CHANGE PROCESS
DEPENDS ON RESULTS	NEW APPROACHES GENERALLY SINK INTO CULTURE AFTER IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY WORK
REQUIRES A LOT OF TALK	WITHOUT CLEAR VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT, PEOPLE ARE RELUCTANT TO CHANGE
MAY INVOLVE TURNOVER	SOMETIMES, WHEN PEOPLE ARE RESISTANT TO CHANGE, THERE MUST BE A CHANGE IN KEY PEOPLE
MAKE DECISIONS ON SUCCESSION CRUCIAL	PROMOTION PROCESSES MUST CHANGE TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE NEW PRACTICES OR THE CULTURE WILL REASSERT ITSELF

Recreating a lifecycle takes time as one walks through the change process. To see the reality of a turnaround, pastors must repeatedly articulate the vision, encouraging people who oppose change or remain reluctant to change. Resistance can take many forms: attacking, avoiding, complaining, and silence. Since change occurs randomly, not

¹³⁹ Ibid., 154.

¹⁴⁰ Beitler, 48.

¹⁴¹ Kotter, 165.

linearly, learning to manage difficulties and make adjustments constitute a necessary part of the implementation process. Revitalization requires constant restructuring to freeze new divine urgencies.

Conclusion

With 70 to 80 percent of churches in plateau or decline, it remains imperative that there exists a vision for church revitalization and a desire to learn the necessary keys to creating new lifecycles of growth that remain essential to survival. Many denominations, including the Assemblies of God, have placed much focus on visionary church planters who can plant spiritually healthy churches, but the Fellowship needs greater focus on the revitalization of established churches. Church renewal can occur at any point in a church's lifecycle; however, "the older a church becomes and the later in the lifecycle renewal is attempted, the more difficult it is to see true resurgence of growth and vitality."¹⁴² Pastors must understand how to keep a church at its growth point for as long as possible or return the church to its growth point. This will enable a new lifecycle to begin, "which can last for another twenty-plus years. However, if a church never returns to its growth point, it will continue with much less vitality, eventually losing so much ministry vigor that it closes its doors or slides into a time of mere survival."¹⁴³ Established churches facing decline must reignite their passion and refocus on their purpose. While the process remains difficult, some churches can reverse the decline by creating new lifecycles.

¹⁴² McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 198.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

Pastors must realize that any plateau that lasts “for three or more years, are life-threatening, silent killers.”¹⁴⁴ Therefore, it remains vital that churches keep vigilant. They must always watch for plateaus and understand the key elements necessary for revitalization. They must become conversant in the process of change that brings about new lifecycles. The Fellowship needs a nationwide movement prompted by the Holy Spirit that leads to revitalized churches fulfilling their mission in their communities for the glory of God, one that powerfully impacts cities and neighborhoods.

¹⁴⁴ McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 52-53.

CHAPTER 4: DESCRIPTION OF FIELD PROJECT

This chapter provides the process for creating a new lifecycle in Christian Life Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida (CLC). The four key aspects of the field project addressed in this chapter include (1) the preparation of the project, (2) the execution of the project, (3) the results of the project, and (4) the project's contribution to ministry.

Preparation of the Project

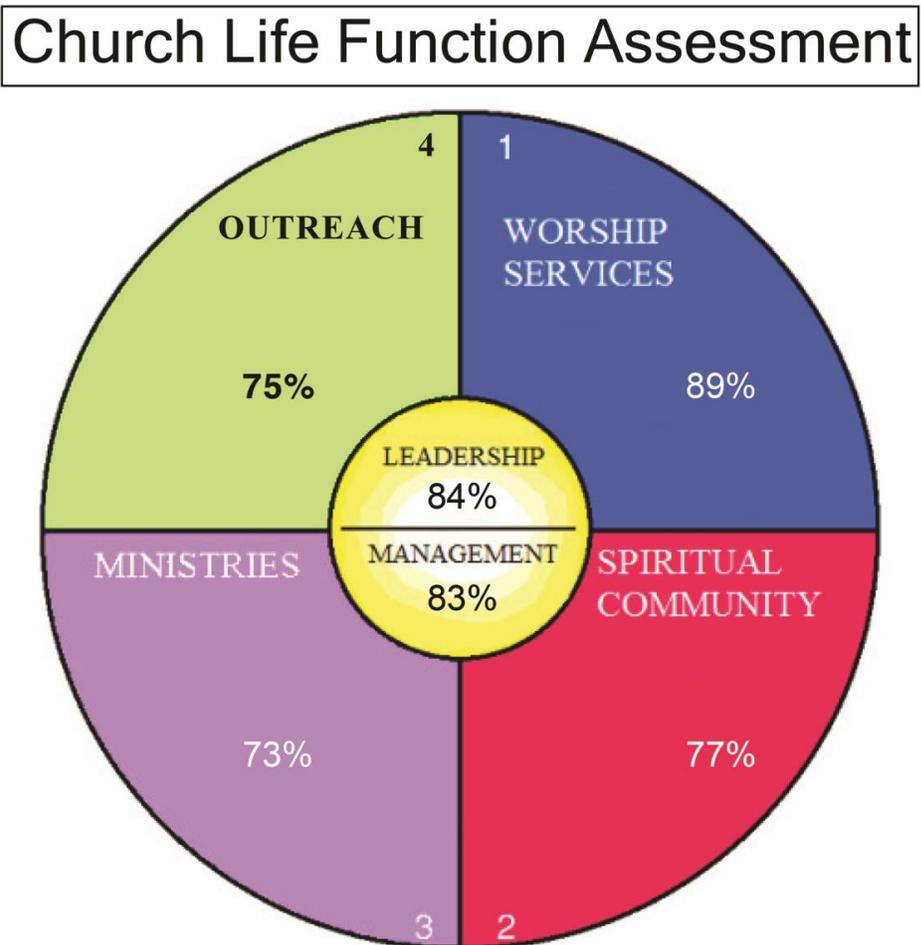
Inspiration from this project initially came from classes taken at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary that addressed the crises facing the American Church, revealing the need to create a new lifecycle for the aging and declining CLC. This led to a comprehensive assessment of CLC's environment and its leadership, the hiring of three consultants to help identify the church's strengths, weaknesses, and growth barriers, and the development of an eighteen-month comprehensive strategic plan to stop the decline in six major areas known as divine urgencies.

Preparatory Assessments

The consulting group Church Life Resources (CLR) was engaged for a one-year coaching/consulting relationship. The initial consultation began with the Church Life Assessment, which showed current strengths and weaknesses of CLC.¹

¹ See Appendix A, "2012 Church Life Function Assessment Composite Score."

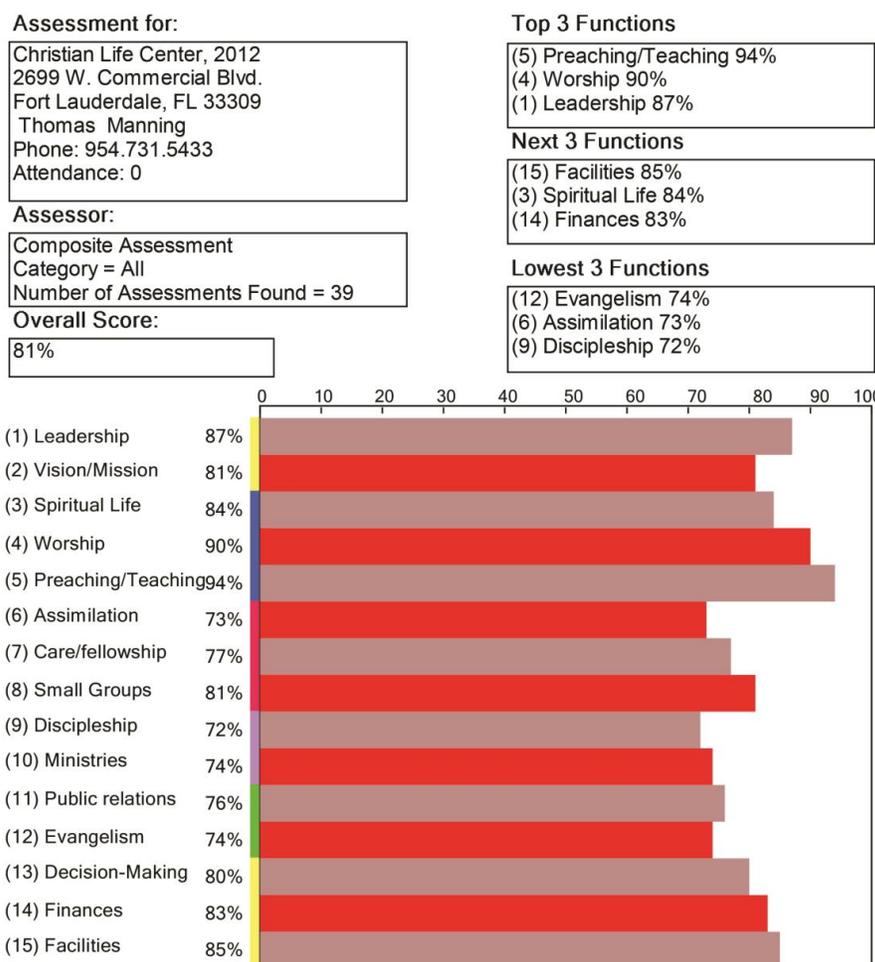
Figure 3: Composite Scores of CLC's Church Life Function Assessment



Additionally, fifteen vital functions received assessment, indicating CLC's overall health.² See Figure 4 on the following page.

² Ibid.

Figure 4: Fifteen Vital Functions of CLC



The weakest functions were discipleship, assimilation, ministries, care of people, and evangelism, which were due to a lack of sufficient leadership and member involvement.

The strongest functions were preaching, worship, and leadership. A church's health depends on all six quadrants reaching at least 80 percent marks.³ However, three

³ Wayne and Sherry Lee, *The Church Life Model: A Biblical Pattern for the Spirit-Filled Church* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2011), 87.

quadrants scored under 80 percent, and “health in one area cannot compensate for a lack of health in another.”⁴ Health simultaneously requires all six quadrants.

An intensive demographic study was then conducted to provide a clear analysis of the congregation. Using the program Survey Monkey, questions assessed the vitality of the congregation in each missional value of the church, sorted by age, gender, ethnicity, commitment level, etc. This assisted in developing strategies by departments and corporate missional values.

Consultations and Coaching

The initial onsite consultation with CLR’s Dr. Wayne Lee and Mike Harper took place in February 2012. They met with five groups of leaders, approximately fifteen to twenty people in each group, for one hour per group, representing different areas of ministry: leadership (board), spiritual life (music, prayer), spiritual community (life groups, care), discipleship and ministries (men, women, youth, children), and outreach/public relations. Then they observed Sunday worship services from all aspects: parking lot, children’s ministry, music, preaching, Sunday school classes, greeters, ushers, etc. CLR then debriefed all who had participated in the group sessions and provided fifteen observations:

1. There are not enough leaders for the present or next level of the church. CLC needs one leader for every ten congregants. Only about 50 percent of those necessary are in place. Also, no leadership development plan exists or job descriptions are in place for leaders.
2. No vision/mission plan exists to lift CLC to the next level.

⁴ Ibid.

3. No individual, accountable, devotional plan exists for the core of CLC. Not enough passionate prayer exists with present core of leaders to lift CLC to the next level and receive God's present directives for His church.
4. The first service time could be moved to 9:00 or 9:30 a.m. to include more families in public worship. The prime Sunday morning time is taken by Sunday school. A more varied and liberal worship style may be necessary. One gets the sense that a spiritual explosion is about to take place. Finding ways to release it will be the challenge.
5. Not sufficient healing and prayer teams available. Spirit baptisms seem to be very low. Salvation retention rate is about 5 percent of those receiving Christ annually.
6. With attrition in the South Florida area as high as 15 to 25 percent, only new guests are replacing attrition. The hospitality team needs a retraining process for the new pastoral leadership. New software needs to solve the follow-up and sponsorship phases of assimilation.
7. Small units including life groups and Sunday school classes have no trained caregivers to express care twice a month to members of their groups. Specialized care teams for funerals, wedding, etc., will need to emerge.
8. Allowing the new life groups to meet on Sunday evenings is greatly needed. No district zones or organizational methodologies exist.
9. Christ's gifts within individuals have been left unidentified, undeveloped, and unused for 85 to 95 percent of the congregation. The church now needs 750 individuals in the work force. Specialized ministries such as women, men, singles, young marrieds, young adults, and seniors are trying to emerge as congregational groups.
10. No specific pattern for discipleship.
11. No identified receptive group upon which to focus evangelism. No plan to attract, win, and retrain potential prospects. An imbalance exists between foreign/home missions and evangelism.
12. Minimal use of external PR. Most public relations are internal.
13. The unaligned process, structure, and staff is impeding the church from advancing. The organization is too flat to advance. Management is too restrictive.
14. Present funds are inadequate to lift the church to the next level.

15. The internal facilities, especially in the children's area and foyer have no WOW factor. The outside and inside signage remains weak and carries no "POP." The parking in the second service is 99 percent full.

Following this consultation, CLR provided leaders a written evaluation with strengths, weakness, values, goals and necessary steps to address the observations.⁵

A second consultant, Dick Hardy from the Hardy Group, came in the first year to conduct a leadership retreat and onsite assessment. He observed that CLC must not lose its entrepreneurial spirit while developing an executive leadership team. He recommended the bifurcated approach to relational connection and discipleship (life groups and growth groups). His recommendations reinforced the direction that CLC was taking to advance strategic goals.⁶

CLR's Mike Harper made two onsite visits to help train and implement the new vision and strategy with a focus on several points from the fifteen observations given by Dr. Lee. Trainings included a variety of formats, such as one-on-one meetings, pastoral team meetings, and group leader trainings. Topics included how to lead passionate core prayer, build creative team structure, develop a care system, develop vision teams, and develop divine urgencies within each pastor's departments. Dr. Lee coached me monthly on how to formulate thoughts, ideas, and process transition decisions. We focused on vision development, launching a Saturday evening service, identifying CLC's Jerusalem

⁵ See Appendix B, "ICC from Church Life Resources."

⁶ See Appendix C, "Dick Hardy Evaluation."

Harvest,⁷ leadership development, administration and management, and preparation for the pastors/board vision retreat.

Development of Comprehensive Plan

CLC developed a comprehensive and strategic plan out of the assessments, consultation, coaching, and prayer.⁸ The plan addressed the immediate need to break restricting behaviors and hindrances, and outlined necessary steps for renewing health and growth in the church. This strategic plan guided the environmental change needed to transition the leadership culture for the transformational journey ahead. During the implementation of the plan, CLC developed the Encounter Retreat and School of Discipleship to train and inspire congregants in vision, spiritual growth, ministry training, methodology, leadership, and care. Preparation of this project centered on the development of a transformational process for CLC that would address six divine urgencies. This included the construction of the materials for the Encounter Retreat and School of Discipleship course, and pretests and posttests for evaluation of the effectiveness of the process.

Execution of the Project

Out of the observations made during the preparation phase, CLC implemented goals in six missional categories, or divine urgencies, as it sought to create a new

⁷ Jerusalem Harvest is reaching those that are in the South Florida area and are those that are in relational connecting with members of the CLC congregation.

⁸ See Appendix D, "18-month Comprehensive Strategic Plan."

lifecycle: leadership development, passionate spirituality, authentic community, discipleship and equipping of laity, outreach/evangelism, and management.

The Divine Urgency of Leadership Development

Creating change in an organization requires a guiding coalition. CLC's coalition included the pastoral team, staff, and board of deacons. The coalition worked to build a cohesive team around a common vision. This began with me as the new senior pastor. I needed to build relationships, trust, unity, and vision with the other pastors, ministry staff, board, and lay leaders. I utilized numerous breakfast and lunch appointments, weekly pastor and staff team meetings, monthly board meetings, and regular all church leadership meetings to accomplish this.

Second, the pastors and board members read and studied together several books: *The Speed of Trust*, *Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, *The Advantage*, and *The 360 Degree Leader* and completed numerous video teachings that enabled deeper discussion of how to implement the new vision.

Third, CLC developed a simple and clear vision that embraces the ethnic diversity of the congregation and motivates the church to fulfill its mission. With Wayne and Sherry Lee, we held a vision retreat in June of 2012 for two days with all pastors, board, and spouses. Topics included the layering of Pentecostalism, church life model, transformational bridge graphic, team formation, MBTI personality types, vision, values assessment, and conflict resolution. The retreat yielded a biblical schema of church health and vitality, which was adapted from CLR's Church Life Model.⁹

⁹ Appendix E, "CLC Vision Graphic."

The retreat also outlined a mission statement that continued to be developed with the pastoral staff over a period of four to six weeks, which ultimately became “Experiencing God, Connecting Together, Growing and Serving, and Impacting Our World.” A prayer was also written that was used to conclude worship services each week: “Father, help us to be the people and the church you have called us to be. A people that always build up, and never tear down, who always encourage and never discourage. A people and a church who take a message of hope everywhere we go, to everyone we meet. In Jesus’s name, Amen.” We developed a short personal mission slogan too: “messengers of hope.” Logos, bulletins, the website, social media, video announcements, and all print materials began reflecting the new vision.

Fourth, there were not enough leaders for the current size or next level of the church. When arriving to CLC, we had approximately seventy-five leaders for a church that was averaging around 1,750 each weekend. To advance to our next level of 2500, we needed to develop an additional 175 leaders serving in ministry. To address this problem, a leadership development pipeline was put into place that would include a spiritual retreat, a discipleship course, and leadership coaching.

The Divine Urgency of Spiritual Life

CLC’s spiritual life needed stronger emphasis to lift the church’s spiritual passion in several areas. CLC needed individuals to renew their personal relationship with the Lord, especially in the area of private devotions. Church leaders also felt that the church needed greater emphasis on the presence of God and freedom of the Spirit during weekend services. Services had grown too restrictive and structured, with little flexibility

for a move of the Holy Spirit. Few opportunities existed for congregants to experience the presence or gifts of the Spirit, and few were being baptized in the Spirit.

In response to these issues, we designed the Encounter Retreat, a three-day weekend spiritual retreat held at a local retreat center to give extended times for prayer and the seeking of the Holy Spirit. We scheduled revival and renewal nights and invited speakers gifted with seeking the Holy Spirit and altar calls. We held prayer vigils several times a year, two of which were all-night services with close to seven hundred in attendance. In addition, my wife, Candi, took the role of pastor of spiritual life to oversee Encounter Retreat and the new prayer ministries Healing Point and Gate Keepers.

CLC's spiritual life also lacked core prayer meetings. In response, my pastoral team, ministry staff, and I began incorporating thirty minutes of prayer in our weekly staff meetings. We also changed the format of Wednesday evening services to include times of intense Pentecostal prayer. These prayer times focused on remaining prophetic, God-centered, and learning to discern God's agenda for His people.

CLC also needed to change the worship style and church service times due to overcrowded parking during the 11:00 a.m. service, which limited growth. CLC added a third service to alleviate parking. This afforded an opportunity to change service times and worship styles in the different services. We added margin in service programming to facilitate the supernatural moments for the release of God's grace.

Finally, we chose a theme for the year: *imagine more*, which became a vision campaign accompanied with comprehensive marketing, including banners, bulletins, invite cards, website development, and social media blasts. The campaign featured a twenty-one-day prayer and fasting focus, including four weeks of devotional guides to

accompany a sermon series on the state of the church. During the yearlong theme, we offered life groups and volunteer opportunities for the congregation, who responded with overwhelming participation. Additionally, I preached a sermon series around each aspect of CLC's vision with simultaneous emphasis placed throughout the spiritual community of the congregation.

The Divine Urgency of Spiritual Community

Of all the issues found during the initial assessment, one deficit in particular needed urgent change—authentic relational connections. When I first came to CLC, the church offered twenty-three life groups, small groups of ten to twenty congregants who met in various homes. Nearly everyone to whom I spoke was starved for friendship and relationships. In response, we decided to multiply life groups, but we needed to train new leaders for these groups. As a result, we developed the School of Discipleship to train group leaders, which eventually enabled us to add sixty-four more groups for a total of eighty-seven groups.

The consultations described the CLC assimilation process as ineffective; this vital function “is the process of connecting a person or family to the local church; it involves incorporating new people into the life of the local assembly. The assimilation process helps the church to preserve the fruits gained from evangelism.”¹⁰ To strengthen this system, CLC implemented several changes. First, we hired a new staff pastor to oversee assimilation and ministry connection. This pastor developed an assimilation strategy and formed the Red Carpet Team, which developed graphics, trained recruited volunteers,

¹⁰ Lee, section 6, page 1.

and researched, purchased, and implemented a new software system, Church Community Builder, to track and contact large numbers of new congregants.¹¹ We implemented new systems for visitors, new converts, membership, and baptisms. The assimilation system was designed to “start the minute someone drives into the parking lot, steps foot in the church, or before.”¹²

Improving authentic relational connection meant we also needed to strengthen congregant care, or biblical shepherding, within the church. This included improving comfort, prayer, encouragement, and ministering to special needs that arise. To meet the vast amount of needs in our large church, we gave specialized training to life group leaders, so they could better meet the needs of their group members. We also created Healing Point, which gives specialized and intentional prayer for those in physical, emotional, financial, or spiritual difficulty.

The Divine Urgency of Discipleship/Ministry

Though we had discipleship classes, they lacked systematic spiritual, ministry, and leadership formation. No path existed to help direct new believers in their spiritual growth, to help members identify and engage in ministry service, or to provide formal leadership development. As a result, we focused on strategically implementing a discipleship and leadership process. We identified simple steps for developing spiritual growth in new guests, new believers, and regular attenders, illustrated in a simple

¹¹ See Appendix F, “Assimilation Process for Red Carpet Team.”

¹² Ibid.

graphic.¹³ This led to the development of new courses to accomplish the missional values for each group, which included Starting Point, Alpha, Encounter Retreat, and School of Discipleship (SOD). As we implemented each of the divine urgencies, the Encounter Retreats and SOD began to shift the mindset and culture of CLC, which helped the church embrace its missional values and create a new lifecycle.

The Encounter Retreat

CLC offers Encounter Retreats from time to time as a part of the ministry of the church. The retreat provides a spiritual outing with God, in which one fully experiences His presence and is based on this biblical principle: a time of separation and of dying to self during a period of three days, as set forth in Hosea 6:1-3. The retreat provides a time when a believer leaves behind family, work, and worries in order to fully concentrate on God. It begins on a Thursday evening and ends on Saturday afternoon. CLC leaders encourage everyone, not just new believers, to attend a retreat since even mature believers may have unresolved issues that need addressing. Encounter Retreat also caters to those desiring a deeper level of intimacy with the Lord. CLC leaders emphasize that this retreat should result in a time that the believer will always cherish and remember as an encounter with Jesus.

The three-day retreat deals with five themes: the Father's love, sanctification, the work of Christ on the Cross, Holy Spirit baptism, and vision. The retreat is designed to lead to a total transformation, one that gives birth to the character of Christ in the believer. Topics covered during the retreat may also include rejection, spiritual pride,

¹³ See Appendix G, "Path of Spiritual Growth."

sexual sins repentance, sanctification of unconfessed sin, inner healing, and/or deliverance from demonic oppression.¹⁴ On the last day of the retreat, a significant amount of time focuses on the work of the Holy Spirit and His power.

During the retreat, spiritual sensitivity improves in participants, greatly enhancing their ability to hear God. It is also one of the primary ways that CLC enables its members to experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The ultimate goal of Encounter Retreat is for participants to receive a greater vision for the harvest, so that they clearly understand and receive the mandate of Christ “to go and make disciples” and God’s vision for the Church.

The first Encounter Retreat held in conjunction with this project was held for the guiding coalition, pastors, board, staff, and spouses in January of 2012, for 3 days. We held the second retreat a month later for life group leaders and department and ministry heads. The next two retreats, held in February of 2012 for 3 days were for the choir, worship team, and all key leaders within the church. By then, approximately two hundred people had participated in the retreats and were experiencing a renewed spiritual vitality. Nine months later as momentum had started moving the vision forward, CLC pastoral leadership publicly invited congregants to Encounter Retreat. Afterward, participants of Encounter Retreat were invited to continue their growth through the School of Discipleship, which began the week after each retreat.

¹⁴ See Appendix H, “Encounter Schedule and Topics.”

School of Discipleship

School of Discipleship (SOD) provided the opportunity to renew the mind. There, believers grew in relationship with God, and discovered and embraced their ministries to the Body, and grew in leadership principles. SOD was carefully developed to address the crucial components of spiritual formation, ministry skills and gifts development, leadership skills and execution, and growth through mentorship by other leaders.

SOD consisted of three levels; each level consisted of ten weeks of training with two lessons per week. Therefore, SOD provided sixty lessons given over a nine-month period.¹⁵ Level one addressed spiritual formation (being); level two concerned ministry formation (doing), and level three encompassed leadership formation (leading others). Each week had action steps for application along with homework. Participants turned in their weekly work, which a team of volunteers then graded.

A team of mentors worked with each group of participants as they went through all three levels. Their primary role was to encourage participants and keep them engaged through the entire process. In addition, SOD provided translators who had been trained to work with those who do not read, write, or have difficulty with English, since CLC has a large percentage of congregants representing various ethnicities. Each level came with a binder of materials: class notes, homework assignments, and reading schedule.

My wife and I taught at least one class weekly to impart an apostolic vision to the lesson. We believe the vision is caught more than taught. We have found that young leaders remain powerfully impacted when they receive the vision directly from the senior

¹⁵ See Appendix I, "Scope and Sequence of School of Discipleship."

pastors. We selected teachers based on their fruitfulness in the vision, passion, and ability to inspire. Though much knowledge transferred through the teaching, small group discussions, and assessments, success came from the renewing of the mind and the Holy Spirit.

Level One: Spiritual Formation

Level one built on the foundations established in the Alpha course and the renewed passion from the Encounter Retreat. The teaching was divided into two, one-hour sessions. The first hour, called doctrine, focused on being what Christ has called believers to be: transformed into His image. We emphasized character formation and reinforced that with homework and Scripture memorization. Students read through the New Testament during the ten weeks. The second hour, known as seminar, highlighted the importance of becoming men and women of God. Women and men separated for these sessions. This level also emphasized connection to a life group, which was a requirement for proceeding to level two: ministry formation.

Level Two: Ministry Formation

Level two equipped students to learn how to do what Christ has commissioned them to do: win souls and make disciples. The course focused on discovering one's spiritual gifts, ministry connection, and developing one's story (testimony). Video teaching covered several topics, such as overcoming offense, coming under spiritual authority, spiritual warfare, and breaking intimidation. Students stayed together for both hours of teaching in levels two and three. The second hour introduced the CLC mission, vision, strategy, assimilation process, and the need for spiritual community. Connection to a ministry was a requirement before proceeding to level three: leadership formation.

Level Three: Leadership Formation

Level three enabled the student to learn effective leadership as one who understands and develops their anointing and influence for Kingdom impact. Lessons inspired students toward fruitfulness in ministry and included handling conflict, teaching, dangers of leadership, ministry at the altars, counseling, and multiplying one's life group. Level three helped one become a better leader in the work of building the kingdom of God.

The Divine Urgency of CLC's Jerusalem Harvest

In the first year of creating a new lifecycle for CLC, the church needed to determine its Jerusalem Harvest. A lack of understanding existed about the differences among evangelism, home missions, and outreach. CLC directed outward ministry to the inner city, prisons, and homeless; however, the church's vision needed to expand to impact all segments of society. This would require a paradigm shift.

The initial survey revealed demographics that CLC needed to consider for felt need ministries: women comprise 69 percent of congregants, and singles represent 47 percent of the church, 54 percent of whom have children living at home (single parents). The survey also showed that ethnic minorities comprise 91 percent of CLC, with most identifying as Caribbean, Latino, and Portuguese. To reach and connect these ethnicities, we started relational and evangelistic evenings called Christ in Culture, which grouped together congregants with shared ethnic backgrounds. The culturally and linguistically relevant evenings took place once a quarter. At the time of launching these events, we did

not envision what would eventually lead to Peter Wagner's Multi-Congregation Model.¹⁶ However, the change provided the seed for our current multi-campus strategy as the Spanish congregation sprang forth from Christ in Culture.

It was immediately discovered through assessments and dialog with pastors, staff, and board that the bussing ministry from the inner city had become a major issue in the church. Over the past several years, many of the congregants had become uncomfortable with the increasing inner-city environment of the kids and youth ministry. Teens bussed in from the inner city reached numbers of eighty to 100 kids, while church teens only numbered fifty to sixty. CLC leaders had to process this very sensitive issue with great care. We needed to focus on the vision to disciple the teens and not just gather large crowds for services. We emphasized the responsibilities of the outreach department for this ministry, not just the youth and children's ministries.

As a result, we moved the outreach bussing ministry to Tuesday evenings and hired a new staff pastor to work with this program as well as the middle school students. Some in the outreach ministry initially resisted the change, but it has proven to be a good move. Currently, the Tuesday night program, the Rock, averages forty, and the Wednesday night youth service, Powerhouse, has grown back to its original size of 150 to 160 youth. More importantly, however, those being bussed in are receiving more intentional discipleship, and the inner city environment is no longer a perceived problem.

¹⁶ Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990), 67-70.

Upon my arrival to CLC, the church lacked a communication or public relations department to share information with both the congregation and the community. Both need to receive communication: “The internal audience builds a spiritual, relational community for others to join. The external audience consists of the potential constituents, the church of the future.”¹⁷ To address this, CLC hired a new communications director to produce a communications and PR strategy in an effort to bring value to the whole versus pastors always focusing on the individual parts.¹⁸ This corporate branding has brought unity, excitement, momentum, and increased community awareness.

Finally, we developed a several large community outreaches. To better equip the congregation, we ran three cycles of 30/60/90 bridge events a year. The strategy involved (1) praying ninety days prior to the event for a period of thirty days, (2) investing into the relationship with acts of kindness sixty days prior to the event for another period of thirty days, and (3) then inviting people to the big day events for the final thirty days. During the ninety days of preparation, CLC organized management, finances, and facilities for the events.

The Divine Urgency of Management

CLC has wonderful facilities with a relatively new worship center built thirteen years ago. Though CLC kept the facility clean, no significant improvements or investments had occurred in a number of years due to the debt load. CLR encouraged the church to (1) add “wow” to the children’s’ facilities, (2) remodel the lobby, (3) relocate

¹⁷ Lee, Section 11, page 1.

¹⁸ See Appendix J, “Promotional Priorities.”

the bookstore and create a welcome center/café, (4) remodel the youth auditorium, (5) remodel the fellowship hall (6) and add “pop” to the outside of the facility to improve curb appeal with new signage and landscaping, and (7) increase parking capacity. CLC contracted Visioneering Studios to help envision and design a master plan, which led to CLC accomplishing each recommendation within three years.¹⁹

All three consultants noted that the management structure of the church was too flat for advancement and recommended an organizational restructuring to include more layers of executive leadership. However, due to financial reasons, CLC delayed implementing additional staff pastors and directors until April 2016. We then developed an executive leadership team comprised of five executives who work directly with me as senior pastor. In addition, I am currently seeking a COO to assist in all operations.

We have also organized a financial campaign to raise funds for vision initiatives and additional facility remodeling. A banquet was organized for high capacity donors as part of the *Imagine More* campaign, in which donors committed over \$100,000 to jump start improvements. We developed a financial giving system to increase income by 10 percent (\$350,000). This included building relational connections to the top 5 percent givers in the church and developing a strategy to increase the number of giving units in the church. The plan includes rebranding foreign and local missions under the name Kingdom Builders and a marketing strategy that utilizes newsletters, magazines, videos, five-minute missionary windows, and local outreach highlights.

¹⁹ See Appendix K, “Space Utilization and Interiors Study.”

Results of the Project

The purpose of the project was to create a new lifecycle for the aging and declining CLC by leading change in six missional values or divine urgencies through a paradigm shift. In response, CLC developed a transformational process to impact pastors, board, leaders, and congregants. The implementation of this new lifecycle allowed CLC to see significant growth spiritually, financially, relationally, and numerically.

In order to measure the success of the new lifecycle's implementation, CLC gave two separate assessments to two different groups to evaluate changes in understanding, knowledge, and the embracing of missional values. As the guiding coalition, pastors and board members took the Church Life Function Assessment, while non-leaders took the Spiritual Health Assessment.²⁰ Both groups received pre and post assessments.

Guiding Coalition: Pastors and Board

The Church Life Function Assessment produced a snapshot of the fifteen vital functions of the church, grouped into six missional values. The assessment evaluates the perceived vitality of fifteen targeted areas. Each area receives an assessment using ten items evaluated on a ten-point scale. On that scale, 1 equals "poor," 5 equals "average," and 10 equals "excellent." Participants sent their assessments to Church Life Resources, which compiled a report that synthesizes responses into a composite analysis. CLC

²⁰ See Appendix L, "Church Life Function Assessment" and "Spiritual Health Assessment."

administered the pre-assessment prior to the initial consultation by CLR in February 2012.²¹ The post-assessment was given at a Vision Retreat in September 2014.²²

Table 1 is sub-scale 2012 and 2014 percentage scores of CLC's 15 vital functions.

Table 2: Church Life Function Assessment Sub-Scale Percentage Scores from 2012 and 2014

Sub-Scale	2012	2014	Change
Assimilation	73%	90%	17%
Care/Fellowship	77%	84%	7%
Decision-making	80%	86%	6%
Discipleship	72%	88%	16%
Evangelism	74%	81%	7%
Facilities	85%	84%	-1%
Finances	83%	87%	4%
Leadership	87%	90%	3%
Ministries	74%	83%	9%
Preaching/Teaching	94%	94%	0%
Public Relations	76%	86%	10%
Small Groups	81%	87%	6%
Spiritual Life	84%	89%	5%
Vision/Mission	81%	89%	8%
Worship	90%	93%	3%
Overall	81%	87%	6%

Table 1 reveals the sub-scale of the fifteen vital functions of the pre and post assessments.

The pre-assessment highlights the reality of an aging and declining congregation, with nine of the fifteen functions at or below the minimum target of 80 percent. Following the implementation of the transformational process, Encounter Retreat, and SOD, all fifteen functions improved above the 80 percent mark. The greatest increases occurred in assimilation and discipleship, netting increases of 17 percent and 16 percent respectively.

Two subscales showed no increase, facilities and preaching/teaching. The

²¹ See Appendix A, "2012 Church Life Function Assessment Composite Score."

²² See Appendix M, "2014 Church Life Function Assessment Composite Score."

preaching/teaching subscale likely exhibited a ceiling effect while the score in facilities reflects the lack of attention given to this area at the time.

School of Discipleship Participants:
Non-Leaders

CLC gave the Spiritual Health Assessment to SOD participants who were beginning the transformational process. This group provides a realistic measurement of the shifts in understanding, knowledge, commitment, and influence. Table 2 shows the t-test results, which indicates a statistically significant improvement in spiritual health as evidenced by the large t-test scores and levels of significance with $p < .05$ for each subscale.

Table 3: Average Scores for Pre (A) and Post (B) Assessments of Spiritual Health Dimensions

Sub-Scale	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Worship A	33.2	24	5.29	1.0801
Worship B	35.8	24	3.25	.6639
Connect A	31.3	24	3.76	.7667
Connect B	33.8	24	4.08	.8318
Grow A	33.8	24	4.20	.8569
Grow B	35.9	24	2.88	.5877
Serve A	32.1	24	4.37	.8926
Serve B	34.8	24	3.19	.6502
Go A	30.0	24	5.51	1.1245
Go B	33.3	24	4.05	.8268
Overall A	160.4	24	18.85	3.84755
Overall B	173.7	24	13.00	2.65441

Overall scores are the sum of each of the sub-scales.

Table 4: Summary Table for Paired-Samples t-tests on Sub-scales and Overall Health

Sub-Scale Comparison	Mean		Std. Error		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Difference	Std. Deviation	Mean				
Worship A – Worship B	-2.623	4.762	.97		-2.700	23	.013
Connect A – Connect B	-2.54	4.672	.95		-2.665	23	.014
Grow A – Grow B	-2.04	3.532	.72		-2.832	23	.009
Serve A – Serve B	-2.75	3.926	.80		-3.432	23	.002
Go A – Go B	-3.33	4.381	.89		-3.728	23	.001
Overall A – Overall B	-13.29	14.695	3.00		-4.431	23	.000

As these results reveal, a significant increase occurred in spiritual health during the project implementation.

The Project's Contribution to Ministry

The selection of this project came out of a necessity to stop decline and see renewed vision, health, spiritual vitality, authentic relationships, and community impact for CLC. The church desperately needed to create a new lifecycle since it remained at risk for spiraling quickly from an aging congregation to a dying church.

The project contributed to ministry growth in several ways: it (1) increased spiritual health, (2) increased relational connections, (3) increased volunteerism, (4) increased leaders, (5) increased numerical growth, and (6) increased financial health. Further, this project will prove beneficial to other churches and pastors who need vital information and principles for creating a new lifecycle within their own contexts.

In conclusion, Pentecostal churches must fulfill the mandate and mission of Christ. In order to do so, however, they need to be healthy. They need to embrace God's vision for their community, discover His divine urgencies for their churches, design intentional systems and processes that break restricting behaviors, and cultivate a giving ministry that fulfills God's purposes and develops leaders and members who remain

passionately committed to Kingdom values. This project demonstrates that churches can indeed renew themselves to further His mission.

CHAPTER 5: PROJECT SUMMARY

This project focused on implementing a biblical, comprehensive, Spirit-led, Pentecostal model for revitalizing a dying church by creating a new lifecycle for Christian Life Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This chapter evaluates the impact of this project, including an assessment of the factors that contributed to its effectiveness and those that would have improved it. This chapter also offers insights for churches desiring to overcome plateaus by creating new lifecycles within their congregations. The matrix of CLC differs from other situations; nevertheless, principles and insights of this project can be extrapolated to motivate change and bring revitalization to the Pentecostal church.

Evaluation of the Project

When my wife, Candi, and I assumed the senior pastorate of Christian Life Center, Fort Lauderdale in November 2011, the average attendance was 1,590 people and declining. By revitalizing all systems of the church and creating a new lifecycle, CLC's attendance has soared to 2,733 people spread over three campuses and seven weekend services. In evaluating the transformational process and project effectiveness that led to this dramatic turnaround, several keys emerge.

Keys to Project Effectiveness

Five factors in particular deserve in-depth review in discussing the overall effectiveness of this project: (1) assessments, consultation, and coaching, (2) development of a comprehensive plan for revitalization, (3) clarity of mission, vision, and

strategy, (4) designing, developing, and implementing a transformational process, and (5) leadership development and alignment.

First, the engagement of outside consultants played a vital role in CLC's successful turnaround and revitalization. The consultants provided necessary and objective perspectives as CLC engaged in the change process. Their realistic and clear assessment of the church enabled the evaluation of long embedded ideologies without others perceiving it as an attempt to carry out a personal agenda by the new senior pastor. This permitted leaders and congregants of the church to more freely dialogue about CLC's "sacred cows" and ministry philosophy. With their vast experience in working with Pentecostal churches, the consultants skillfully provided options in the decision-making process that served both the process and the outcome. Leading change requires unique skills and strategic implementation. The coaching from these consultants helped me discover God's divine urgencies and activity. Their coaching provided a means to process choices and ideas with experts who would not be affected by the outcome of decisions or who harbored any desires to influence the process. This proved invaluable.

Second, the development of the eighteen-month comprehensive plan for revitalization¹ supplied the road map for progress in the six missional lanes for CLC. This provided clear direction for strategic methodologies and missional goals, allowing us to measure progress with the vision. It created a scoreboard for the pastors and board to use to evaluate advancement.

¹ See Appendix D "18-Month Comprehensive Strategic Plan."

Third, clarifying and communicating a compelling vision from God proved crucial in making the project effective. As senior pastor, it remained my responsibility to be the number one vision caster and motivator of the church's mission. Deep-seeding the vision, core values, strategy, and vision for change proved instrumental in CLC's turnaround. The pastoral team continually communicated the vision and strategy through sermons, trainings, retreats, conferences, video testimonies, slogans, etc.

Successfully articulating clear vision and strategy involved the development of simple graphics that depicted the vision and steps to fulfilling it, which increased the effectiveness of bringing vision clarity. This proved the truth of the old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words." Graphics from Church Life Resources helped pastors and leaders visualize the strategic steps needed to reach our goals and vision. One effective graphic in particular was the vision bridge graphic,² which enabled us to envision the change process that identifies the present and future realities, the personal and corporate values, the missional goals, and the strategic steps needed to reach these goals.

A related key to the success of clarifying the mission, vision, and strategy of CLC was the implementation of a weekly staff enrichment, in which all staff gathered for prayer and training. This weekly time enabled me to paint the picture of God's vision for the future and discuss how we could see that become a reality. These meetings empowered them to accurately and clearly impact their leadership teams and the congregation in striving toward the church's preferred future. This renewed vision created energy and fuel to ignite a passion in their leaders to challenge the status quo and

² Wayne Lee, *Vision Bridge Graphic*, 2001. Wayne Lee, "PTH 900: Issues in Church Life" (class lecture for course at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO, October 25-30, 2010).

re-envision the future. Additionally, the pastors participated in coaching sessions with the consultants, helping them to dive deeper into practical implementation of the vision for their departments. By the completion of the project, the vision had grown deeply anchored within the DNA of CLC.

The fourth key to project effectiveness involved the primary strategy used to shift the paradigm and mindset of the leaders and congregants through the development of Encounter Retreat and School of Discipleship. By beginning with the core leaders and eventually offering the Encounter Retreat and School of Discipleship to the congregation, we were able to build credibility and momentum. As old paradigms began to unfreeze, a new sense of urgency rapidly thrust the church into its new lifecycle of passionate spirituality, authentic community, character transformation, and spiritual impact in the community.

Finally, a critical element to this project's success involved leadership development and alignment. The new paradigm fueled vision. The pastors, staff, and board became the guiding coalition that passionately led the vision and strategy implementation. Success in alignment came from the intentional commitment to fostering a healthy, cohesive team. This required a season of intense growth in ministry practices, team dynamics, personality differences, prayer, conflict resolution, authenticity, loyalty, and commitment to the vision of CLC. We deliberately broke down silos of leadership and replaced them with a collaborative environment. As a result of the transformational process, we empowered over 150 new leaders and released them into ministry.

Keys to Project Improvement

The scope of the project required enormous time, energy, effort, and sacrifice. Leading any church through major philosophical shifts in vision, ministry, and practice remains challenging, but in the context of an aging, declining, and large church the hurdles proved especially daunting. Three areas in particular stand out as weaknesses in this project. At times, the lack of personal balance and management help impacted progress in creating CLC's new lifecycle. In addition, the lack of written feedback has kept CLC from being able to fully evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the transformational process.

First, as ones who were simultaneously transitioning to a new ministry context while tackling the work of breathing new life into CLC, I found that my wife and I expended an enormous amount of emotional energy on the revitalization. The successful implementation of a comprehensive plan required working simultaneously in all six missional lanes as we proceeded through the transformation process. This immense undertaking was led by my wife and I while we walked through our own season of life transitions, leaving behind the mission field to minister stateside. While we worked hard to revitalize the church, we also had to build new personal relational networks. Although the creation of a new lifecycle proved exhilarating and rewarding, we experienced seasons of stressful imbalance in our lives.

Imbalance characterizes the "founder" in the "go-go" stage of an organization, according to Ichak Adizes: "What propels the founder is his [or her] commitment to the organization: the crying need he [or she] believes he [or she] was destined to fulfill. So,

the founder plunges in with gusto. It is a do-do-do time.”³ One key for project improvement would be to build balance and margin for ourselves and the pastoral team. Stressing the importance of taking a Sabbath, and building boundaries on the number of nights out and away from family, as well as the number of weekly hours worked.

Second, as a new lifecycle began, CLC lacked a stable layer of management while it returned to the “go-go” and “adolescent” stages of Adizes’s model of organizational lifecycles, which significantly contributed to the management burden I carried during this season.⁴ Creating a new lifecycle requires an entrepreneurial, work hard spirit with a commitment to achieving short-term gains, for without them, the aging congregation will more rapidly slide towards the aging and dying stages of its lifecycle.⁵

CLC experienced exactly what Adizes describes in a go-go company, one that “expands rapidly in many different directions, usually intuitively and in a highly flexible manner. It might over-commit itself in a very short time ... the administrative role is low. It is still underdeveloped, which explains the lack of systemization, the lack of order, the lack of an organization chart.”⁶ This stage requires stabilization, management, priority setting, and empowerment for executive leaders. Without this layer of management, the church becomes too personalized and dependent on the leader/pastor, rather than the systems. As noted in chapter 3, getting to and remaining in Prime, the ideal stage in

³ Ichak Adizes, *Corporate Lifecycles: How and Why Corporations Grow and Die and What to Do about It* (Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988), 188.

⁴ Ibid., 190.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

Adizes's lifecycle model, is difficult. Ideally, the church has to remain entrepreneur, flexible, productive, while also developing administrative structures.

As a result, one key for improving this project would have been to follow the recommendations from all the consultants to add new layers of executive leadership, what Adizes would call administration. This would have reduced the management burden that I carried during this season. Carrying less of the management roles would have enabled me to build more relational connections with the other pastors, board, and key leaders. I would have also had more time and energy to personally coach and lead the pastoral team on vision implementation within their departments. Ultimately, this would have enabled more balance and margin in our personal lives.

The last key to project improvement centers on better tools for evaluation. We should have required written evaluative responses from the participants involved in the transformational process of Encounter Retreat and SOD. While verbal feedback occurred at the conclusion of the SOD process, written feedback would enable leaders to compile and analyze data and identify trends that need addressing.

Implications of the Project

Every organization and church has a lifecycle. Within time and without intervention, a church will die. The need for church revitalization in the United States remains vast: "Struggling churches, disillusioned pastors, and disenchanting believers litter the church landscape. Many of the survivors have no vision for the future! They are simply hanging on by their fingernails hoping for a better day."⁷ The greatest implication

⁷ Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon E. Penfold, *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014), 22.

of this project is that church pastors and leaders cannot ignore the number of plateaued and dying churches. Organizations of all kinds possess the potential for renewed growth and vitality. Awareness, training, and mentoring can help churches recreate the life, vitality, and growth they once experienced. They can grow healthy again. This project extends hope, explains principles, and offers a process that pastors can utilize as they head into church revitalization.

Second, the project resulted in exponential growth for CLC in all six areas of its missional values: (1) Leadership development through the transformational process resulted in a numerical increase of leaders, which began with seventy-five people and concluded with 275 leaders by the end of the project. (2) Passionate spirituality grew as more than 600 congregants have attended Encounter Retreat, leading to a greater sense of God's presence within the congregation. (3) Authentic community improved as we increased life groups grew from twenty-three groups to 133 groups, connecting more than 1,400 people to a life group. This has also made specialized care more effective as trained life group leaders directly minister to the members of their group. (4) Spiritual formation increased as over four hundred individuals have graduated from SOD. A clearly-defined discipleship path has developed, which begins with the new believer and extends to ministerial training through the addition of a CLC extension site of Southeastern University. Along with this, volunteerism has increased from 325 serving in ministry to more than 1,500 connected to a ministry. (5) Outreach and evangelism expanded, which, along with the new lifecycle and the creation of an effective communications and PR department, resulted in exponential church growth from 1,590 people to 2,733 people spread over three campuses and seven weekend services. (6) Improved management,

facilities, and finances led CLC to remodel its lobby, children's, youth, and young adult facilities, increase parking by 250 parking spots, invest over \$200,000 in landscaping and signage, and acquire two additional church campuses for its multi-site locations. CLC averaged an 8 percent yearly financial increase during the project implementation. This project contributed immensely to the life and vitality of Christian Life Center.

Third, the CLC leadership team has embraced the vision to expand regionally. Strategic partnerships with other churches are forming, and CLC currently is finalizing a merger.

Finally, a door to consulting has opened to me through this project. As pastors have seen the impact and turnaround of CLC and our desire and willingness to equip and mentor others, they have sought my assistance and advice. This has led to the launching of a pastoral cohort, which will begin in the fall.

Recommendations for Pentecostal Leaders

The transformational process developed in this project is a reproducible model for revitalizing the local church; however, it does not provide a quick fix for numerical growth. This project offers a process that leads to the restoration of spiritual health, vitality, and growth, which remain subject to the laws of organic growth: "Some church growth concepts literally stay on the surface by merely studying the fruit, while overlooking the roots which produce the fruit."⁸ Health produces growth; it cannot be manufactured. The Holy Spirit causes all things to grow and move in a healthy environment, one that has removed all obstacles and hindrances for the mission of Christ

⁸ Christian C. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2003), 9.

to be fulfilled. This project offers a process-oriented approach to church health and revitalization.

Second, Pentecostals renew spiritually as they experience God. Revitalization remains a spiritual issue, and leaders must promote a process that develops spiritual disciplines, discernment, and Holy Spirit empowerment. Strategic processes alone do not effect spiritual changes. Building spiritual momentum must take high priority for the Pentecostal leader. Experiencing and worshipping God, not the desire of church growth, should motivate the leader. This renewal begins with the leader pursuing a deep and intimate relationship with God. Jesus says, “wait for the gift my Father promised” (Acts 1:4), as He speaks of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostal church leaders need a fresh endowment of power from on high, which comes through times of waiting on God.

Third, the principles that bring revitalization centers on a return to the missional work of Christ, as noted by the Church Life Model developed by Wayne and Sherry Lee: “No other vision and mission exists, except that spoken to the church by the Head, Jesus Christ. His sole desire for the souls of all humankind moves in and through the functions of the missional quadrants.”⁹ Methods and programs will change, but Christ’s mission remains the same. Regardless of size, every church can embrace the developmental, systemic principles contained in this project.

Fourth, pastors leading a turnaround need experienced Pentecostal consultants, mentors, and coaches to help with the art of leadership: “There are two different ways we can learn how to navigate uncharted waters. We can learn through bad decisions or we

⁹ Wayne and Sherry Lee, *The Church Life Model: A Biblical Pattern for the Spirit-Filled Church* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2011), 25.

can learn from someone who has been there and done that. We call these people mentors or coaches.”¹⁰ Consultants, mentors, and coaches offer invaluable help to pastors, enabling them to lead well and boost ministry competency. Mentoring makes a profound difference in the lives of pastors entering church revitalization, as proven by the investment of mentors and coaches in this project. Pentecostal leaders should dare not travel alone the road through church revitalization.

Finally, Bible colleges and seminaries provide the opportunity to learn important principles of church renewal. The majority of those called to full time ministry will find themselves in one of the 84 percent of churches that have plateaued and are declining. Without the knowledge and understanding required to lead change, transformation, and a renewal process, they will remain destined for discouragement, despair, and defeat. Comprehensive training and education helps leaders discover God’s direction for their lives, guiding them to discover and develop His anointing that will lead to Kingdom fruitfulness and impact.

Training programs should partner with local churches to provide practical experience in church-related ministries. Ministerial students ought to enlist a mentor or coach who can give ongoing feedback concerning personal character, practical ministry skills and competencies, and life experience as it pertains to the art of leadership. Education, training, and mentors remain priceless resources for those who find themselves in a turnaround situation.

¹⁰ Malphurs and Penfold, 186.

Recommendations for Further Study

Three areas of research will benefit pastors and churches seeking to revitalize their ministries. First, research should explore the characteristics and qualities of successful turnaround pastors. Having walked through this revitalization, I have learned that certain gifts and skills are necessary for creating a new lifecycle—ones that not everyone possesses. A deeper study could assist pastors contemplating the task of revitalization, helping them to ascertain if they have the calling, temperament, spiritual gifting, and competence to undertake such an endeavor. While some individuals do have the natural abilities to lead, others have the potential to grow and must learn the skills they need to improve effectiveness. The study of the temperaments and gifting of pastors who have successfully created new lifecycles and revitalization, especially within Pentecostal churches, would benefit pastors as they determine whether they should embark in church revitalization.

Second, there exists a need to find methods for Pentecostal churches to remain relevant within the shifting currents of society. This research could address some of the major causes for lack of health and decline in Spirit-filled churches. Issues that need exploring include cultural irrelevance, cultural barriers, lack of spiritual vitality, relational difficulties, globalization, the role of Internet saturation on biblical communications, and modern Pentecostalism.

Third, with the state of the American Church in plateau and decline, pastors need more training and equipping in conferences, Bible schools, district functions, and seminaries. These should create a sense of urgency and passion. They must recognize and respond to the majority of pastors, who come to them leading a church that needs to create a new lifecycle.

Conclusion

This project commenced with the challenge of a new ministry context and a spiritual mandate to lead a dying congregation into making a major spiritual impact on its community and around the world. The courage and faith required to lead a church through renewal is like that found in the story of Joshua. Moses prayed that God would appoint an individual “over this community ... so the LORD’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd” (Num. 27:15-17), and He provided Joshua as Moses’ successor. A strong believer in the great promises of God, Joshua demonstrated incredible courage and faith. He followed after God’s own heart, and God chose him to lead His people into the Promised Land to receive their inheritance.

Likewise, as I embraced my new role at CLC, I prayed that God would equip me with the strength, passion, and anointing that Joshua needed to serve Israel. The success of this project shows in the lives that have been transformed by the power of God’s work. The goal was not to grow a large church or to break another growth barrier. Instead, the goal remains to expand the kingdom of God for His glory.

The American Church can no longer afford to sit back and exist in a status quo environment. To embrace Christ’s mission, pastors must learn the art of leading a church to advance God’s purposes, restoring health, and bringing renewal while pulsating with the dynamic presence of Christ. Revitalization remains essential to our future, and we must place as much emphasis on creating lifecycles of growth and vitality as we do on planting new churches if we have any hope for the future of the American Church.

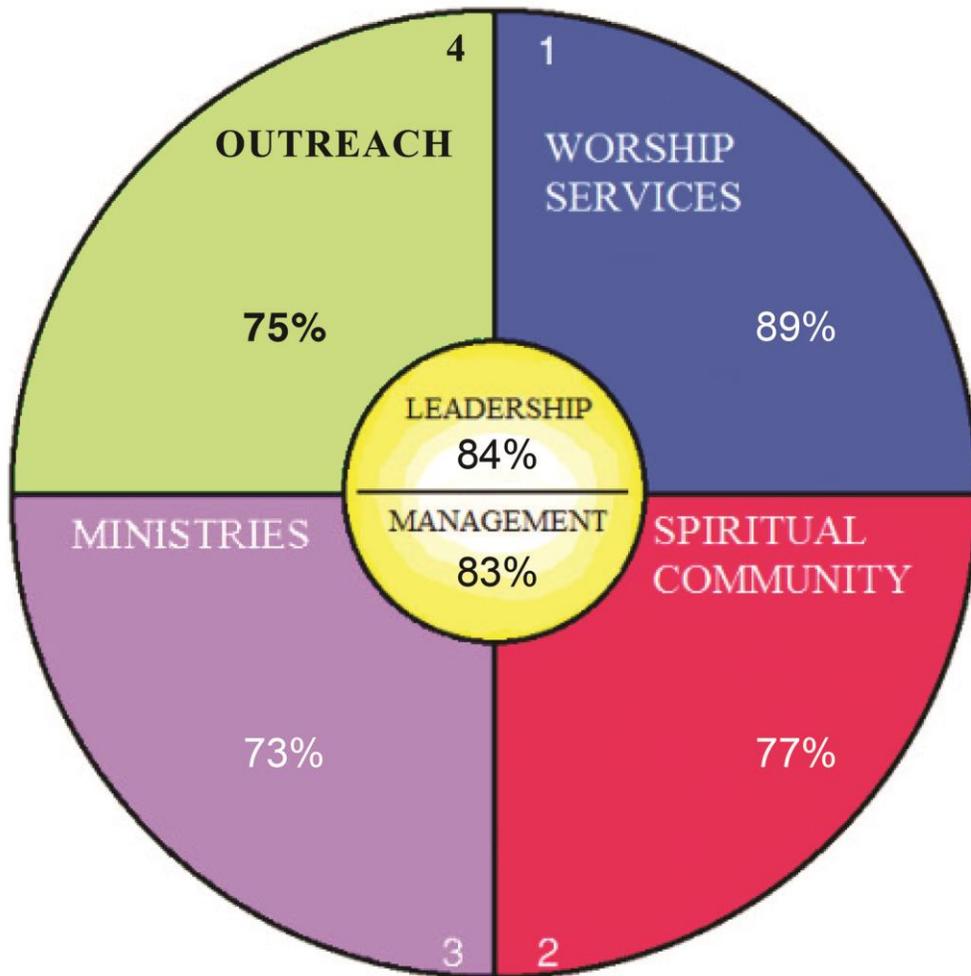
It remains my prayer that the messengers of the Church will receive the challenge, and exhortation presented in this project. May this challenge be embraced, met with discernment, and received through the empowerment of the Spirit: “Now it’s up to you.

Be on your toes—both for yourselves and your congregation of sheep. The Holy Spirit has put you in charge of these people—God’s people they are—to guard and protect them. God himself thought they were worth dying for” (Acts 20:28, The Message). We must accept the charge and continue the mission of Christ.

APPENDIX A: 2012 CHURCH LIFE FUNCTION ASSESSMENT

COMPOSITE SCORE

Church Life Function Assessment



Assessment for:

Christian Life Center, 2012
 2699 W. Commercial Blvd.
 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
 Thomas Manning
 Phone: 954.731.5433
 Attendance: 0

Assessor:

Composite Assessment
 Category = All
 Number of Assessments Found = 39

Overall Score:

81%

Top 3 Functions

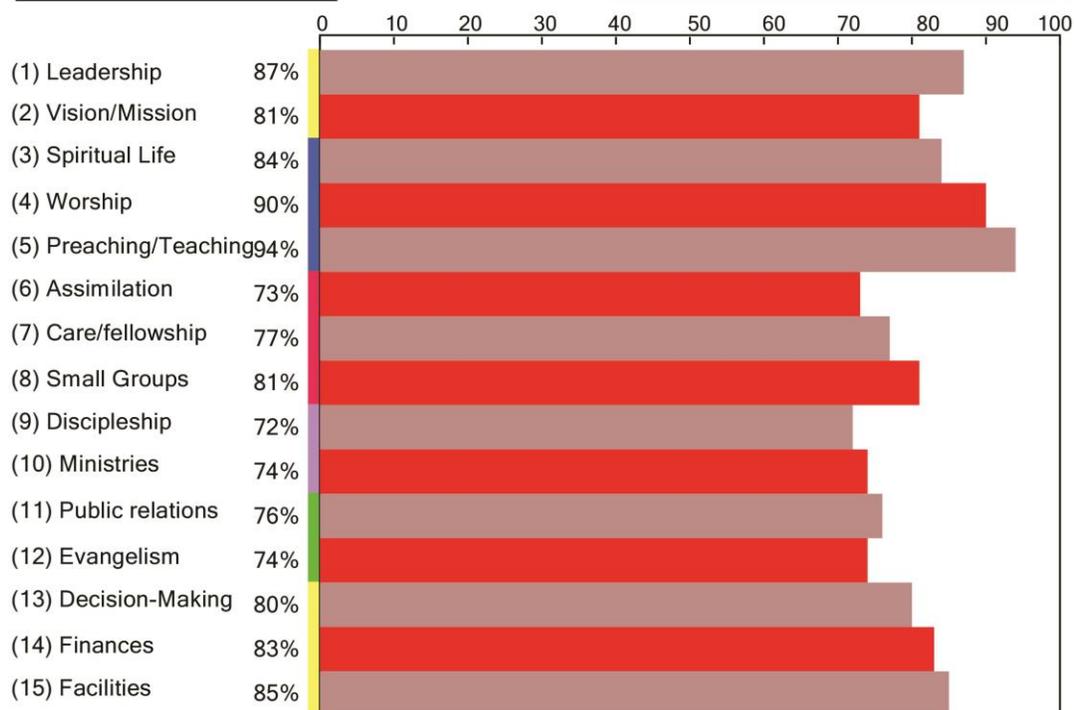
(5) Preaching/Teaching 94%
 (4) Worship 90%
 (1) Leadership 87%

Next 3 Functions

(15) Facilities 85%
 (3) Spiritual Life 84%
 (14) Finances 83%

Lowest 3 Functions

(12) Evangelism 74%
 (6) Assimilation 73%
 (9) Discipleship 72%



APPENDIX B: ICC FROM CHURCH LIFE RESOURCES

Tom Manning
Christian Life Center
DRAFT

Comprehensive Strategic Plan

Vision/Mission Reality

We experience God, embrace believers, equip disciples, and impact the community and world.

Church	Values
Christlikeness	Love and Acceptance
Credible	Ministry Involved
Passionate	Community Minded
Authentic Spirituality	Maturity
Relationally Connecting	Mission Involved
	Quality/Excellence
	Good Stewards

Missional Goals

Visionary Leadership	Spiritual Life	Spiritual Community	Ministries/ Discipleship	Community Outreach	Resource Management
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15 Goals to Lift to the Next Level

1. Identify 250 potential leaders and where they can serve. Create a leadership development and strategic, comprehensive plan that can be facilitated by the staff and lay leadership.
2. Allow the strategic plan in each function and ministry to become the divine urgencies of the emerging, multicultural, spirit-filled church of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.
3. Ask 40% of the congregation to enter into accountable devotions. Recruit core leadership to pray 250 hours weekly.
4. Provide a varied and more liberating style of worship on the Saturday night and the second Sunday morning worship services. Total week-end attendance at next level - 2500. Retain more formal atmosphere in first service.
5. Train more prayer teams for all services. Offer multiple means of grace at Saturday night and second service Sunday morning. Use Encounter weekends for Spirit baptisms.
6. We recommend moving the WELCOME CENTER into the book store. Place COFFEE BAR in the foyer. Utilizing an aggressive assimilation plan, retain 20% of the 4500 guests and visitors.
7. Provide accountable caregivers for all existing groups including Sunday School. Add a front line Chaplain for hospitals (if not present) and organize specialized care teams as soon as possible.
8. Move 80 proposed small groups into place as soon as possible. Add new groups about two to three times a year. Begin placing existing similar groups in districts for staff over-site, management, and direction.
9. Identify, recruit, train, develop and place 750 workers in CLC ministries. Allow women, men, singles, young adults, young marrieds, and seniors to emerge as small groups who can become sub-congregational groups. Ministry to the additional children and youth culture on another night is the right approach in the long haul.
10. Develop entrance and advanced levels of discipleship. Discipleship needs to be embraced and experienced by about 40% of the church. Allow the pattern to follow the vision of the church and move the core of the church toward maturity.
11. Establish 4 cycles of 30/60/90 evangelism approach in cooperation with CLC's BIG days. Recruit about 1000 church evangelists who will cultivate 2 to 4 prospects—friends/relatives/neighbors each.
12. Organize 8 to 10 PR methods for each 30/60/90 evangelism cycle and LARGE day events. Connect the yearly theme with the particular event. Goal: 4500 guests.
13. Structure the staff and ministries around the mission of CLC. Add director level staff members in ministry areas.
14. Create a Vision Campaign around the annual theme. Raise new money for building and signage. The area which will be forgotten, but is critically important, is new money in External PR.
15. Add the WOW factor in the foyer and children's areas. The new Coffee Bar and Welcome Center will add warmth and excitement. Add "POP" to outside and inside signage. This will attract new guests. Shuttle leadership teams to off-site parking.

Strategic Methodologies

1. Create list of existing 100 leaders in all areas—present ministry and staff leaders.
2. Ask staff and ministry leaders to identify the additional 150 leadership positions needed.
3. Identify the additional 150 potential leaders who could be trained for the new areas of ministry.
4. Identify those individuals who could help in creating simple job descriptions for leadership positions.
5. Pastor identifies a simple leadership development plan.
6. The pastor could plan to leadership coach 6 to 8 staff who could leadership coach 6 to 8 directors/leaders. Those director/leaders could take 6 to 8 leaders to leadership coach until all 250 leaders have a coach on a continual basis.
7. Pastor identifies in each function the challenges/targets. Allow these challenges to become the divine urgency plans for the next level.
1. Establish an accountable system for personal devotions and passionate prayer. The leadership development system should accommodate accountability for the 250 perspective leaders.
2. Test a 9:00 am worship experience.
3. Pilot a stronger release of spiritual flow in the second service, especially with upbeat songs.
4. Train 4 or 5 more healing teams for each service.
5. The Encounter events just begun will greatly increase Spirit baptisms.
6. Salvation retentions will be dramatically increased by the repeated 30/60/90 relational cycles.
7. The Saturday night additional worship expression is a perfect alternative option. The different spiritual and cultural style will reveal possible alternative receptiveness.
1. The welcome center needs more privacy so use the book store space because guests must be one of our highest priorities.
2. The foyer needs warming up. A coffee bar with high top tables and chairs will work.
3. Recruit recent attendees to join the hospitality team and retrain members of the team in new policies, attitudes and knowledge. Make sure the divine urgency for assimilation is a part of the retraining.
4. Rework the CLC communication cards. Add second and third time guest check box on the communication card.
5. Make sure assimilation system has a monthly newcomers fellowship time where guests can talk to pastors, staff etc.
6. Include the sponsorship phase of assimilation along with the software programs.
7. Recruit and train a caregiver for all existing groups, including Sunday School.
8. Specialized care areas such as communion, hospitals, baby dedications, water baptisms, ministry to the poor, healing, counseling, weddings, etc. must now be developed with individual teams and flowcharts.
1. The newly identified 600 volunteer workers must be interviewed, placed, assigned job descriptions, and trained along with the retraining of the existing work force.
2. The next level will require a total of 750 workers between existing and new workers. CLC is well on its way to that infrastructure goal.
3. Emerging groups such as women, men, singles, young adults, young marrieds, and seniors will need to begin and continue as a gathering of small groups emerging into sub-congregational groups. It will be better if the sub-congregational groups only meet seasonally and small groups meet regularly.
4. Allow the new pattern of discipleship to match the vision of CLC.
5. Move the core through discipleship first in order for the pattern to become a core value.
6. Move about 40% of CLC through the new pattern of discipleship.
1. Adopt four cycles of (30/60/90)—identify and pray, invest with an unexpected act of kindness, and invite to a CLC large day—as CLC's relational plan of evangelism.
2. Establish as CLC's priority harvest the lost or un-churched (within 20 miles) interested in a MULTICULTURAL, SPIRIT-FILLED church.
3. Recruit about 1000 in-church evangelists who will cultivate 2 to 4 prospects each.
4. The large and regular days will provide the 4,500 guests needed to grow The CLC FAMILIALLY to 2,500.
5. CLC loses about 20% of its attendance yearly (about 400) because of attrition.
6. Increasing CLC's attendance to 2,500 means the 400 lost must be replaced and an additional 500 gathered.
7. To replace 400 lost to attrition, 2000 new guests at a 20% assimilation rate must be assimilated. To add 500 new individuals, CLC must assimilate 20% of an additional 2,500 new guests.
8. In the first year or so of a new pastor, CLC needs 4,500 new guests and an assimilation rate of about 20%. This will allow the attendance to move toward 2,500.
9. The four (4) large evangelism days need the relational cycles coupled with a message about internal and external PR. Eight (8) to ten (10) PR methods will need to be used in all four cycles.
1. Rework the CLC structure to fit the vision/mission of CLC. Now the church is organized around CLC ministries.
2. Add inside depth and capacity to the inside CLC structure by adding ministry directors between administrative help and staff pastors.
3. Add the WOW factor to the children's areas and both foyers.
4. A VISION CAMPAIGN will add the funds needed for the evangelism cycles, intensive PR, and the facilities upgrade.
5. The new coffee bar and welcome center contribute to the retention of new guests.
6. Add "POP" and directional signs inside and outside the buildings.
7. Shuttle leadership teams to off-site parking. Start the new approach on big days.

APPENDIX C: DICK HARDY EVALUATION



THE HARDY GROUP

Christian Life Center
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Pastor Tom Manning

CHURCH EVALUATION
March 15, 2014

Provided by:

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CHURCH EVALUATION

Observations & Recommendations

It has been said that when the church is working right there is nothing like the church. How true that statement is for all churches and specifically Christian Life Center (CLC). We live in an age when competing interests and opportunities clamor for the attention of those who attend the local church. For that reason it is imperative that those of us in leadership do all we can to be sure the church is a place where people of faith can be disciplined and those looking for faith can find just that.

The following pages describe in detail the elements that need to be in place for CLC to grow. Having these elements in place does not guarantee growth. However, not having these elements in place does guarantee the church will not grow. The church needs to work to be sure these are in place at the highest level.

Next is a description of the cultures that need to be in place for the church to grow. Some of these cultures seem to be foundational to church life. However, in far too many churches they do not exist, certainly not to the extent that everyone would define them as ingrained into the DNA of the church.

I then make a series of general observations of CLC as a response to the Sunday Secret Shopper and meetings and conversations I had during the weekend. Page 27 prior to the appendix lists the final highest-level recommendations for immediate or near-term implementation.

GROWTH ELEMENTS

These next four pages describe in detail the elements that need to be in place for CLC to grow.

Growth Element #1: Good preaching. Billy Graham does not have to be the Senior Pastor of CLC but his principles of solid foundational preaching from the Word should be. I advocate that for the church to have a preaching foundation for growth that preaching needs to be expository in nature. If a pastor will simply walk through the Bible, in the course of their preaching they will cover everything in balance as God has given it to us - the full counsel of God. Besides that, most churches do not do this. Hence, this will set CLC apart.

Some pastors try to make the Bible relevant. I suggest they give up on that. Pastors cannot make the Bible more or less relevant to culture. It simply is. It is the pastor's job to communicate what the Bible says in a relevant way. Do not fall prey to the idea that if you do not spice up the Word people will not come. That is simply not true.

If you are going to preach exclusively topical messages, it is imperative your content is Scripture and not just Scripture to support your points. Your points need to emanate from Scripture. Do not make your points and then find scripture to back them up. People want to know what the Bible says *and* how it relates to their lives. So tell them. Explain it to them. Go to work on the application side and always preach the Word.

- Pastor Tom provides outstanding Bible-based preaching to the CLC family. Exceptional, very engaging. The leadership validated that the weekend I was there and should continue to do so with Pastor Tom. I thoroughly enjoyed the tag team I saw with Candi. Well-done professionally. Anointed spiritually.

- In the second service Pastor Tom and Candy had the pulpit for 43 (22 for Tom and 21 for Candi). I recommend staying in the 25-30 minute range in total.
- Both demonstrated good energy in the pulpit. Very good voice inflection and preaching voices; very good appeal to all ages.
- Even as a gifted communicator, I recommend the church continually invest in the further development of Pastor Tom's preaching. By the way, if given the chance I would recommend this for other preachers like Rick Warren, Andy Stanley, John Lindell, etc. Of Tom's choosing and if not done so already, he should identify and follow the teaching/preaching and resources of two premiere "preaching" pastors.

Growth Element #2: Good music. Music plays a critical role in the life of the church. Its influence on the worship service is profound. Music has the capacity to move one into an intimacy with God. The Senior Pastor necessarily must set the tone for what music is to be like in the church. The worship leader will carry the day with the music but they must do so in complete alignment with where the Senior Pastor wants the church to go. When these two positions go at odds, music wars begin. The folks in the church begin to line up one against the other. Staff division sets in as does congregational division. However, when the Senior Pastor and the music pastor are in alignment they are able to withstand the rockiness of the ride in helping all generations in the church understand the focus and direction of music in the church.

Be sure to note that CLC's music is a key area that must have at its core the mission of the church. Church music should not be a catering point to those who love church the way it has always been. Church music should be a latch point where people new to the church and to faith find life, energy and a sense of purpose.

- CLC has talented music, worship team and choir members who did a good job on the Sunday I was there.

- I observed the second service worship segment to be 17 minutes in length. I normally recommend staying at or below the 20-minute mark. You are right on target.
- Good start to worship. We want them coming with expectancy.
- Continue to validate the high-capacity volunteers the church has on the worship teams. Invest in them and help them be the best they can be. Understanding that talent plays a role in this ministry, I recommend staff and volunteers be trained to reproduce themselves in raising up new people.

Growth Element #3: Good ministry to children. The Group of people most likely to make CLC their new home is younger families. Questions: The older the demographic of a church gets how likely is the church to see the value in ministry to the 32-year old single mom with two elementary age children or the 26-year old couple with a newborn? How well does it teach and disciple the 5th grader ready to hit middle school?

These questions must be answered thoroughly to effectively set the stage for growth. Please note the answers do not always include a laundry list of more and more and more for the kids to do, although you do need to have a reasonable slate for kids. The issue is to do everything you do very, very well. You want children figuratively or literally (in the younger years) crying to leave your children's ministry every Sunday morning. If they cry going in, you have big problems that need to get addressed yesterday. Nothing speaks louder to a mom or a dad than how you treat their child.

- I celebrate the efforts of the good children's workers at CLC.
- I encourage the church to do all it can to be the place that every kid in the City of Fort Lauderdale and surrounding areas says, "I WANT to be there!"
- The Children's Pastor has a well-organized process in place for the children of CLC. It appeared the parents and children were well-served by the check-in process and that the guests were easily integrated.

- The best children's leadership training in the country is that of Jim Wideman, former Children's Pastor at Church on the Move in Tulsa. I recommend enrolling the children's pastor in Wideman's Infuse Leadership Mentoring Service for the fall of 2014 or spring of 2016. www.jimwideman.com/infuse/
- Assuming CLC wants a strong youth ministry, it must aggressively advance a children's ministry second-to-none.

PREVAILING CULTURES

Three cultures need to be in place for CLC to grow. These cultures seem to be so foundational to church life a person can wonder whether they really need to be mentioned. However, in far too many churches these cultures do not exist, certainly not to the extent that everyone would define them as ingrained into the DNA of the church. They must be part of the church.

Prevailing Culture #1: Prayer. This one excites me more than anything. Most churches say they are churches of prayer but when you examine the church calendar and schedule you find that to not be the case. Generally the churches I see are churches with prayer ministries and one where they call people to prayer for various and sundry issues of the day for the church and community. "We always pray before and after everything." However, if they are honest with themselves, they really do not possess a culture of prayer.

The Senior Pastor needs to regularly talk about prayer as a privilege and responsibility for all believers. He needs to communicate that the Body needs to pray together. Call it whatever you like but there needs to be some time set aside regularly where the Body joins together to pray.

CLC needs to understand this time to be the most important time of the week in the life of the church. To be sure, do not plan to do a prayer meeting like you remember them from days gone by. We are not asking Aunt Mildred to give a testimony about how God transformed her gall bladder. As well, we should not expect people to come into a cold, silent room, kneel and pray for an hour. Make sure your space is conducive for prayer. Maybe dim the lights to remove distractions for people. Segment off areas of the room in order to create greater intimacy for those who come. They should not be made to sit hip to hip but you also do not want every person sitting 15 - 20 feet from everyone else.

It is critically important that Tom along with the worship leader's assistance lead the Body in meaningful prayer, music and worship. Sometimes you can start the time with energy and move into segmented times of prayer so that the time together moves. If you want to kill time in the presence of the Lord just ask people to come sit in silence in a 75% empty Sanctuary and pray on their own for an hour. That will not happen!

- Be sure to understand that nothing in this section is directed at the prayer life and commitment of Pastor Tom. It is clear he is a man of prayer, fully committed to that in his own life and in the life of the church. This discussion is not about him. It is about the culture-building of prayer at CLC.
- I applaud all CLC does to talk about and promote the importance of prayer in the life of the church. The January 21-day time of prayer and fasting, the weekday morning prayer times, Friday noon prayer for staff/others and the twice annually three nights times of prayer are all centerpieces to what God is doing at CLC, whether we recognize it or not.
- I recommend consideration be given to the creation of a CLC Prayer Service that would run with expectancy to be a major service of the week. This should be new and unique, not like prayer meetings that people are most familiar with; either crazy or boring. If Pastor Tom feels truly guided by the Holy Spirit, I recommend making this shift at a God-appointed time in 2014, possibly the Wednesday after Labor Day.
- Language will be important. If you view this prayer time as the most important time of the week then tout it as such.
- During any prayer time do not assume people know how to pray. They do not. In those times, always teach and train on the subject of prayer. Do so in small, short segments.
- Make sure CLC is not doing prayer the way we've always done them or the way our Pentecostal/Charismatic heritage has said to do them. Give a critical eye to making sure they are done exactly as scripture tells us times of prayer should be done.

- It is essential that everyone at CLC understand their individual and corporate responsibility and privilege to pray. This must be taught and coached at all levels of the church, starting at the top.
- Be sure to regularly communicate that prayer is part of the DNA of CLC. Make a regular part of your language the fact that whenever you choose to gather for prayer, the church's corporate time of prayer is the most important time of the week. Without it everything else falls short.
- In all you do in accelerating the emphasis on prayer, do it from a spiritual perspective. Focus on prayer. Preach on it. Talk about it. Teach it. Do it. Most importantly, pray ... and keep it up for the long haul for months and years to come.

Prevailing Culture #2: Change. "But we've never done it that way before!" How many times have you heard that one? A couple of sister statements to that one are, "We've tried that before and it didn't work" and "If we change we'll be going down the slippery slope." All three statements more than slightly suggest a church culture that is froth with fear and resistance to change. Change is critical if you want to grow. When you change you grow. I know it can be argued that bad change will not lead to growth. However, there is no argument in the fact that if you don't change you will not grow.

My observation is that change is an anathema to most churches. We have been conditioned to believe that change means we are shifting on Biblical absolutes. Nothing could not be further from the truth. While the wheels of change are in motion, CLC needs to communicate that the message of the Gospel will never change even if we tried to make it happen. However, culture changes all the time.

By the way, if an older person suggests they just don't like change then challenge them to the fact that they love change. They probably are not going to trade in their microwave, new Buick, home and church air conditioning, cell phone, high-speed internet or a litany of other nice new things in order to go back to the way

things were. By the way, even then it wasn't as it had always been to that point. God and His Word do not change, but everything else changes all the time.

- I applaud all Pastor Tom has done in bringing change to CLC. Fortunately because of the time involved in Pastor Max's final years at the church and the ensuing transition, change has become the norm. Pastor Tom needs to continue to be the leader in talking about change. The staff and lay leaders should echo his words.
- Be diligent in implementing change. Explain the "Why" behind the change. Then move quickly but don't hurry.
- When advancing a culture of change language is critical. In casual conversation Pastor Tom and all leaders should validate that the only thing permanent around CLC is change.
- At CLC, when implementing change which has church-wide implications, always communicate, communicate and communicate again. Always explain the "Why" behind the change. You are not doing so to vote on the change, rather to gain buy in and an understanding from the body as a whole. Always communicate "Why." And then communicate some more. Then change and be smart about it.

Prevailing Culture #3: Ministry to young families. This can be a hot potato for a Senior Pastor. You must navigate this one carefully. You need to teach and coach the congregation on the need to reach spiritually lost people with the Gospel. In doing so, you should systematically help the middle and older age groups of the church see the need to help younger families be welcomed into the church. Particularly with the older population I would encourage you to talk about their grandchildren. Unfortunately, many of those in the older population talk about the facts of their grandchildren not living for the Lord. Ask older people if their 16-year old granddaughter gravitates to Grandpa's music, attire, styles, etc.

- The Senior Pastor should continually take time to communicate to the whole Body the high value of young families. I recommend it become the mantra of the entire leadership team.
- I would encourage you to create expectant mother's parking spaces in the upfront high visibility spot on the lot, both for the regulars who park in the family/children's lot and near the guest parking on the other side of the lot. This helps people know that you expect young families to come.
- Pastor Tom should help those outside that demographic embrace the church's desire to reach young families with the Gospel.
- Continue to take steps to create higher profile for young adults on the worship team and in hospitality ministry. Be sure you intentionally profile young adults. Do not talk about it publicly. Just do it.
- It is important to see 16 - 39 year old faces in the greeter and usher ministries as well as music ministry. It is critical that they be seen in all of CLC's hospitality ministries. The largest number of guests who will consider making CLC their church home will be in that age demographic. For them to come onto the property and into the building only to see greeters and ushers who look like their parents or grandparents (people they love by the way) will not serve to advance CLC numerically or spiritually. Do not throw out the older people. Just beef it up with younger people, senior high students, young adults and young parents.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

(Not listed in any priority order)

Discipleship. Discipleship starts in the pulpit. The stronger the pulpit in any church, the stronger the discipleship. Systems must be put in place to accomplish further discipleship on a personal level and that is best done in the context of relationship. I do strongly recommend this process be made clear to all.

- I was very pleased to see the intentional discipleship process CLC encourages for not only the believer but the non-believer.
- I was impressed with Encounter, School of Discipleship I & II, School of Leaders and School of Ministry. I strongly encourage you to grow each component of the CLC Transformational Process.
- For the long-term growth of the Church (big C) the School of Ministry must be producing ministers and missionaries at a continually accelerating rate. I am very encouraged to see what CLC is doing that this end. You have a bright future ahead.
- I noted the Growth Groups (Adult SS) meeting in between services. I suggest for the long-haul these types of classes do not contribute to the relationship-building necessary to connect people to the church. I'm sure the teachers are very good who take seriously their role with their classes. I suggest at some point the church begin the process of transitioning all Growth Groups to Life Groups and pouring targeted emphasis onto the Life Groups.
- While you are starting a new schedule on Sunday, March 16th, and I presume you looked at this when building the schedule, I would suggest running the Growth Groups concurrently with the Worship Service. I know the parking lot was part of your reason for doing this 5-slot schedule but I think the energy drain on volunteers and total time it will take to make a morning happen will sooner or later work against you. Maybe consider a schedule realignment for this fall.

- Kudos to CLC for their efforts in walking the new believer through the beginning nuances of the faith.
- While we aim at 100% it is critical that CLC leaders maintain proper expectations of how many new converts will remain committed to the Lord six months or a year after conversion. There is an inverse relationship between the ease of accepting Christ in a public worship service and the depth of commitment and follow through by the new believer. It is important for staff and volunteers in this ministry to have proper expectations.
- I applaud the 30% retention referenced during the retreat. I would elicit a plan to move to 35%.
- I observe there to be a huge disparity between the number of people getting saved (856 in 2013) and those getting baptized (61 in 2013). This is a confusing statistics as it is compared to the 30% figure in the point above. This needs major attention.
- It is critical to continue to communicate the clear descriptive path (including baptism) for the new believer of how they move forward in discipleship and in fellowship. Then continually refine this process.
- I recommend moving from once a month with 8-10 people getting baptized to every other week with 4-5 people for baptisms.

Organizational and Administrative Structure. In order for any church to succeed it must have systems and structures in place that drive it to mission. Larger, growing churches always find ways to organize themselves to the point of best productivity. If these churches are led by strongly administrative Senior Pastors, the organization comes together rather naturally. If the Senior Pastor is not strong administratively, they must take steps to aggressively put systems in place to compensate for this absence of natural organization.

- Pastor Tom provides very good administrative structure for CLC.
- I applaud the effort of considering the development of the CLC Management Team. I normally encourage ultimately moving to a three or four person

team to drive the vision forward. However, in CLC's case I believe the five person team can be molded into an effective unit.

- As CLC grows be careful to not structure yourself to ineffectiveness. Part of the magic of young organizations is that they are so fluid. Older organizations like CLC must organize but stay nimble.

Over-the-top hospitality must be the order of the day. Most churches do the basics with regard to hospitality. They have greeters at the outside doors and ushers at the inside doors. Many times those folks smile. Sometimes they do not. CLC should define how the care of others is done. The church has the greatest mission and message of any organization or institution on the planet. The message of the Gospel is the centerpiece of all we do. However, too many churches are inward in their focus. The church should operate with wide open arms. Do not just do hospitality well. Do it over-the-top!

- I commend the efforts of CLC to provide the best experience to the regulars and guests to Sunday service. The Red Carpet Ministry is of the highest value.
- I applaud the ministry of the parking lot crew, greeters, ushers and post-service hospitality volunteers I saw on the Sunday I was there.
- It did appear there could be a greater connectedness between the various ministry components of Red Carpet; left hand knowing what the right hand is doing.
- I would encourage a greater understanding of "what-to-do-when" with the hospitality volunteers. One greeter directed me to a locked door with a sign on it to go to another door and they were hesitant to know what to do if they had to leave their post to take a guest somewhere.
- Consider aggressively promoting the post-service hospitality area to the guests of the church. Do so with more than one mention of it in the service.
- Consider renaming the hospitality area something like the Connect Center. Language connotes function to the guest.

- It is most valuable when Pastor Tom can be in the Connect Center to meet guests. Right before he begins the message he should personally invite the guests to meet with him and Candi after service in the CLC Connect Center. A diplomatic security person (discreet but present) should be there to keep the regular folks from trying to grab Tom's time. Tom's focus should be undivided on guests. Pastor Tom could leave the service to go to the Connect Center at the end leaving the worship leader to do a concluding song and dismiss. The worship leader is the second most visible person to the guests and if she can make it back there that is good.
- I commend the church for staffing the Connect Center with perky, bubbly, younger adults who work to serve the guests of the church as they visit and learn more about CLC. I do encourage augmenting the guest experience by offering Starbucks coffee and homemade sweet rolls or something like that to all guests and then communicate that in the service. Be diplomatic in chasing out the regulars who want to come nibble. Nothing but the best for your guests. Offer a tour of your facilities to those who would like one.
- Encourage regular attenders to bring guests to church and take them to the CLC Connect Center.
- Signage at the entrance to the property should send the signal to the community you expect guests and young families.
- Inside Red Carpet work toward developing a 5-Star Hospitality system to care for the members, friends and guests of CLC. In addition to the outside hospitality listed above, this should include but not be limited to all which is described in Appendix B
- Even as good and friendly as the hospitality folks are, CLC can be better. Do not think in terms of church hospitality as you have known it in the past. Make CLC better than any place you have ever been, including a place like Disney or the Ritz-Carlton.
- Hospitality is not exclusively the greeters' and ushers' jobs. It is everyone's job. Inculcate a spirit of hospitality with the entire church. This needs to come from the pulpit. Utilize key lay and paid staff in making this happen. This is labor intensive.

- This was not a major observation at CLC but it is worth noting. It is critical to make sure you stay away from a sense that "It is all about us in the family" to "It is all about them - those outside the family." On Sundays it's all about the guests no matter how long we've been around.
- Pick up copies of *Be Our Guest* (From the Disney Institute, forward by Michael Eisner). Make it required reading for any person serving in the CLC Hospitality Ministry.

Greeters are generally the first hand-to-hand and eye-to-eye contact with guests or regular attenders.

When a guest or regular attender visits the church some of the friendliest and youngest adults in the church should be at the doors. Do not allow yourself to plug holes in slotting just anyone in this role. Greeters must be able to smile, shake hands with a firm but not vice-grip handshake, and be able to guide new people to the right places when they need guidance. There are few things worse than a greeter who does not smile, has a dead-fish handshake, and is clueless where things are or what is happening. Guests who meet that kind of person at the front door likely will not be back.

- I encourage the church to consider asking those in the greeter ministry to wear either a uniform shirt with the CLC logo along with their. It could be a cool long sleeve T for the winter or regular T for the summer. For the guest, this creates an overwhelming presence of hospitality or people in the know. But make it cool. Go careful and be wise.
- On your hospitality crew lanyards, I recommend making sure the first name is big and bold and the last name is smaller. You want guests to immediately be able to say their first name.
- Those I met inside and outside were very good people, happy to serve their church.
- An intentional effort should be made to recruit, train and dispatch greeters in the 16 - 40 age demographic. Don't turn down the older ones, just augment with younger.

- Continual training and retraining of the current and new greeters and ushers should be the order of the day. Training to that end will be of great benefit to advance true and genuine warmth in welcoming guests.
- Be sure to continue and expand the pattern of opening doors for everyone as they enter the building.
- On all occasions the church should have two people at every hospitality post. Be sure to maintain multiple people at each post so that if one needs to take a guest to another part of the building the post is still covered. The old adage is true, "You only get one chance to make a great first impression." Got to be there!

Ushers do more than just collect the cash. If you think the guys and gals who pass bags or buckets just perform a routine service for the church, think again. These people are greeters on the inside of the Sanctuary. Once a person enters the building and has received the warm friendly welcome from the greeter, the handoff occurs when the person actually enters the Sanctuary. In all cases, ushers need to carry the same persona as the greeters. Many churches already have good guys/gals on the bags or buckets, but these folks have not been trained in hospitality. In fact, some of them just grunt as they go by. You cannot have that. Ushers need to be the best hands, smiles and eyes you have in the Sanctuary. Train to that end.

- I recommend that some uniform look be created for ushers. For consistency it is best that the ushers' attire be the same as the greeters. This strengthens the presence of hospitality even more.
- The ushers I met were helpful and courteous.
- As a group they were a bit on the older end of the age spectrum.
- Be sure an intentional effort is made to recruit, train and dispatch ushers in the 18 - 40 age demographic. Responsible juniors and seniors in high school could also be integrated in the usher crew as well. Don't throw out the older ushers, just augment with younger.

- The church should provide training for ushers in the same human relations skills required of the greeters/hosts.
- It is critical that ushers own the aisle they are assigned. In all cases, ushers should walk ahead of people looking for seats. Never should an usher wander down the aisle behind someone trying to point them to a seat.
- I recommend ushers split responsibilities between themselves for greeting people at the sanctuary doors, doing so inside the sanctuary before services and standing in the aisles. For those standing in the aisles, ushers should position themselves halfway down the aisle with their back to the platform, facing the entrance doors to the Sanctuary. Once the service starts they should move to the back of the Sanctuary and face the platform.
- Ushers should have their eyes open for guests. Following the service, an usher should invite any known guest to go with the usher to the CLC Connect Center. At that point the usher should hand off the guest to Connect Center volunteers.
- If not already ushers should be readily available to the Senior Pastor at his request.

Assimilation. If there is one consistent theme from church to church across the country, it is a statement like, "We have lots of people visiting our church but not enough stick" or a question like, "How in the world do we close the back door?" Unfortunately there is no magic wand or magic dust that makes it happen. Assimilation is two words; Hard Work. The churches that do the best job assimilating people raise it to a high value. Their belief is that until we do all we can to help new believers assimilate into the body of Christ called CLC our job is not done. Further, until we provide a track for every guest of CLC to run on, matriculating all the way to volunteer service, participation in a small group and membership, our work is not done.

- CLC is diligent in following up on the members, friends and guests of the church. I commend this effort.

- This may exist but it seems there could be a better connectedness between assimilation of guests into Life Groups. Guests are looking for connection points and this happens best in the context of Life Groups.
- Stats are great. They reveal much. However, always be cautious in culling numbers that you continually keep real, live people in focus.
- If not done so already, I encourage Pastor Steven to make contact with three other churches for the purpose of gathering their assimilation systems: churches like Gateway, James River and North Coast come to mind.

The flow of the service. The start to finish of the service should be seamless. The components of the service should make sense to those attending. It is particularly important that attention is given to the time allotted for each component. Those who have been part of the church for a long time can flow with longer services. Those who have not cannot. All parts of the service should demonstrate the priority on preaching and the respect for time.

- I measured the time in the Sunday morning second service. It was a total of 96 minutes in length, a bit long. I recommend working to move to the 70 -75 minute mark. When you do so do not talk publicly about it. Just do it. That way if you have trouble hitting it at first you don't have to keep explaining what you were trying to do and not hitting the mark.
- I encourage the development and use of a 60-second high-energy, fast-paced visually and musically countdown video. Fill it and other sanctuary-use videos with images of young adults, youth and children.
- Again, I commend your worship team in drawing people into worship for 17 minutes.
- Communion took 16 minutes, a bit long.
- The beginning portion of the service prior to the preaching was 49 minutes. I encourage getting that down to 30-35 minutes. Everything points to the preaching of the Word.

- Always give a critical eye to how every minute is used in the service. This is not an unspiritual exercise. It is highly spiritually in accentuating that which is most important to ministering to the Body and reaching spiritually lost people.
- I recommend that you continually have a very purposeful dismissal that is encouraging in nature. Tom could possibly pronounce the Blessing (Numbers 6:24-26). This can be very encouraging and special. They came with expectancy. You want them to leave encouraged and feeling this was great to be in church today.

The outside of the building is the front door to your property. All parts of it should be pristine in their presentation to members, friends and guests of the church. Anything less short-changes the potential for growing the church. You must look behind what you see day-in and day-out. There are things right under your nose that miss your eye every day. Use other people regularly to look over what you have already examined. You will be surprised how much it will help you present the best front door possible. Be sure, however, that those you ask have standards as high as or higher than yours. You cannot ask the overage Joe or Mary to fill this role for you.

- CLC is blessed with a wonderful facility for which they can be proud.
- The outside landscaping is attractive to those who attend or visit the church.
- The outside signage was weak. CLC should work to make sure the outside of the property clearly communicates where things are at and where a guest who knows nothing of the property should go.

Paid staff and volunteer leaders are vital to the growth of the church. They are the primary players who carry the vision of the pastor and make it a reality. Without them Pastor Tom is a lone ranger. The recruiting, training and leading of staff members and volunteers are critical roles of the Senior Pastor.

- There are some very good people working at high capacity in the staff and volunteer crew of the church. Kudos to the faithfulness of these partners in ministry.
- I did note that a frequent theme I heard from equally from staff and volunteers was there were not enough volunteers. I believe CLC would be well-advised to go through a process to reduce the number of ministries and simultaneously increase the intentional recruiting process discussed at the retreat.
- CLC paid staff should have a healthy good fear for their jobs. While I do not suggest creating a dictatorial culture, there should be expected performance parameters in place for every employee. Rewards for performance and consequences for non-performance should be in place.
- Key lay volunteers in a church the size of CLC should receive leadership training at or near the same level of paid staff. The development of these leaders should be a high priority. It should be an expectation of the Senior Pastor.
- Development/training of volunteers should be done by staff pastors and key leaders. Do not assume that because you train a volunteer once they get it. With volunteers, CLC must train, train and retrain. I recommend training and retraining for most positions set at six month intervals.
- Consider the articles, podcasts and websites at this link www.thehardygroup.org as a start to being better at recruiting, training and retaining volunteers.

Children's Security. The security of all ages of children is of paramount importance. We live in a dangerous world where anything can happen in any church. The issue of custodial and non-custodial parents is growing every year. I recommend whenever possible that churches look for ways to increase the protection of their children. Parents and grandparents will applaud those efforts. This is a major issue for guests who may be considering CLC as their home church.

- I commend the ministry of the staff and volunteers who serve tirelessly in the children's ministry at CLC. In particular the security team in the children's area was very good and effective at what they did.
- A notable sense I had while in the children's building was that the security was present but was not overbearing. It appears to not make people feel uncomfortable.
- I commend the church for having a good number of men in children's ministry areas. For the security of the children who come regularly deterrence is everything.

Church security should be in place. We live in an unfortunate age when anything can happen inside the walls of our churches. As much as a senior pastor does not like to think about it, he is a target for the enemy. This enemy has great control over evil people who would purpose to do harm to the pastor and the church. Church security does not need to be anything highly visible but should be present. However, the larger the church gets there is merit in making security more visible to make sure elements inside and outside the church understand that the church will not be a cakewalk.

- I was very impressed with the use of good volunteers in church security on Sunday. The coordination between the children's building, the main building, the parking lot and the off-duty police officer is very good.
- CLC feels safe. I don't believe during the morning at CLC any person should have felt unsafe. At the same time no one would have been "creeped out" by overbearing security.
- I encourage a church the size of CLC to train the ushers in the basics of security. They would be there in a preventative way, the best of all security.
- If not done so already, I suggest placing two trained security volunteers on the front row maybe one near (but not on top of) Pastor Tom and the other further away. These security personnel are to be watching people all morning.

- If not done so already, Pastor Tom's security person should assist in keeping the regular folks at bay when Tom and Candi are at the post-service Connect Center. Further, they can be helpful to Pastor Tom in taking notes on what he wants done or commits to doing while in conversation with others.
- I commend the use of the off-duty police officer on the lot. Bad people try to steer clear of people in police uniforms. Prevention is the key.

The use of technology advances the cause of the local church. Most churches have savvy tech people in their volunteer core. Sometimes when the supply may seem short, the average 16-year old can add tremendous value to what you and the church are attempting to accomplish.

You must do everything you can to develop the best website possible. Believe me, new people to the church will look at the website long before they drive by your sign out front on Sunday morning. Website traffic will drive to the church. Further, while you are on the web why not minister to those who visit your site. Make your site extremely user friendly. Reach out to the non-believer before they come. You will be amazed at what the best quality website that fits your budget can do for you.

- The website is adequate but could be so much more. I understand CLC has a new one coming soon. Obviously these pages need to be a driving force for the church.
- Use multiple-look pics for Tom and Candi. Continue to get more casual. Same with other staff.
- In general the website needs to be full of pictures, some short videos and young (children, youth, adults) people. As I'm sure you have, I encourage continuing to go through the entire site for it to become a destination for people in and out of the church. Consider increasing the number of short (certainly under 2- minutes and many under 1-minute) videos on key pages for people to see what happens. Direct them to the Connect Center and show them what happens in there. Show them what happens in Children's

and Youth Ministries. Show lots of pictures of younger, smiling people having fun at CLC.

- Drive all information to the website. You need to talk about it regularly from the pulpit. This helps you in ultimately discontinuing production of the bulletin.
- The church should regularly use teens and 20-somethings in the continual development of the site; improvement and clarity.

Inter-staff relationships are critical to building a sense of unity. The larger the staff, the more critical is this issue. It is very important for all staff members, pastoral and support, to understand their need to be the very best possible cheerleaders for each other. Words and actions speak loudly. No one is an island. One staff member must know that in a pinch he/she can always count on any number of other staff members to be there for them. In order for that to happen there must exist a culture of honor and respect among all players on the team. The proper handling and distribution of phone calls, messages, e-mails and communications inside and outside the office to each other, laity and guests is of paramount importance.

- CLC has a good staff. I was very impressed with the level of commitment of these folks and their commitment to Pastor Tom.
- As it did during the retreat, CLC should be diligent in building times away from the office for intentional prayer, fellowship and team-building with the entire Leadership Team.
- I recommend you build into the staff schedule a specific day (minimum of six hours) approximately every six weeks away from the office to pray. This means no phones and no emails.
- Continue your spring retreat as you did it. Great job. Well-done and well-received by staff. Build your fall retreat accordingly. Involving board members and spouses will always be of extremely high value.

- Always make sure the relationship and resulting trust between staff members moves to the highest possible level. They need to know their number one cheerleaders are in the offices down the hall.

Thoughts. Each church has a culture unique to itself. While always appreciating that culture, it is critical that the church is regularly introspective of the perception of the church culture by those outside the family of faith. If a church clings to its church culture because of whom it is and not because of its ability to draw spiritually lost people to a saving faith in Jesus Christ, the church is on the road to being all about itself and on the road to decline. Here are random thoughts that directly or indirectly impact that mission.

- I observed a formal dress culture at CLC. Not a bad thing but it did feel very churchy. It didn't feel wrong but I wonder about the guest who comes in as he/she is and not dressed up. I'm presuming some of this has to do with Island culture? One of the things I observe when there is a "dress up" culture and I'm told it has to do with "our culture" it invariably has to do with their "church" culture. My guess is the average person in Fort Lauderdale with an Island background is not dressed up at Starbucks or Publix. I would encourage discussion of slowly moving to a more casual look.
- One of the biggest roadblocks to getting people involved in ministry is the other ministries who want them as well. In other words, in my opinion CLC needs to remove the competition. I encourage you and the church to go through the exercise I suggested on the final morning of the retreat to rank top to bottom all the ministries of the church. This will be an agonizingly difficult task but so high in value in targeting the resources, human and financial, to the most important ministries. At the end of the ranking draw a line at the bottom 10% and conclude their service. In all cases, however, Pastor Tom would hold veto power over the conclusions of ministries.

➤ **Christian Life Center**

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

FINAL HIGHEST PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

(Not listed in any priority order.)

(Pray to hear the voice of the Lord on each of these recommendations.)

1. **Prayer:** As Pastor Tom prays for God's direction, develop and create the CLC Prayer Service and bill it as the most important service of the week.
2. **Management Team:** Select a team of four people who will serve with you and Candi in leading the staff and church to the levels of spiritual development you desire.
3. **Eliminate the Bottom 10%:** Go through the process of ranking ministries top to bottom and eliminate the bottom 10%.
4. **Increase and Interface Hospitality:** Recruit and train additional volunteers to serve in all areas of hospitality to regular attenders and guests for Saturdays, Sundays, Wednesdays and all other services. The current hospitality leaders will need to be trained in the nuances of recruiting. The interfacing of all components of hospitality must be the order of the day.
5. **Post-Service Hospitality Area:** I recommend renaming the post-service hospitality area to the Connect Center and increasing its function. It needs to be the centerpiece in connecting guests to Pastor Tom and Candi. It also should be the place where anyone goes to get into a Life Group and to volunteer. In other words, it truly is the connecting place.

Appendix A: Miscellaneous Notes to Leadership team

I want to give you a few observations I have made over the last few years of larger, growing churches and the leadership that guides them. These are not necessarily recommendations but they are frequently present in larger church. It is important that all leaders see the potential lay of the land ahead of them.

- Senior Pastors in these churches tend to put high demands on their staffs.
- For staff pastors to thrive in these churches, they tend to be constantly changing what they do and how they do it.
- Staff pastors in these cultures have to develop thick skins.
- These churches are all about mission - to reach spiritually lost people with the gospel.
- These churches have a strong focus on numbers. They believe that every soul counts for eternity. What the leadership does to introduce people to God and disciple them in the faith is important enough to measure.
- Senior Pastors in these churches are intent on finding and keeping unity. They do that through the strength and wisdom of their leadership. They do not capitulate to whiners.
- These Senior Pastors generally understand they are in over their heads and have an extremely deep commitment to calling on God for their strength.
- Staff pastors and board members understand where confidentiality starts and stops. If someone in the church wants to speak confidentially with a staff or board member and shares information that could be construed as working against the unity of the body or could be harmful to the body, the leadership team members understand that information has to be shared with the Senior Pastor regardless of any confidentiality request. The person needs to understand that position. No elements of disunity are allowed to ferment.
- These Senior Pastors are seldom satisfied. Like Paul they are content in the state they are in but understand that until every person within their reach

and influence knows Jesus their work is not done. They tend to always be looking for ways to do everything better.

- These Senior Pastors tend not to dwell on celebrating victories very long. They are regularly saying things like, "That was great. Now how can we do it better?"
- Staff pastors frequently feel like they can never satisfy the Senior Pastor. While they work hard to perform, staff pastors like to celebrate wins for a longer period of time than Senior Pastors. Hence, they have the feeling that they cannot satisfy their leader.
- Senior Pastors require staff pastors to be solution-oriented. There are not many things worse for a Senior Pastor of these churches than to hear a staff pastor say, "We tried that and it didn't work" and then not give a solution to the issue at hand. Staff pastors who cannot develop solutions do not last long at larger, growing churches.
- Staff pastors can easily fall prey to the "My plate is already full" mentality while the Senior Pastor says there is more to be done.
- Senior and staff pastors with longevity in large church cultures have discovered the necessity of reinventing themselves. Those who do not, find themselves and the church stagnating and/or out the door.
- While not disregarding what long-time members of the church think or feel, Senior Pastors in these cultures make their decisions based on what is going to reach more people outside the walls of the church as opposed to how satisfied they can keep those inside the walls of the church. They regularly teach and preach to those inside about the mission to reach those outside.
- Senior Pastors at large growing churches seem to be able to live with fewer people "liking" them than pastors of smaller churches. Regardless of how people feel about them they make tough decisions and live by them.
- Senior Pastors of these churches are sometimes wrong but never in doubt.
- Larger, growing churches are completely staff-led and board-advised.
- No senior or staff pastor gets comfortable in larger, growing churches. When they do the church stops growing.

- Senior Pastors continually look for newer, younger, fresher ideas to reach the demographic most likely to make a life change for Jesus, the under-40 crowd. While this happens, older staff pastors who frequently reinvent themselves thrive in these churches.
- Suggestions made by Senior Pastors of larger, growing churches often are not suggestions. If a peer makes a suggestion staff pastors may consider the idea. If a Senior Pastor makes a suggestion staff pastors may be well-advised to consider the suggestion much stronger than if someone else had made the suggestion. Staff pastors either gain clarity from the Senior Pastor as to how strong they feel about their "suggestion" or they go ahead with the Senior Pastor's suggestion as an instruction of what the Senior Pastor really wants done.
- Larger, growing churches and the pastors/leaders who lead them never read unsigned cards, notes or letters. Neither do they with emails under bogus names. They have no compulsion to respond to spurious attacks on character or actions of anyone if it is unsigned. Admins of these pastors know to throw those away without telling the pastor they came in. These gutless, unsigned communiques are a blight on the Body of Christ and these Senior Pastors never respond to them. Never!

Appendix B: 5-Star Hospitality at CLC

In order to implement 5-Star Hospitality at CLC, I recommend implementing the following 8 specifics of hospitality. I recommend all these folks be referred to as hosts and not greeters or ushers. It sounds newer and has less of an older person feel to it.

Parking Lot Entrance Hosts - Welcome people at the Parking lot entrances, give directions when requested. Always wave and smile - when the windows are open say hello! Work in tandem with the rest of the team directing cars to an open parking area.

Traffic Hosts - Direct and give assistance to guests as they drive onto the property. With a smile and hospitality, work with the team to guide and direct the entire parking process.

Sidewalk Hosts - Be present outside building entrances at the end of the sidewalk and near marked Guest Parking spaces to welcome guests with a verbal "hello" and smile. Welcome everyone and especially look for guests offering them assistance and "The Hospitality Area" coupon. Personally bring guests to a Building Entrance Host and/or personally help orient them in whatever way possible.

Building Entrance Hosts (Currently called greeters) - Stand at building entrance and open door to all guests with a warm smile and welcome (wear lanyard and/or t-shirt). Watch for guests who need assistance. If needed, walk them into an area (example: Kids check-In) and transfer to a Kid's Check-in Host.

Sanctuary Door Hosts - Be present at Sanctuary entrance with a warm smile and open door. Welcome and assist guests with Sanctuary questions. If needed connect them with a Sanctuary host. Wear CLC specific shirts and/or lanyard.

Sanctuary Floor Hosts (Currently called ushers) - These folks are assigned to a section in the Sanctuary to assist and host with different aspects of the service. Welcome guests with a smile and assist guests with questions or specific needs. Assist with seating, collect offering, distribute cards, etc. During the altar call assist Pastors to see those who respond with an upraised hand. Wear CLC specific shirts and/or lanyard.

Altar Hosts (currently called prayer partners-sort of) - These folks are a bit different than the others in that they are specific to helping a spiritually lost person looking to become a Christian. Their role is to explain how to accept Christ and demonstrate 5-Star Hospitality in how they treat them as they complete their time of prayer and move on to the new convert discipleship process.

Post-Service Hosts - These folks work the CLC Connect Center. Their role is to welcome guests after service and to explain all the guests want explained relative to the church and its ministries. The hosts must be good conversationalists and should be ready to engage further connection with guests who have taken the step to go to Connect Center.

**Christian Life Center
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Pastor Tom Manning**

Addendum

Tom, as I noted to you driving back from the Keys, in our original conversations we had talked of Tom Clegg potentially serving as your Pastoral Leadership Consultant from The Hardy Group. He continues to be available and excited about the potential of serving you. However, since that time I have freed up a spot in my own personal client base and would be happy to serve you personally in this role. Of course, I have spoken with Tom about this shift and as always, he is about what serves the needs of the pastor first. I sensed from you during our earlier conversations that the network in the AG was important to you and you felt I would clearly bring that to you better than would Tom. I can and will be excited to bring that to the table for you.

I would love to work with you and your team for these reasons.

1. You and the CLC team are winners. I work with winners to help them be better.
2. You're young enough you don't have all the answers and I'm old enough to know how much more we all have to learn.
3. Your team is an energized bunch. I see ambition and desire in a lot of eyes.
4. Your team responded very well to my facilitation of the retreat. We are ahead of the game by this being the case.
5. You are at the point of creating management and leadership teams and the personal consultant fits well in these discussions and configurations.

If we were to move ahead together here might be some thoughts as to a game plan, just a starter-kit so to speak.

1. I would work with you in the actual selection of those who will serve on your Management Team.
2. Relative to staff development I believe the two staff members who could benefit from immediate interaction with me would be Brian and Steven. In both cases, any bump in their performance should contribute directly to the church's bottom line.
3. Nadine would benefit from transitional interaction with me moving to the administrative pastor (not necessarily your title but it is the function as I understood from you).
4. You and I would look for the areas where you desire the greatest interaction and networking and I would put measures in place to make those things happen.
5. I would be available by Skype or conference call for your first couple of Management Team meetings.
6. We'll set up monthly phone conferences between you and me from the get-go. Then beyond that my phone is open to you 24/7.
7. A very good friendship ensues.

In addition, I want to share with you some thoughts as to how this can work with your budget. I created the monthly retainer of \$1595 for CLC based on a church size of 2000 which was your attendance in 2013. If we were starting our conversation today the pricing for churches of 2500 would be in the \$1800 – \$2100 range. Of course, I am not changing a thing. In fact, as I told you I am reaching the place in my

own life and ministry where I get to pick the people with whom I work. In turn, the investment I ask of the church is fully in my discretion to set.

Here is what I would encourage you to consider relative to the retainer.

1. Your annual giving per capita is \$1534 – man, woman, child
 - a. This means that the church would only have to gain 12 ½ people in a year to cover the investment in the retainer paid to The Hardy Group. Or the reverse would be true as well that if partnering with The Hardy Group prevented 12 ½ people from leaving in a year then you've broken even. Anything more than 12 ½ says you're money in the bank for having engaged.
2. I would submit that the full annual retainer may already have been attained by decisions that emanated from the retreat. Questions:
 - a. How much is the value of Steven improving his assimilation process? Did he hear anything that would result in the church keeping 12 ½ more people?
 - b. How much is it worth to you to get the right Management Team in place? Can my role be of value to you in doing so?
 - c. What is it worth to CLC for the top leadership group (retreat attendees) at the church developing hospitality to a level that 12 ½ more people connect and matriculate into the active life of the church?
 - d. As you noted on the ride home and we all know of ourselves and people around us, we don't know what we don't know. What is the value of having someone in this case 13 years ahead of yourself in the life journey walking with you and connecting you where you want and need to be connected with other pastors and churches?

Let me know your thinking, Tom and I'm happy to proceed accordingly. Again, it truly has been my privilege to hang with you, Candi and the team. The best is yet to come for you, the team and CLC.

Stay faithful and God bless!

Dick

APPENDIX D: 18-MONTH COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN

Eighteen-Month Plan

Leadership (C1)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cultivate relationship with Pastors, Board, Top 10% leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ** Specific conferences, training for Pastors. ** Begin Leadership Coaching with Pastoral Team 2. Saturday morning breakfast with major departments/ministries (Vision casting, relational) 3. Develop “Simple” Vision Steps – Cast Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ** Pastors & Board to Read Simple Church, by Rainer and Geiger ** Vision Retreat (June 2012) Mission/Vision Evaluation 4. Personally bring close Life Group Leaders, Train New Leaders (Candi/Women, Tom/Men)
Spiritual Life (Q1)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen Passionate Core (Wed Nights, Pre-service, Friday Fasting Service). 2. Develop Creative Team for Preaching 3. Develop Theme for transitional Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ** Open Skies (21 Days of Prayer and Fasting – Jan 2012) ** Missions Theme (Feb 2012) 4. Implement Encounter Weekends (Spring 2012) 5. Increase attendance – minimum 15% 6. Launch Sat Night Service (Fall 2012) Target: Younger generation 7. Launch Senior Adult mid-week, mid-day Service
Spiritual Community (Q2)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen Assimilation Process (new comers luncheon sponsor) 2. Launch Life Group Emphasis (Jan 2012) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ** 23 groups to 80 Groups (40% of attendance = 800 people, 80 groups x10 each) ** All Pastors/departments, Wives, Board, 60 Already trained leaders) 3. Develop Eurasia Café 4. Strengthen Care Ministry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ** Care giver in each Life Group & Ministry Group.
Ministry/Discipleship (Q3)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase ministry involvement to minimum of 40% (800 people...wow). 2. Develop discipleship & leadership development path (Wed Night)

<p>** Following Encounter</p> <p>** Alpha (New Believers)</p> <p>** Starting Point</p> <p>3. CLC Leadership College (CBC Corps, Greg Hackett).</p>
Outreach/PR (Q4)
<p>1. Strategically use bride events with 30/60/90 (Easter, 4th July, Friend Day, Heaven's Gate, Christmas).</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Discover Jerusalem Harvest vs. outreach/missions</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Identify "felt needs" of Jerusalem Harvest.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Pastor/Board Vision Retreat (June 2012, Dr. Lee).</p> <p>2. Re-design Web Site, logo</p> <p>3. Develop Communications Department (increase internal & external comm.)</p> <p>4. Use Media department more effectively (T.V., Radio, Internet, etc.)</p> <p>5. Address & possibly change "busing issue."</p> <p>6. Target "Crowd" for connection in transitional phrase</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Mail outs to database (minimum 6, ideally 12/monthly), e-bulletin, e-invites, etc.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Correlate with New Preaching Sermon Series Starting</p>
Management (C2)
<p>1. Re-align budget to strategic goals</p> <p>2. Personal lunch/meeting with top 5% givers</p> <p>3. Eurasia Café (Giving Campaign)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Fulfilling Our Vision (Campaign)</p> <p>4. Better Signage (LCD)</p> <p>5. Get Shelby program working better or change to CCB.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** How many adherents</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Leaders, workers</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">** Average Attendance</p> <p>6. Increase income 10% (350,000)</p>

APPENDIX E: CLC VISION GRAPHIC

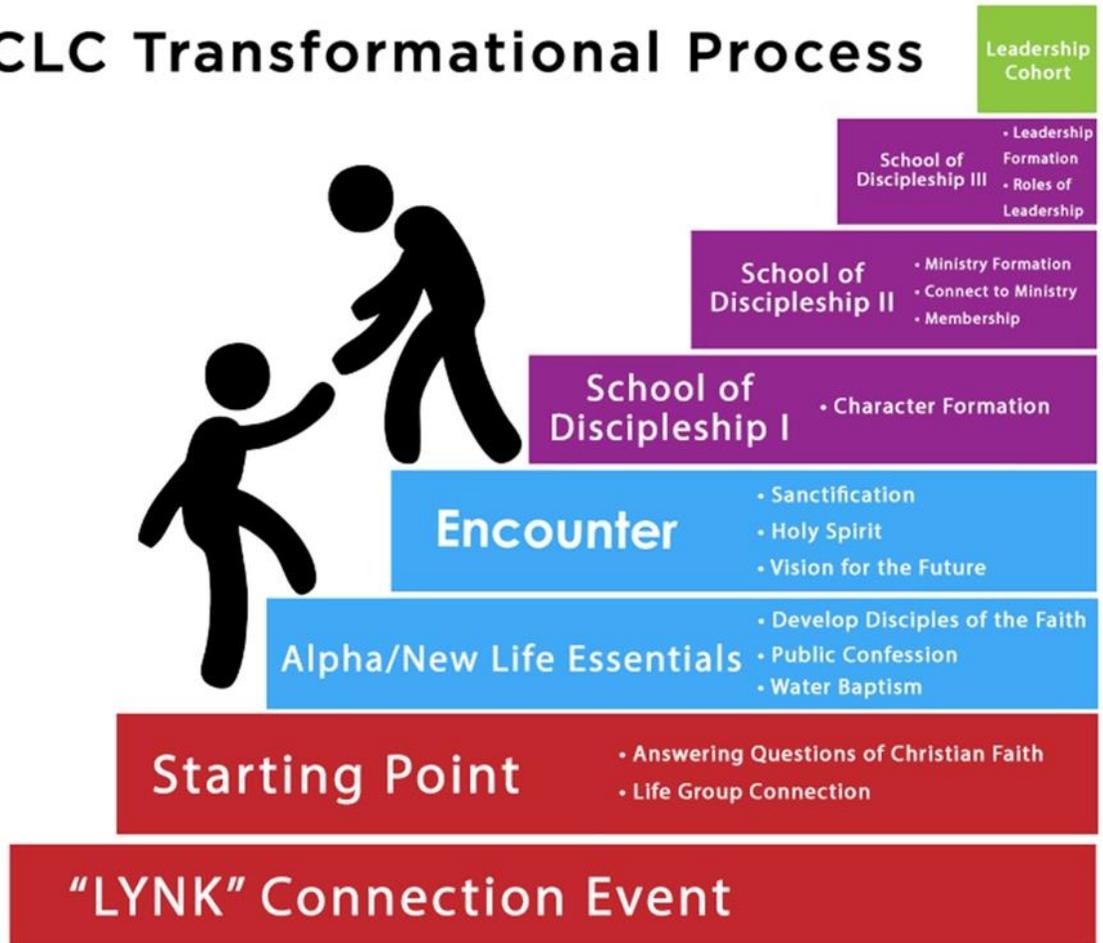


APPENDIX F: ASSIMILATION PROCESS FOR RED CARPET TEAM



APPENDIX G: PATH OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

CLC Transformational Process



APPENDIX H: ENCOUNTER SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

ENCOUNTER RETREAT

FRIDAY (Challenge to Change)

6:45 – 7:30 p.m.	DINNER
7:45 p.m.	Introduction of Weekend (Overview) Prayer & Worship
8:15 pm	Opportunity Knocks
9:15	The Father's Love <i>Love Letter to Jesus</i>
10:15	Small Group
11:30	Lights Out! (The emphasis should be on spending time with the Lord, not in excessive fellowship).

SATURDAY

7:30 – 8:00	Devotional (Men & Women)
8:00 – 8:30	Breakfast
8:45 – 9:15	Worship
9:15 – 9:45	Hearing the Voice of God (Hindrances)
9:45 – 10:45	I Have Sinned Against the Lord Spiritual Profile
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:15	Fearfully and Wonderfully Made (Overcoming Rejection)
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch/Break
14:30 – 15:30	Pathway to Purity
15:30	Break
16:00	Closing the Open Doors
18:00 – 19:00	Dinner
19:00 – 21:00	The Cross
21:00 – 21:30	Bonfire
21:30 – 22:00	Praise Service

SUNDAY

7:30 – 8:00	Devotional (Men & Women)
8:00 – 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 – 8:45	Worship
8:45 – 10:15	Receiving the Promise of the Spirit (Holy Spirit)
10:15 – 10:30	Coffee Break
10:30 – 11:20	Advancing in the Spirit
11:30 – 12:00	Testimonies / Celebration
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
13:00 – 14:00	Establishing Purpose & Vision
14:00 – 15:00	Prayer of Multiplication / Communion
16:00	Going Home

APPENDIX I: SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP

(See following page)

Week	Hour	Growth In Christ	Growth In Spiritual Formation	Growth In Ministry Formation	Growth In Leadership Formation
		ALPHA	SOD 1	SOD 2	SOD 3
1	Hr. 1	Is there more to life than this?	Your Character and Truth	Power of a Vision	Law of the Lid
	Hr. 2	Who is Jesus?	Seizing the Opportunity	The Heart of Ministry	Morning Matters
2	Hr. 1	Why did Jesus die?	Men: A Man and His God Women: Purpose of Life	The Necessity of Spiritual Community	What is a Leader?
	Hr. 2	How Can We Have Faith?	Men: Men in the Bible Women: God Values Women	Unwrapping the Gifts Pt 1	Structure of a Lifegroup
3	Hr. 1	Why and How do I pray?	Salvation and Repentance	Unwrapping the Gifts Pt 2	Leadership is Influence
	Hr. 2	What and How should I read the bible?	Men: A Man and his Relationships with Other Men Women: Developing your Character	Unwrapping the Gifts Pt 3	Relationship Between Group Leaders and Members
4	Hr. 1	How does God Guide us?	The New Birth	S.H.A.P.E	Requirements for Successful Leadership
	Hr. 2	Who is the Holy Spirit?	Men: A Man of Purity Women: Growing to Your Fullness	Connection to Ministry	Handeling Conflict
5	Hr. 1	What does the Holy Spirit do?	Surrender and Lordship	The Ways of Evangelism	How to Teach for Real Results
	Hr. 2	How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?	Men: Battle plan of Sexual Purity Women: A look at Sexual Integrity	Breaking Intimidation	Qualities of Potential Leaders
6	Hr. 1	How can I make the most of the rest of my life?	The bible	Share your Testimony Pt. 1	Dangers of Leadership
	Hr. 2	How can I resist Evil?	M: A Man and His children W:The Family on God's Heart	Bait of Satan:Bait of Offense	A Person of Influence has Faith in People
7	Hr. 1	Why and How should I tell others?	Prayer	Share your Testimony Pt. 2	Developing your Anointing
	Hr. 2	Does God Heal today?	Men: A Man and His Mentors Women: Developing Relationships	Understanding the Needs of New Believers	Alter Worker Training
8	Hr. 1	What about the Church?	Faith	Power of Assimilation	Faith Goals
	Hr. 2		Men: A Man and his Church Women: Preparing for Excellence	Undercover: Kicking Against the Goads	Counseling and Ministering to the Needs of others
9	Hr. 1		Holy Spirit	Spiritual Warfare	SOD Reflection
	Hr. 2		The Necessity of Spiritual Community	Undercover: Obedience & Submission	The Heart of Leadership
10	Hr. 1		Overcoming Obstacles	The Master Plan of Evangelism	What's Next?
	Hr. 2		Final Exam	Bait of Satan: My Father, My Father	Celebration
11	Hr. 1		Community Life		
	Hr. 2				

APPENDIX J: PROMOTIONAL PRIORITIES

Christian Life Center

Communications Manual

COMMUNICATIONS MANUAL

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE "MANUAL"?	2
COMMUNICATION VALUES	3
THINGS TO WATCH	4
PUNCTUATION, SPELLING AND GRAMMAR	5
THINGS TO LOOK FOR	5
PROOFREADING AND EDITING	7

EMAIL GUIDELINES

THE BASICS	8
EMAIL SIGNATURE	8

COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

GRAPHICS & VISUAL AIDS	9
COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES	9
AUDIENCE BREAKDOWN AND REACH	10
PRIORITY LEVEL PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES	10
CLC VISION	11
PUBLIC & MEDIA RELATIONS	12
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN	12
WEB	12
WRITING FOR THE WEB	13

GRAPHIC STANDARDS

INDIVIDUAL MINISTRY LOGO GUIDELINES	14
EVENT LOGO GUIDELINES	14
STYLE GUIDE	14

COMMUNICATIONS MANUAL

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE "MANUAL"?

The Communications team helps protect the quality of what you read, touch or click beyond the platform.

This document is an integral part of Christian Life Center's effort to help people take their next steps toward Christ. It provides guidelines designed to help effectively communicate the mission, vision and values of Christian Life Center with one voice in print, electronic and online media. How we communicate (beyond the platform) with each other and our audience brings the message to life. Our consistent approach will have a positive impact on the overall effectiveness of our church.

- **Reach**
Requires a partnership with staff and ministry leaders to facilitate good stewardship of resources. It's not about dogmatic ideas and rigid principles, but about harnessing the power of our message to enhance the experience.
- **Consistency**
Each communication piece is a valuable tool with the opportunity to unify or dilute all communications church-wide, depending on the quality of the information and how it is organized.
- **Clarity**
Simplify everything our audience sees or touches to make their life easier and more rewarding in every aspect of their engagement with Christian Life Center. Help them connect with Jesus and others effortlessly.
- **Growth**
The commitment to excellence in our print and electronic communication tools provides even more areas for talented people to connect and serve.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

For answers to anything not included in this guide, contact:

Steven Da Silva
Communications & PR Director
Christian Life Center
(954) 731-LIFE
steven@clcftl.org
www.clcftl.org

REFERENCES

When in doubt, we refer to the following recommended resources (besides this guide):

- **Dictionary**
Merriam-Webster Home and Office Edition, Merriam-Webster, Inc., Springfield, MA, 1998
ISBN 0-8777-96068. merriam-webster.com
- **English/Grammar**
The Associated Press Stylebook 2006, Norm Goldstein, Editor, Perseus Publishing, Cambridge, MA, 2006.
- **Web/Internet**
The Wired Style Guide: Principles of English Usage in a Digital Age, Constance Hale, Editor, Jessie Scanlon, Broadway Books, 1999 ISBN 0-7679-0372-2.

COMMUNICATION VALUES

- Reinforce that we are a unified church working toward a common vision, not a federation of sub-ministries or individual departments/silos.
- Be driven from the outside-in. That is, there will be a heavier emphasis communicating to those in the outside circles (community and crowd), and a progressively lighter emphasis toward those in the inner circles (congregation, committed and core). However, certain events and specific periods in our church development must allow for a balance to be established between the outer and inner circles of reach. The focus must not be solely based on either the latter or former, but must be distributed evenly, or in accordance with the direction God is leading us as a church for the season at hand.
- Focus on the needs of our guests, not the needs of our ministries.
- We will ask more questions than we answer in communications-allowing people to absorb and seek on their own terms, drawing them into the content we have to offer. Two-way communication is also established through this principle; communication from us to our guests, and communication to us from our guests.
- Deliver excellence in timeliness, accuracy, design, layout and ease of use.
- Be simple and clear, eliminating unnecessary fluff or complicated content.
- Always present in a language, style and method that is visible and understandable to the first-time guest.
- Do not focus on being fair, but instead content and promotional avenues will be appropriate based on ministry priorities and scope of influence or reach. This means that “equal time or work” is not valued or considered.
- Be designed so it reduces the noise in people’s lives and eliminates competition between ministries. Too much information can be just as dangerous as not enough. Therefore, we will provide the basic information for people to easily scan.
- Capitalize on our strength. Most people will connect to CLC for the first time through a weekend service. Therefore, most of our communication resources will be expended on inviting people to the weekend service, and then helping them take their next step beyond the weekend service.
- Be sustainable. We won’t launch a deliverable (i.e. electronic newsletter or Web site) if we don’t have the systems and personnel to consistently maintain it with excellence.
- Actively balance inspiration and information. Therefore, everything will be evaluated in context of the church; not just a ministry audience.

THINGS TO WATCH

There are several areas of writing that are neither right nor wrong, but should still be consistent. This section summarizes Christian Life Center's grammar, style and spelling conventions.

ABBREVIATIONS	Avoid in general, particularly when referring to events or groups.
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SENTENCES	Choose active versus passive writing. Passive voice lowers the readability and clarity. Example: Mark decided (not "It was decided").
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TITLES	All titles are to be in italics for easier readability (rather than underlined or with "quotes"). Example: Dr. Wayne Lee's <i>The Church Life Model: A Biblical Pattern for the Spirit-Filled Church</i>
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DATES	Drop reference to year when appropriate. Don't abbreviate. Example: Tuesday, March 9 (not Tues., Mar 9 2006)
--------------	---

EMAIL	<u>In</u> text, email should be italicized and always lowercase. Don't hyphenate email addresses. Don't underline. Example: <i>steven@clcftl.org</i> (not <i>steven@clcftl.org</i> or <i>steven@clcftl.org</i>) Important: Don't publish volunteer personal email addresses in Christian Life Center collateral. Always use a clcftl.org email address.
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PHONE	Should be separated with one dash before "LIFE" instead of periods. Use parentheses for the area code digits. Use lowercase "x" for extension with no space. Spell out the word "LIFE" instead of the digits 5433 when citing the church phone number. Example: (954) 731-LIFE (not 954.731.5433, or 954-731-5433) Note: Never publish volunteer personal phone numbers in Christian Life Center collateral. Always use a Christian Life Center phone number and extension.
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TIMES	Time should be written consistently and concisely. Use a.m./p.m., lowercase with periods. Example: 6 p.m. (not 6:00 PM), 7-8:30 p.m. (not 7:00 to 8:30pm) Example: 12 p.m. (not 12 noon), 10 p.m. (not 10:00 P.M. tonight)
--------------	--

WEB	Use lowercase for all web address. Internet addresses should not be underlined. In body copy, drop www. Addresses should be italicized. Don't hyphenate. Example: <i>youthspecialties.com</i> (not <i>www.youthspecialties.com</i>) Web is capitalized when referring to the world wide web or Web site. When used as an adjective like web addresses or web copy, web is lower case.
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WORDINESS	Avoid it and eliminate unnecessary phrases or adjectives. If the sentence makes sense without it, you should take it out. A clear, concise writing style is preferred over a wordy, flowery style. Example: phrases like "for more information" and "a time of" can generally be omitted.
------------------	--

PUNCTUATION, SPELLING & GRAMMAR

Most of us know the difference between a subject and a verb; however, errors continue to appear in our writing. This section describes the grammar, word choice, punctuation and spelling errors that occur most often.

APOSTROPHE	Avoid using apostrophes in plurals. Example: CDs, URLs, FAQs, 1990s, etc.
BULLETS	Maintain consistency in the type of bullets used.
CAPITALIZATION	Avoid all caps, except for emphasis. It gives the impression of YELLING. Capitalize pronouns when referencing the Deity (God, Father, Holy Spirit, He, Him, etc.).
COMMAS	In lists of three items or more, eliminate comma before and/or. Example: He went to the store, post office and dry cleaner. (Not, "He went to the store, post office, and dry cleaner.")
EXCLAMATIONS	Do not overuse!!!!!!
HYPHENS	Make every effort not to hyphenate words. Add hard return if necessary to avoid. Never hyphenate Web site addresses.
NUMBERS	Spell out numbers one through nine, use numeral for 10 and above. Example: one, two, three (not 1, 2, 3) or 10, 11, 12 (not ten, eleven, twelve) Example: six-week series (not six week, or 6 week or 6-week)
PERIODS	One space after periods and at the end of sentences. Omit periods in bulleted lists for incomplete sentences.
PUNCTUATION WITH QUOTES	The period and the comma always go inside the quotation marks. The dash, the semicolon, the question mark and the exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.
WIDOWS/ORPHANS	Eliminate. A widow is the last line or word of a paragraph printed by itself. An orphan is the first line or word of a paragraph printed by itself.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

AFFECT/EFFECT	Affect means <i>to influence</i> , effect means <i>result</i> .
ALLUDE/REFER	These two words are not interchangeable. <i>Allude</i> means an indirect mention, <i>refer</i> means a direct mention.
E.G./I.E.	e.g., precedes an <i>example</i> , whereas i.e. means <i>that is</i> and simply restates what was just said. Always place a comma directly after e.g. and i.e.
IMPLY/INFER	To <i>imply</i> is to suggest or indicate, although never to express. To <i>infer</i> is to conclude from evidence.
INSURE/ENSURE	<i>Insure</i> means "to provide insurance for" and is the only meaning for this word. <i>Ensure</i> means "to make clear or certain."
IRREGARDLESS	Avoid this term. The correct term is "regardless."
ITS/IT'S	<i>Its</i> is the possessive form of the pronoun "it." <i>It's</i> is a contraction of "it is."

THINGS TO LOOK FOR**GENERAL**

- a lot (not alot)
- all right (not alright)
- backup
- cannot (vs. can not)
- CD or CDs
- email (not e-mail)
- FAQ or FAQs
- Flier (not flyer)
- HotSpot
- information about (not information on)
- Internet
- online
- snail mail
- voicemail
- Web site
- web address

MINISTRY-SPECIFIC

- Powerhouse Student Ministries
- Café (with accented “e”)
- clcftl.org
- christianlifecenterftl.org
- Surge Kids
- Vibe Young Adults
- Wired Junior High
- DNA Membership Class
- Growth Groups (not ASB, or Adult School of the Bible)
- Lifegroups (Not life groups, or LifeGroups)
- *I love my church!* (Italicize wording and add exclamation point)

VEHICLES & DELIVERY:

HOT	NOT
CLC logo	Ministry logos
Web site, Social Media, Bulletin	Ministry brochures
How can we take it to the next level?	What else can we add?
What does our guest need?	What’s cool?
Less	More

VERBIAGE:

HOT	NOT
Connection	Intimacy
Group	Small Group
Community	Fellowship
Team	Committee
Program	Ministry (noun)
Serve	Ministry (verb)
Guest	Target Audience
Guest	Unchurched
Guest	Visitor
Volunteer Expo	Ministry Fair
Next Step	Go Deeper
Invite	Recruit
Opportunity	Need
Experience	Attend
Explore	Commit
Outreach	Missions
Reaching Out	
Growth	Maturity

PROOFREADING & EDITING

Copy without proper proofreading and editing can potentially turn off readers. It's important that each piece is reviewed by at least a member of the proofing team and/or an editor who adheres to the following practices. These team members (preferably who are unfamiliar with the material) will check and double-check even the most minor of details.

ACCURACY	Cross-reference dates and days of the week with a calendar.
AUDIENCE	Does the copy answer the most important question our audience asks: "What's in it for me?" Leo Burnett, leading advertising executive of our generation, says, "Don't tell me how good you make it. Tell me how good it makes me when I use it."
BASICS	Does the copy include the necessary basics of: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (call to action)? Does the call to action include appropriate contact information (e.g., complete address, phone with extension, email, Web site addresses, etc.)?
CONSISTENCY	Look for consistency with punctuation, style and formatting throughout the piece. Compare with our Style Guide. Include review of capitalization, indents, type size, type face, leading, alignment, page breaks, hyphens, etc.
NAMES	Double-check accuracy on names, phone numbers and extensions directly with name owner or cross-reference with more than one proofreader.
SPELLING	It's critical. A single misspelling can convey the information or audience is not important or valued. Do not rely on your computer's spelling and grammar checkers.
TERMINOLOGY	Step into the shoes of a new guest and consider what their reactions may be to certain phrases and the appearance of the piece. Do certain words sound "cliché" or "too implied"? If so, it is likely our audience may not understand the message.
TOPE	Are we accurately representing the intended meaning? Question anything that may raise a red flag to you. It's better to address the potential problem than to allow it to go unchecked. Don't assume someone else will do it.

REMEMBER

- Work from a printout, not the computer screen (but use computer shortcuts below).
- Read out loud. You'll hear problems you may not see when reading silently.
- Use a blank sheet of paper to cover up the lines below the one you're reading. This technique keeps you from skipping ahead of possible mistakes.
- Use the search function of the computer to find mistakes you're likely to make. Search for "it," for instance, for "its" and "it's;" for opening parentheses or quote marks (people tend to leave out closing ones).
- End with a spelling check, using a computer spelling checker or reading backwards word by word. But remember that a spelling checker won't catch mistakes with homonyms (e.g., "they're," "their," "there") or certain typos (like "he" for "the").
- One error can convey that the information or audience is not important or valued. Always have someone (preferably someone who is unfamiliar with the material) proofread your work before it becomes public. Don't rely on your computer's spelling and grammar checkers.
- Replace long blocks of text with easier-to-read bulleted lists.
- Break up text for important words by using bold, italics or underline. But don't overdo it. Less is more.

EMAIL GUIDELINES

THE BASICS

- Check your mailbox at least once per day and respond within 36 hours to a request. If you are on vacation or will be unable to respond in a timely fashion, either set your out of office message on or make sure someone else is monitoring your emails.
- Reply to every message that originates from a person. Delete general solicitations and advertisements.

Forwarding:

- If you are forwarding to someone else for a response, copy that person in your reply and reference his or her email address. Also, send blind copies (BCC) to contact's assistant when applicable.
- Forward to one person only for follow-up and BCC other contacts as professional courtesy only. Monitor responses to original message. Follow up in one week if no response is received.
- When forwarding, make sure contact will be available to answer it in a timely fashion.
- Never forward to or distribute personal email addresses in replies. Always use a church email address vs. a home-based email address.
- Always include the phone number when recommending people call someone.
- Always include the URL address (web link) in the message when recommending a place on the Web.
- Use staff titles in email responses. For example, "Steven Da Silva, Communications & PR Director, will have the answer to your question."

EMAIL SIGNATURE

Use the following format for an email signature:

John Smith
 Official Role/Title
 Christian Life Center
 (954) 731-LIFE
john@clcftl.org
www.clcftl.org

Including a graphic logo in your email signature does not ensure the recipient will be able to view or receive your email, depending on their inbox and junk/spam mail preferences.

As there are many email providers with varying rules for handing images and attachments, the safest and most professional way to include a signature in an email is to do it in a formatted text-only manner. This way, delivery of the email is ensured and is accessible by both hypertext and plain text formatting receiving bases.

Do not use any images, quotes or colors other than the standard black provided by your email client. Colors have a purpose and function, and improper use of them would be incorrect as pertaining to the CLC style guide. All of our communication vehicles must be as closely standardized and uniform as possible.

If you set up your @clcftl.org email account on a mobile device or smart phone, please change the preferences for your CLC email account signature so that it will not include the default signature applied from your device (e.g. *Sent from John's iPhone* or *Sent from a Samsung Galaxy S3*.)

REMEMBER

- You may be the first and only contact that someone has with the church.
- Your goal is to connect people directly with a resource and not necessarily another person. Avoid the middleman.

ASK YOURSELF

- Instead of connecting people to the church staff, how can we connect them with each other?
- Instead of making people wait for us, how can we give them tools that empower them to do things themselves?

COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

GRAPHICS AND VISUAL AIDS

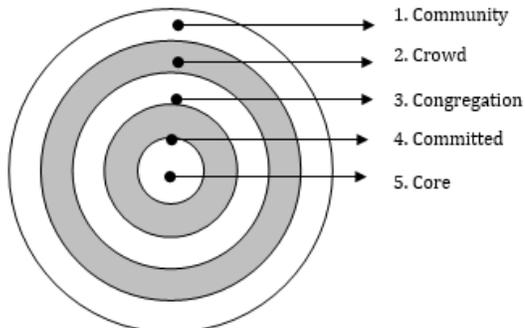
Graphics and visual aids can enhance or distract from your presentation or sermon. The following do's and don'ts can help you avoid common pitfalls in slide design and increase the effectiveness of your presentation.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| CONTENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use statements instead of sentences. Use active, visual language. ▪ Keep it short. Use key words to help the audience focus on your message. ▪ Too many words on a slide will tune people out quickly and will force you to read the slide as you're presenting. Each slide should present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one idea - no more than eight words per line |
| GRAPHICS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Art should enhance and clarify your message. ▪ Ensure that all design is in accordance to the specifications stated in the CLC style guide. |
| FONTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't use more than two fonts in your presentation. ▪ Sans serif fonts (e.g., "Arial" or "Helvetica") provide the best on-screen legibility. Try to avoid serif fonts (e.g., "Times Roman" or "Palatino"). |
| COLORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Let the information be the important point of every show, rather than an expression of jazzy colors. ▪ Use a color format that gives good contrast between background and text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dark backgrounds with light-colored text work best. - Text drop shadows should be black or a darker value of background color. ▪ Pay attention to shadow colors. It makes the legibility poor if not done properly (e.g., yellow text with gray shadow on tan background is almost impossible to read). |
| PRESENTATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preview your presentation on the equipment you will use. |

COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES

Our mission is to help people take their next step toward Christ through excellent, easy-to-use and easy-to-maintain communication tools. Our objective is to simplify everything our audience sees or touches, to make their life easier and more rewarding, in every aspect of their engagement with CLC and our ministries.

AUDIENCE BREAKDOWN AND REACH



A vital component of our department is public and community relations, and so we are driven from the outside in, starting with the community. That is, there will be a heavier emphasis communicating to those in the outside circles (community and crowd), and a progressively lighter emphasis toward those in the inner circles (congregation, committed and core).

However, certain events and specific periods in our church development must allow for a balance to be established between the outer and inner circles of reach. The focus must not be solely based on either the latter or former, but must be distributed evenly, or in accordance with the direction God is leading us as a church for the season at hand. For strategy clarification, discuss with the senior pastor.

PRIORITY LEVEL PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES

PRIORITY LEVEL 1 EVENT

1. Classifications
 - a. Quad 4 Items (CLC Vision)
 - b. Internal & External Focus
 - c. Priority External Focus
 - d. Church-Wide Events
 - e. Full Life Group Mobilization
 - f. Major Events & Conferences
 - g. Assimilation Kit
 - h. Sermon Series
 - i. External Push, "Reach Out" Series

PRIORITY LEVEL 2 EVENT

1. Classifications
 - a. Quad 1-3 Items (CLC Vision)
 - b. Internal & External Focus
 - c. Priority Internal Focus
 - d. Large Group Events
 - e. Sermon Series
 - f. Internal Growth Series

PRIORITY LEVEL 3 EVENT

1. Classifications
 - a. Quad 1-3 Items (CLC Vision)
 - b. Internal Focus
 - c. Medium-Sized Group Events
 - d. Targeted at Specific Demographic or Group

PRIORITY LEVEL 4 EVENT

1. Classifications
 - a. Quad 1-3 Items (CLC Vision)
 - b. Internal Focus
 - c. Small-Sized Group Events
 - d. Targeted at Small or Specific Group

Church-wide, external, and ministry-specific promotions are categorized by priority level strategies in accordance with the CLC vision. Priorities are based on scope of reach - who is this event for, and who are the guests we are striving to reach?

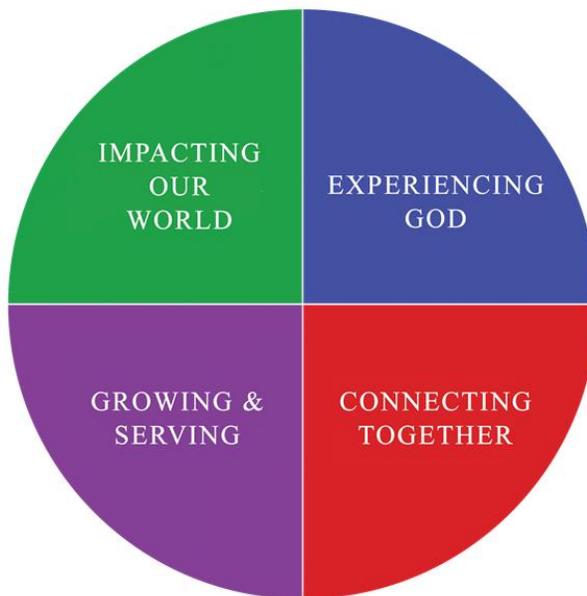
Note that these priority level classifications are to be used as guidelines and not rules. Each event will have its own audience that it is specifically designed to reach, and there are various factors that account for what items and promotions must be executed per event.

Use these priority level promotional strategies to determine what must take precedence in a given time frame with the objectives at hand.

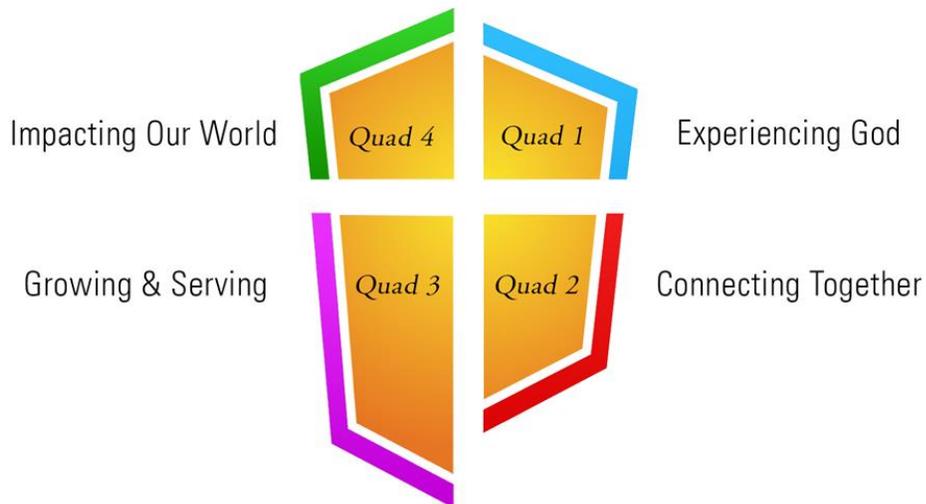
CLC VISION

Christian Life Center is a vision-driven church, and everything we do in our weekend services and in the community reflects our vision. The vision is who we are as a church and as an organization. It is our mission as the communications department to effectively portray, shape, and defend the image our church as an environment where individuals experience God, connect together, grow and serve in ministry, and impact their world. All of our communications must express, educate, and define the character transformational process that occurs weekly at CLC. As of 2013,

This is the primary and currently implemented CLC Vision graphic



This is an alternate and pending CLC Vision graphic



PUBLIC & MEDIA RELATIONS

One way the church tries to connect and establish relationships with the public audience is through effective media relations.

THE BASICS

For each targeted event or audience, the Communication & PR Department helps facilitate and implement strategies to make it run smoothly for media access. For example, a typical plan for publicizing a conference gathering would include:

- Coordinate any pre-event publicity.
- Author news release and assemble all event information.
- Distribute news release (and media packets if applicable) to comprehensive media list.
- Follow up by telephone with media list after distribution of news release.
- Organize and distribute free media passes to event to help generate media attendance and coverage.
- Scan local press for coverage and maintain press clipping book as archive.
- Coach internally those who serve as spokespersons to the media

OTHER MEDIA RELATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Authored articles
- Media pitching
- Media distribution list maintenance
- Media alerts/news releases
- Special events
- Editorial requests

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

A sample plan and template for a Crisis Communications Plan is attached to this document. It is a template that Christian Life Center will adapt to meet our specific circumstances and needs should a crisis arise, and the need to address the media and community news outlets present itself.

Review the template closely and determine where the plan may need to be modified. The final version should be printed in an easy-to-read format, placed in a binder with divider sheets and distributed to church staff and everyone on the crisis team. Keep a copy handy in the office. Use it frequently to practice your responses.

WEB

Effective communications harness the power of a message that brings our mission, vision and values to life. Effective technology provides a seamless, integrated solution giving people what they want when they want it.

Together, communications and technology fuel our Web sites. An integral part of ministry operations, our Web sites are one medium we use to accomplish the objectives above. This section highlights some of the guiding principles we incorporate in Christian Life Center's Internet strategy.

- Direct all traffic through the home page; do not use individual page addresses in communications. (With the exception of *conferences.clcftl.org*) It creates a single, unified, easy-to-understand view of the organization. It also prevents silo ministry and eliminates redundancy of efforts.
- Establish systems that provide freedom within a framework. Whenever possible, use tools that eliminate the bottleneck without sacrificing excellence.
- Shared ownership is one key to success. The online presence is part of normal ministry operations. Not owned by IT or the Communications Department, but part of normal ministry operations. Ministry leaders own their respective content and are edited only when there is a problem (e.g., inconsistencies, grammatical errors, competing objectives, etc.).
- Implement functionality based on the biggest return on ministry.
- Design for re-use and reach. Recycle existing information and provide multiple entry points for the same information.

- Always design under the context of low-to-no maintenance. Automate whenever possible. If you can't maintain it, don't implement it.
- Ask, "What's the objective?" not "What do you want it to look like?" Promote the overall strategy before you encourage specific systems.
- Let it flow. People shouldn't notice the process. If they do, it's broken. It's another paradigm for eliminating distractions. Help them connect with Jesus and others—effortlessly. Don't make them scroll. Give them fewer clicks.
- Reduce the noise. Keep it simple. Really simple. Eliminate fluff and provide the facts. The key goal is to simplify everything our audience sees or touches to make their life easier and more rewarding, in every aspect of their engagement with Christian Life Center and our ministries. White space is your friend.
- Email is still the killer app. People don't wake up in the morning and check the church Web site, but they do check email. Collect email addresses anywhere and everywhere. Make the blank really, really, really long. Execute one weekly newsletter for primary church communication with links that drive people to various information, resources, contacts or web interaction.
- Linear thoughts stopped working years ago. There is no top or bottom or one point of entry. Move from technical to adaptive. There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution.
- Design from the outside in, not the inside out. Make it user-centric not organization-centric. Build around services/products, not the organizational chart.
- Facilitate connections. The goal is to provide self-serve functions where people can exchange information without waiting for the middleman. Provide a plugged-in place for people to manage their own spiritual journey, real-time.
- The Web is a conduit for contribution, not just an online brochure. People want to interact, not read.
- Don't recreate the wheel. Become a trusted agent. We're not trying to offer what you can find on *amazon.com* or *weather.com*.
- It's not Las Vegas. Don't overpower because you can. Just because it's cool doesn't mean you should do it.

WRITING FOR THE WEB

People read online content differently than they do print materials. The physical limitations of computer monitors, as well as the nature of a hypertext environment, prevent people from reading for long periods of time or in a linear fashion. While good writing is good writing, understanding these differences is crucial to communicating effectively on the Web.

Interestingly enough, in today's information age, people are becoming more accustomed to the reading style of web copy and are becoming more impatient with lengthy print copy. The transition has already begun to move to a "task-driven" reading approach as more and more documents are being published in scannable or bulleted formats.

In other words, web copy translates well into printed material but print copy does not translate well into Web copy.

- "Chunk" text (break into bite-sized pieces) for quick and easy consumption.
- Use short phrases instead of full sentences to make a point.
- Be direct. Use active voice.
- Make one point per paragraph.
- Use a sans-serif font like Arial for easier readability on the Web.
- Avoid empty phrases, market-speak and floweriness. A reader is more likely to trust the content when it is not over-hyped.
- Eliminate vague modifiers (e.g., really, very, actually, sort of, etc.).

- Employ the “inverted pyramid” style of writing – place the main point of the topic in the first or second sentence instead of leading up to the topic sentence with introductory sentences.
- Break paragraph points into bulleted lists.
- Never use “click on” or “click here.” Just make the subject a hyperlink.

Example: **Register** now. (not “Click here to register.”)

Example: Connect at our special **events** or **small groups**. (not “Click here for small groups.”)

APPLICATION

Right: We have two morning worship services every Sunday:

- **Early Morning Worship**
8:30 a.m. Service
- **Mid-Morning Worship**
11:00 a.m. Service

Wrong: We have two morning worship services every Sunday. You can choose the service time that is most convenient for you. The first service time is 8:30 a.m. in the Worship Center Main Sanctuary. The second service time is 11:00 a.m. This is usually the most populated service, so make sure to get here early to find a good parking spot.

INDIVIDUAL MINISTRY LOGO GUIDELINES

Too many logos dilute church branding and create confusion for our audience. Our purpose should be to brand the church and message series, not individual ministries. Individual ministry logos aren't a part of the ongoing ministry at CLC.

The only exceptions are ministry groups with large audiences that have a unique weekly venue. Be sure to include a Christian Life Center tagline or footer. Some approved ministry logos include: Surge Kids, Powerhouse Student Ministries, School of Discipleship, and Lifegroups.

EVENT LOGO GUIDELINES

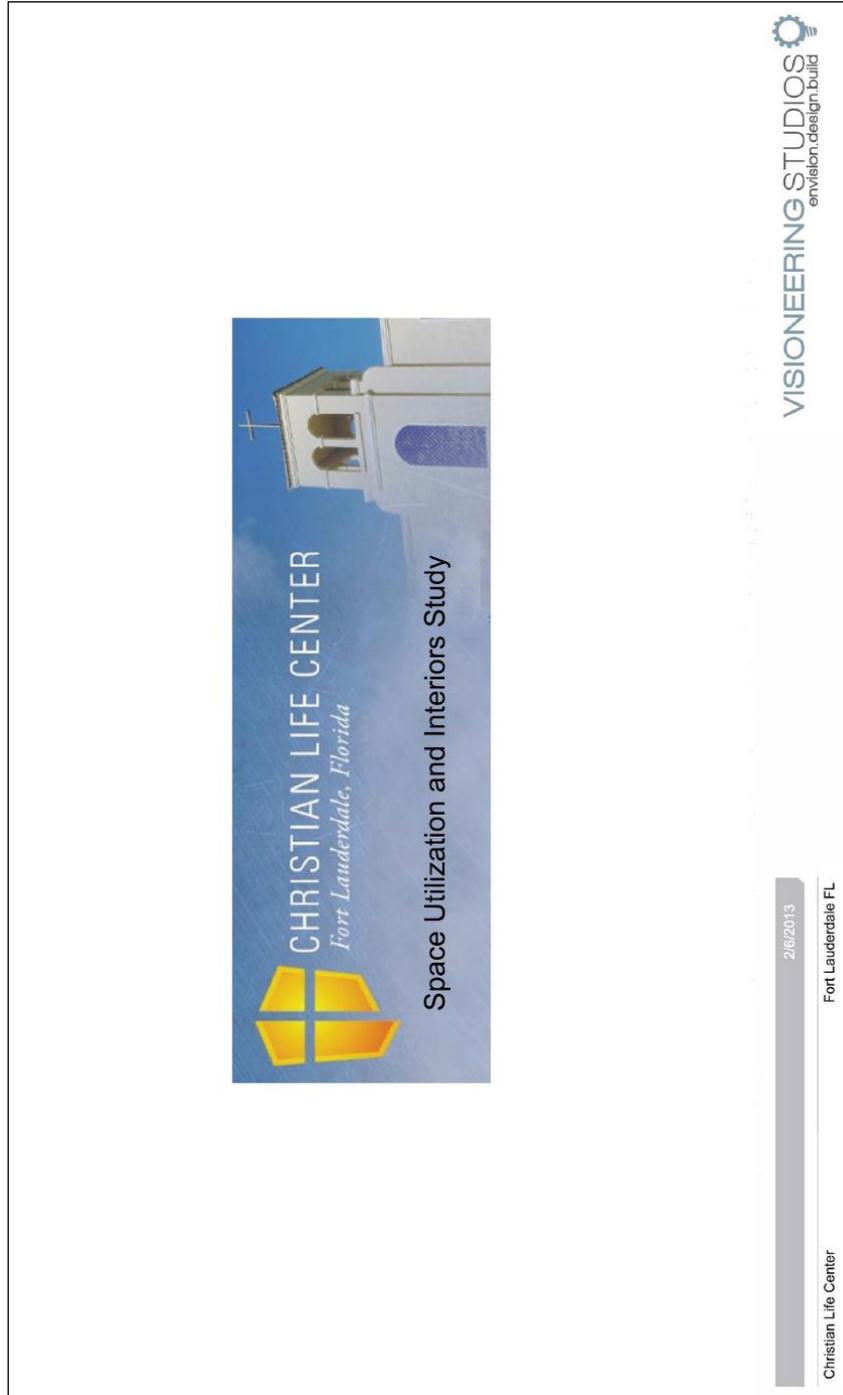
At times, event logos can be created for temporary use. Consult with the Communications Department prior to creation. They almost always include a tagline, like: a ministry of Christian Life Center or a service of Christian Life Center.

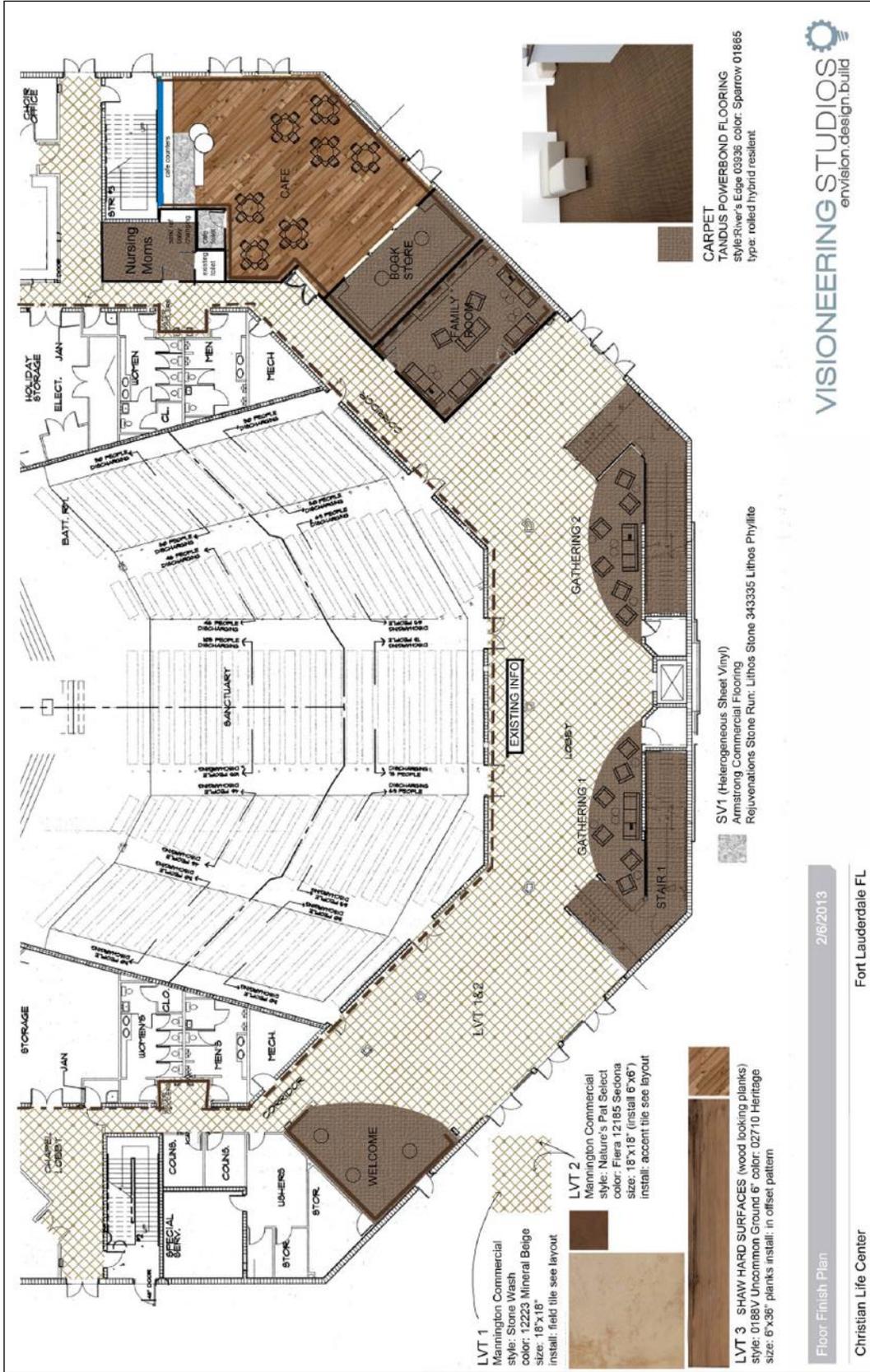
STYLE GUIDE

See attached for CLC style guide.

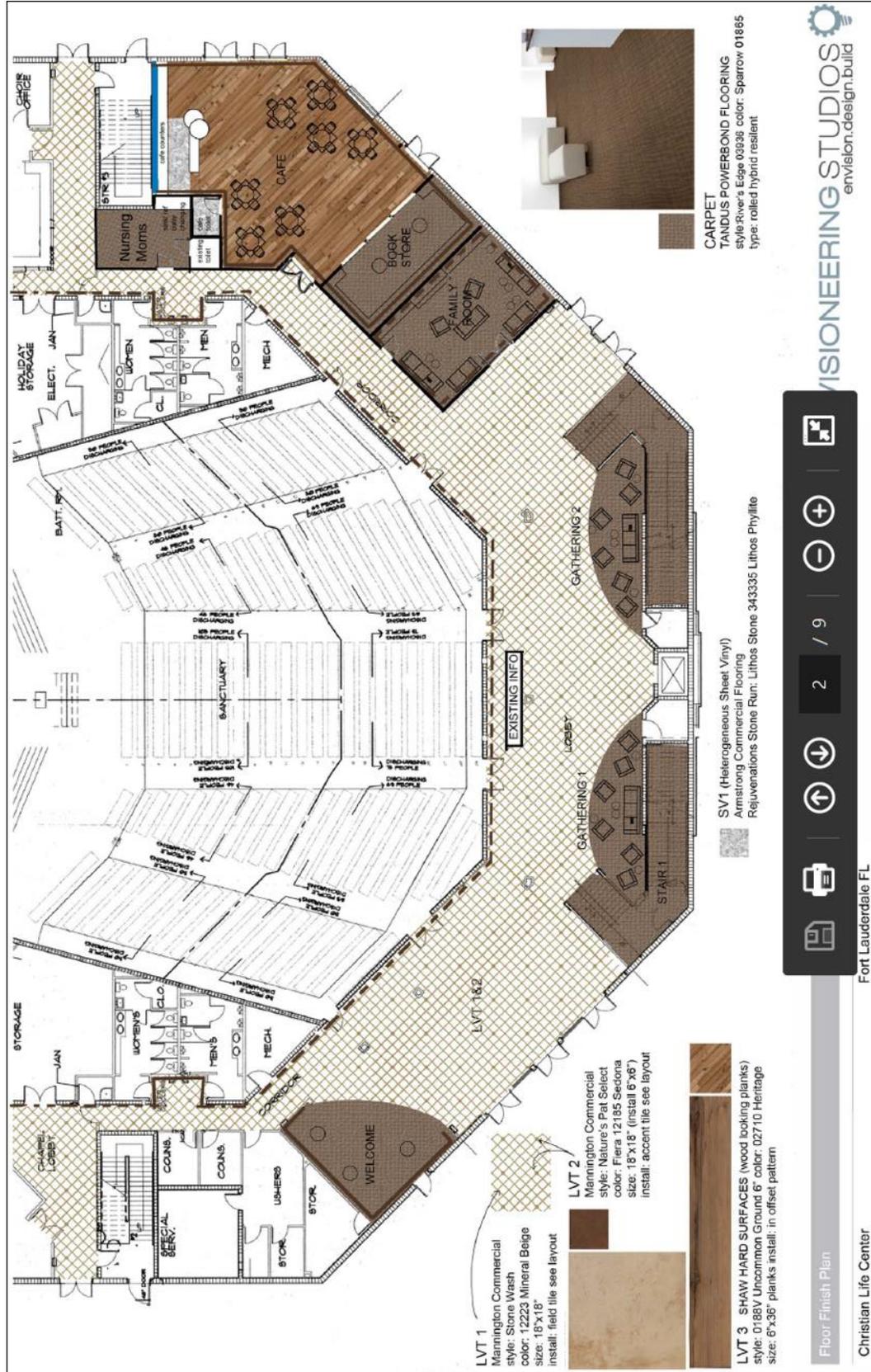
- Always include the Christian Life Center logo or contact information on every public piece.
- Every piece should cover the most important question our audience asks: “What's in it for me?” Then follow up with the necessary basics of: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (call to action).

APPENDIX K: SPACE UTILIZATION AND INTERIORS STUDY





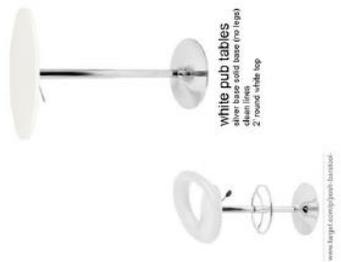








- WHITE WAINSCOTT NOTES:**
1. USE SQUARED WOOD (NO ROUNDED EDGES)
 2. WALL BASE IS A 1x6
 3. VERTICAL PIECES ARE LATTICE STRIPS
 4. TOP RAIL IS A 1x4
 5. BACKGROUND IS WALL PAINTED WHITE
 6. FINISH SHOULD BE A SEMI GLOSS



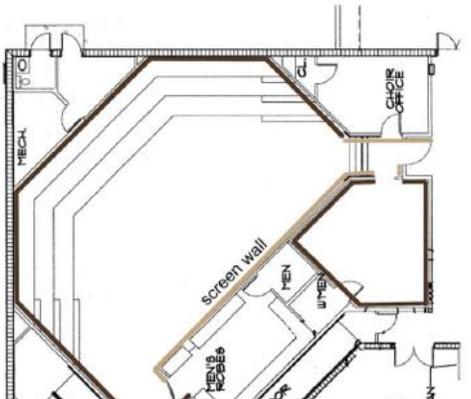
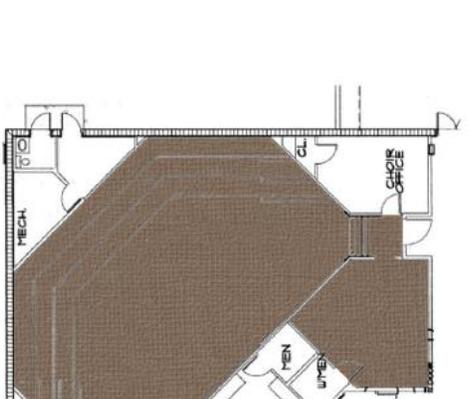
- PAINT**
GLIDDEN PROFESSIONAL PAINT
- DESSERT CASTLE #A1822
APPEARANCE: WHITE
TYPICAL WALL COLOR UNO
 - CHOCOLATE KISS #A1894
APPEARANCE: DARK BROWN
TYPICAL ACCENT COLOR
 - INDIAN BEAD #A1938
APPEARANCE: BRIGHT BLUE
CAFE ACCENT COLOR
 - WHITE ON WHITE #0148
APPEARANCE: WHITE
WHITE TRIM AREAS
 - DARK SECRET #0016
APPEARANCE: BLACK
CHOIR ROOM CEILING

PAINT NOTES:
USE ONLY LOW LUSTER FINISHES (NO GLOSS)
WALLS SHOULD HAVE EGGSHELL FINISH

WALL BASE
MANNINGTON COMMERCIAL
COLOR: 931 OTTER BROWN
TP RUBBER EDGE
EDGE EFFECT 4" ETCHED
USE IN LOBBY WHERE WHITE WAINSCOTT
IS NOT SPECIFIED. FOR THE REST OF
THE BUILDING MAY USE STANDARD BASE
PROFILE FOR BUDGET SAVINGS.

General Decor notes:

1. Only Live Plants: silk or imitation florals are not in vogue. For the younger generation they scream dusty irrelevancy. If you need greenery us a live plant or a natural element. Keep it real.
2. Unclutter the space, while the entry table is beautiful it clogs the space. The modern sign in booths are ok style wise but are over sized for the space, relocate or remove.
3. If you keep the information desk, relaminate (note the modern sign in booths could work in this area)
4. Remove the urns from the top of the stair railings, keep the caps clean and white.
5. Refinish all grout at clay tile inside and out with dark brown stain/sealant to match paint.

NOTES:

- NEW PAINT TILES AND GRID BUT BE SURE TO REMOVE TILES TO PAINT TO AVOID WHITE LINES USE NON-FLAMMABLE PAINT
- NEW TILE AND GRID
- FINE FISHERS SQUARE LAY IN ARMSTRONG
- PRELIME TO 15 TEE GRID
- TRACK LIGHTS
- SPECTRAL LIGHTING
- ARMSTRONG SERIES LOW VOLT
- SHAKE UP
- BLACK FINISH

RCP LEGEND

- BLACK TRACK LIGHTS, LOW VOLT SPOTS
- AREAS TO USE BLACK CEILING TILE AND GRID




CARPET
TANDUS POWERBOND FLOORING
 style: River's Edge 03936 color: Sparrow 01965
 type: rolled hybrid resilient

VISIONEERING STUDIOS
 envision.design.build

Choir Room: Make Over

2/6/2013

Notes:

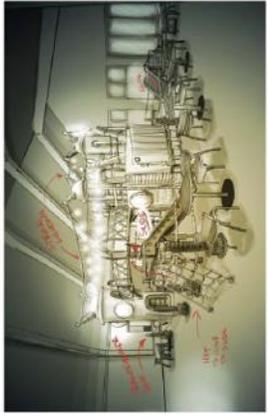
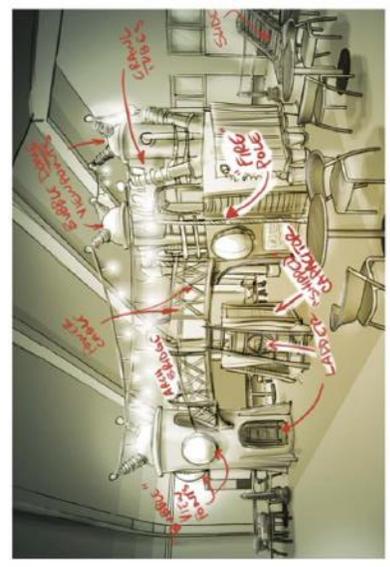
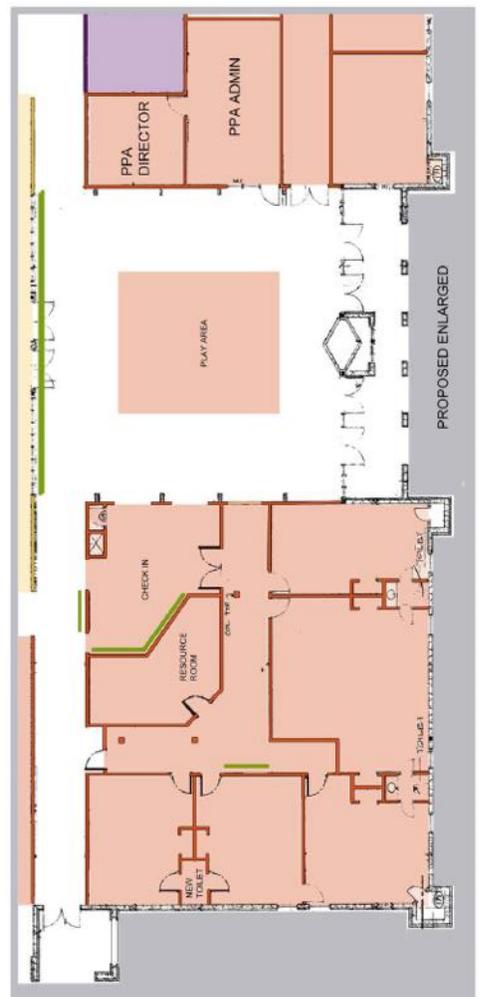
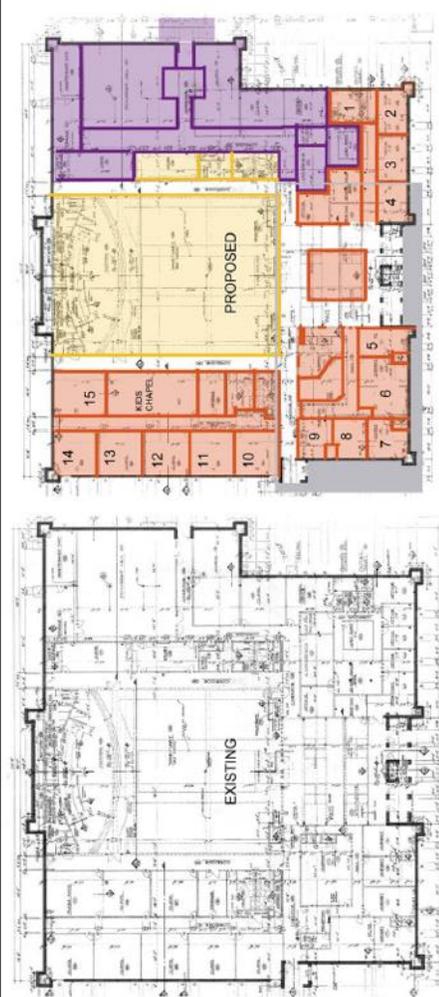
1. Open up the space by lowering existing walls to 3' or less.
2. Add new low built in benches (16" ht max) and greenery, 22" -30" max ht
3. replace existing solid wall at front with "see through" fencing
4. add solid wall at back of play area with environmental graphics.

PROPOSED IMAGE OF SHUTTERS TO ADD SHADE AND INTEREST

VISIONEERING STUDIOS
envision.design.build

Exterior Cafe Area

2/6/2013



PLAIN JOES RENDERING OF PLAY AREA

GRAPHIC WALL

- REORGANIZATION & REVITALIZATION OF EXISTING SPACES PROVIDES:
1. CENTRALLY LOCATED CHILDREN'S AREA WITH DIRECT ADJACENCIES
 2. ENLARGED AND INCREASED CLASSROOM SPACES (15 ROOMS)
 3. CENTRALIZED OFFICE WITH SEPARATE ENTRANCE (IMPROVES SECURITY)
 4. PRESERVED LARGE INTERNAL MULTI USE SPACE WITH KITCHEN SERVICE
 5. ROOMS FOR MULTIPLE USES INCLUDING BOTH IMPORTANCE OF CHILDREN BY ESTABLISHING A CHILD DESIRED DESTINATION.



EXTERIOR NOTES:

1. ADD CONTRAST WITH DARK BROWN ACCENTS AT ALL EXISTING FADED STONE AREAS
2. SEE SITE SIGN NOTES
3. MAKE EACH PORTICO ENTRANCE EASILY DISCERNIBLE AND DIRECTIONAL
3. REPAINT AND BRIGHTEN EXISTING WHITE TRIM
4. CLEAN, REPAIR AND BRIGHTEN CLAY TILE ROOF
5. REPAIR AND REPAINT BUILDING AS NEEDED.
6. RECOMMEND ADDING LIGHTING TO ALL PORTICOS. SKY LIGHTING IS PREFERRED.
7. ADD CURB CUTS FOR STROLLERS & WHEEL CHAIRS CAMPUS WIDE NEED

Color is not only a great directional tool but also a easy way to evoke a good connection....

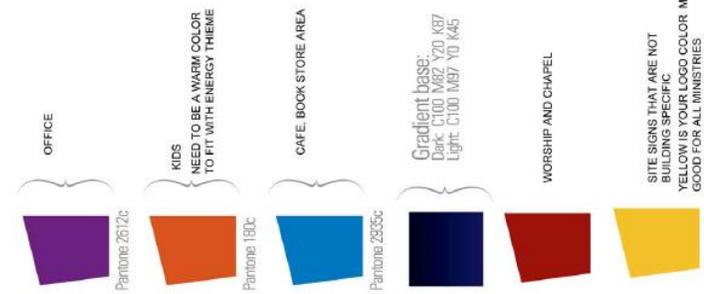
Signage and Waypoint System Design*

INTEGRATING BUILDINGS AND BRANDING

Color is not only a great directional tool but also a easy way to evoke a good connection with visitors and members. We can make the best impact by determining an area or building's color signature and combining that with your branding colors. This will mean a few small tweaks to your branding colors.

Think of like this: when choosing to visit your Church, I first checked you out on the web site (this is common) if when I show up on campus the signage matches the look I saw on-line, there is an immediate connection and comfort. You gain a trust point. If the signage flows right into the space I am looking for another connection is made because that signage has told me something about the feel of where I am going.

For instance, your children's programs all have energetic names so the signature color for that space and your children's department should be warm and bright like the orange color (instead of the blue). In contrast, your cafe area has a water feature and is set up to be a cool, oasis where casual connections can be made, so blue is a good color fit because expresses something intricate about the space. Your Worship room and Chapel have powerful red accents that make for a great link in the mind, adding a red color to your palate will help designate that area. For your general signage that is not building specific, yellow makes a great unifier of all your spaces since it is also you main logo color. These connections create a thread of order and simplicity that run can throughout the entire campus. To the right are some examples I pinched from your branding package and re-colored. Note the added colors of red and yellow which already are a part of your look but not called out. Also note the extra large site sign that starts setting the palette by using small bits of color at the naming of each area to which you are being directed.



APPENDIX L: CHURCH LIFE FUNCTION ASSESSMENT AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

The Church Life Function Assessment assists ministry leaders in identifying the strength and weakness of fifteen vital functions of the church. The fifteen functions assessed are leadership, vision/mission, spiritual life, worship, preaching/teaching, assimilation, care/fellowship, small groups, discipleship, ministries, evangelism, public relations, decision-making, finances, and facilities.

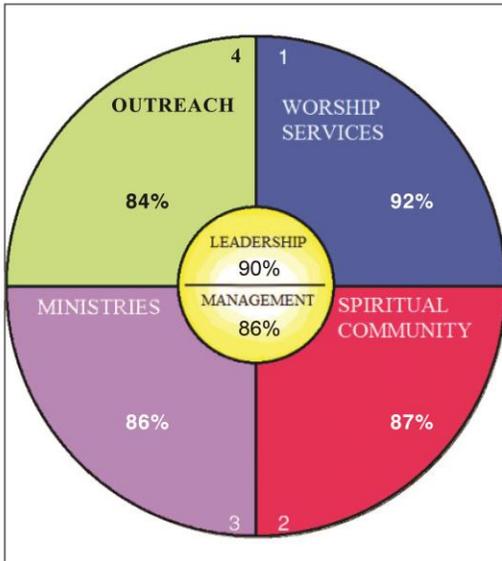
The strength or weakness of each function is determined by responding to ten strategic, evaluative statements targeted specifically toward assessment of that function. This results in a total of 150 responses of evaluation. Assessment credibility increases when all church leaders participate, including senior pastor, staff, and lay leadership. Compiling appraisals from these three perspectives improves the scope and probability of a comprehensive and accurate evaluation.

The Church Life Function Assessment can be ordered through Church Life Resources: <http://churchliferesources.org/church-resources>.

APPENDIX M: 2014 CHURCH LIFE FUNCTION ASSESSMENT

COMPOSITE SCORE

Church Life Function Assessment



Assessment for:

Christian Life Center - 2014
 2699 W. Commercial Blvd.
 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309
 Thomas Manning
 Phone: 954-731-5433
 Attendance: 0

Assessor:

Composite Assessment
 Category = All

Overall Score:

87%

Top 3 Functions

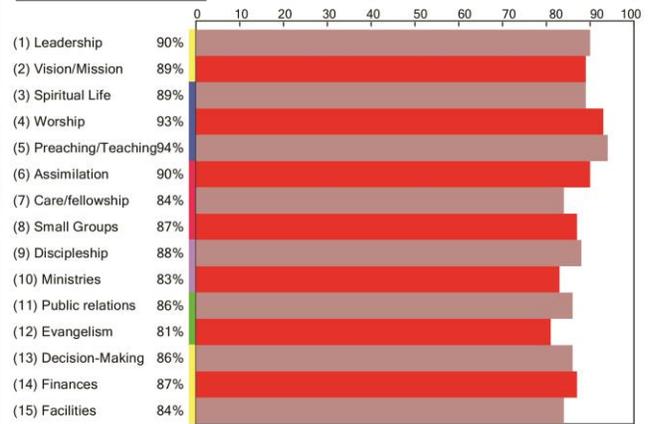
- (5) Preaching/Teaching 94%
- (4) Worship 93%
- (1) Leadership 90%

Next 3 Functions

- (6) Assimilation 90%
- (3) Spiritual Life 89%
- (2) Vision/Mission 89%

Lowest 3 Functions

- (15) Facilities 84%
- (10) Ministries 83%
- (12) Evangelism 81%



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