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Greening Spaces for Worship and Ministry

Congregational community engagement is so widespread in the United States that it is best described as a congregational norm. Both congregational leaders and attenders, in fact, expect to be involved in community activities simply as a matter of course. Moreover, people in need assume aid from congregations is natural and normal. Beyond that, most congregations want to be involved in their communities--they see neighborhood participation as a natural product of their mission. And congregational social activity also tends to spur other action: studies show that individuals who attend congregations in which there is a strong and clear priority on community care are more likely than others to be civically engaged outside the congregation. In other words, congregational activity has ripple effects that are hard to even measure. Congregations interested in community engagement, though, should prepare to accurately assess both their limits and capacities in addressing community issues. There exists no step-by-step formula for congregational engagement that simply translates to all communities/neighborhoods. This book, however, offers a brief overview to stimulate congregational thinking about community engagement in a manner that includes insights regarding social science and local context.

Congregation & Community

What's Going on Out There? Author Steve Taylor takes trips to the edge of the church envelope and sends us back what he's finding inside the emerging church around the globe. From the revival of ancient spiritual practices to the rise of multimedia, each of his posts sketches a view of the body of Christ in wild flux.

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Topics include: birth; pilgrimage; community; creativity; DJing; and leading and following.

Students, Churches, and Higher Education

This accessible introduction to the broad scope of Christian education focuses on its practice in the local church. Two leading experts argue that Christian education encompasses all of the intentional practices of the local church, including worship, mission, sacraments, and teaching. They explore Christian education not only as a field of study but as a vital congregational ministry, showing how congregations can engage in discipleship and formation for spiritual growth. The book features exercises and other pedagogical devices and includes reflection questions and suggestions for further reading.

Becoming a Praying Congregation

In this helpful book, Boyung Lee offers an encouraging vision of the mainline church's future. Lee grapples with some of the greatest challenges facing the mainline church, offering compelling responses to recurring questions: What does faithfulness to the gospel look like in this changing world? What is our distinctive voice in the larger society? How does theological education have to change if it is to serve the needs of a new century? Lee argues that the church's future is a promising one if the church can offer a richer and deeper definition of community--one that moves beyond the excessive individualism of western culture and that helps mainline Christians understand their solidarity with one another and with all of God's people. Lee further explores the crucial role of faith formation at the congregational and seminary levels. More than mere schooling, theological education must engage all aspects of educators' and students' lives to prepare seminarians for the challenges that lie ahead. While not dismissing the mainline church's challenges, Lee offers congregational leaders and seminary educators a vision of a church transformed for the 21st century.

40 Days and 40 Bytes

Its time to Retool the Church by a fresh analysis of the Spiritual Gifts, a subject frequently twisted by popular ideas and poor theology. This new look shows that the gifts are not a mere manipulative technique, but a prime source for our growth in holiness, unity, and numbers. Practical stories from a missionary career illustrate the place of gifts in the church's life. Pastors and laymen, Presbyterians and Charismatics will appreciate this book, which includes tables of the original texts and a flexible test to put this toolkit to use.

Retooling the Church

This handbook for seminarians and clergy professionals places the congregation itself, rather than individual scholarly disciplines, at the center of congregational analysis. Using a comprehensive systems approach to congregations, this volume enables readers to analyze the ministries, stories, and processes that are at work in congregations. It provides techniques for studying the congregation as well as a

framework for understanding the nature of the congregation.

Beacon

Many books have been written about leadership and change, but until now none has focused on the kind of change that tears at a community's very fabric. Alban senior consultant Gil Rendle provides a respectful context for understanding change, especially the experiences and resistances that people feel. Rendle pulls together theory, research, and his work with churches facing change to provide leaders with practical diagnostic models and tools. In a time when change is the norm, this book helps to "lead change" in a spiritual and healthy way.

Doing Justice

Innovating in a Learning Community

"Today we are awash in computerized Bible games, pastoral care software, and church management systems with members' personal information and giving records," observe authors Spiegel, Armstrong, and Bill, but "too often we blindly accept and use technology without asking the big questions. Questions like, is it appropriate to our mission and ministry?" 40 Days and 40 Bytes will help your congregation explore technology so you can decide, from a ministry and culture standpoint, what you need to do. The goal: godly service—not technological glitz. The authors are uniquely qualified to help you think about the role of technology in your congregation. All three are staff members with the Indianapolis Center for Congregations, which launched the innovative Computers and Ministry Grants Initiative in 1998 to help congregations address the challenges they face when using computer technology in their ministries. In this book, they share what they have learned in their work with 102 congregations. There's no question your congregation is going to use computer technology. The only question is, "How?" 40 Days and 40 Bytes will help you design technology that fits your ministry and mission.

The Impact of Church Consultancy

Revision of the author's thesis (Ph. D.)--University of Western Sydney, 2009.

Practicing Christian Education

Through a series of essays contributed by leading experts in the field, The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology presents an introduction to practical theology as a major area of Christian study and practice, including an overview of its key developments, themes, methods, and future directions. The first comprehensive reference work to provide a survey, description and analysis of practical theology as an area of study A range of leading scholars in the field provide original contributions on the major areas, issues, and figures in practical theology Reviews an extensive range of methods for studying theology in practice, along with sub-disciplines in theological education such as pastoral care and

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preaching Covers developments in the discipline in a range of global contexts and distinct Christian traditions Shows how practical theology is relevant to everyday life

Presbyterian Survey

Studying Congregations

Change isn't always easy or intuitive. *How Your Congregation Learns* introduces churches and leaders—both lay and ordained—to the process of the learning journey. By understanding learning dynamics and working to become a learning community, the congregation will be able to move more purposefully to achieve its goals. Congregations face many kinds of challenges. Some are mundane: the roof leaks; the parking lot needs repaving; the microphones don't work well. Some tests are transcendent: How should lives be honored? What is God calling the congregation to do and be? How can generosity be taught? Throughout life people face challenges for which they are not prepared—the death of a parent, a new job offer, making a decision about where to live. So it goes that congregational leaders face challenges that are just beyond the grasp of their abilities. This book addresses the just-beyond-the-grasp challenges and shows how real congregations can learn from them.

Congregations as Learning Communities

Filled with anecdotes, vignettes, thought-provoking quotes from experts and community members, and specific examples of successful strategies, this innovative guide helps faith communities become places of welcome and belonging for people with a wid

Leading Change in the Congregation

How do firms jointly develop open information infrastructures? To answer this question, this book draws on the results of a longitudinal research project covering the development of the pharmaceutical distribution industry in China from 2004 to 2012, focusing on the emergence and subsequent evolution of industry-wide information infrastructures. How do firms delimit areas of proprietary innovation in open innovation projects? How do firms coordinate, initiate, negotiate and implement the development of innovative infrastructures? How do processes and practices within firms enable and constrain such collective efforts? - This book provides answers to these questions and draws conclusions regarding the challenges and new capabilities that firms will need in a world in which participation in the building of open information infrastructures becomes a necessary task for commercial organizations.

Burning Center, Porous Borders

The last forty years have seen transitions in mainline churches that feel, for many, like a journey into the wilderness. Yet God is calling us in this moment, not to

grieve over the changes we have experienced but to hear the call to a new mission, and a new faithfulness. In *Journey in the Wilderness*, Gil Rendle draws on decades as a pastor and church consultant to point a way into a hopeful future. The key to embracing the wilderness is to learn new skills in leading change, to reach beyond a position of privilege and power to become churches that serve God's hurting people.

Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities

Burning Center, Porous Borders articulates what the church is and is called to be about in the world, a world now globalized to the point that the local is lived globally and the global is lived locally. The church must respond creatively and prophetically to the challenges-economic disparity, war and terrorism, diaspora, ecological threat, health crisis, religious diversity, and so on-posed by our highly globalized world. It can do so only if the church's spiritual center burns mightily. Conversely, it can burn mightily in the spirit of Christ only if its borders are porous and allows the fresh air/spirit of change to blow in and out. While there is much rhetoric about change, the most common response to change is to continue doing business as usual. This is particularly the case in the face of perceived global threats. In spite of the hoopla and euphoria of the global village, walls of division and exclusion are rising, hearts are constricting, and moral imagination shrinking. In response to this context, *Burning Center, Porous Borders* proposes alternative ways or images of being a church: burning center and porous borders, wall-buster and bridge-builder, translocal (glocal), mending-healer, radical hospitality, community of the earth-spirit, household of life abundant, dialogians of life, and community of hope. In *Burning Center, Porous Borders* congregational vitality and progressive praxis kiss and embrace!

Communities in Action

Learning in a Musical Key examines the multidimensional problem of the relationship between music and theological education. Lisa Hess argues that, in a delightful and baffling way, musical learning has the potential to significantly alter and inform our conception of the nature and process of theological learning. In exploring this exciting intersection of musical learning and theological training, Hess asks two probing questions. First, What does learning from music in a performative mode require? Classical modes of theological education often founder on a dichotomy between theologically musical and educational discourses. It is extremely difficult for many to see how the perceivedly nonmusical learn from music. Is musicality a universally human potential? In exploring this question Hess turns to the music-learning theory of Edwin Gordon, which explores music's unique mode of teaching/learning, its primarily aural-oral mode. This challenge leads to the study's second question: How does a theologian, in the disciplinary sense, integrate a performative mode into critical discourse? Tracking the critical movements of this problem, Hess provides an inherited, transformational logic as a feasible path for integrating a performative mode into multidimensional learning. This approach emerges as a distinctly relational, embodied, multidimensional, and non-correlational performative-mode theology that breaks new ground in the contemporary theological landscape. As an implicitly trinitarian method, rooted in the relationality of God, this non-correlational method offers a practical theological

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contribution to the discipline of Christian spirituality, newly claimed here as a discipline of transformative teaching/learning through the highly contextualized and self-implicated scholar into relationally formed communities, and ultimately into the world.

Learning in a Musical Key

Personal experiences and congregational success stories highlight this highly readable text. An essential resource for leaders in the congregation.

The Church As Learning Community

Dissertation Abstracts International

Congregations, Neighborhoods, Places

In the United States, some populations suffer from far greater disparities in health than others. Those disparities are caused not only by fundamental differences in health status across segments of the population, but also because of inequities in factors that impact health status, so-called determinants of health. Only part of an individual's health status depends on his or her behavior and choice; community-wide problems like poverty, unemployment, poor education, inadequate housing, poor public transportation, interpersonal violence, and decaying neighborhoods also contribute to health inequities, as well as the historic and ongoing interplay of structures, policies, and norms that shape lives. When these factors are not optimal in a community, it does not mean they are intractable: such inequities can be mitigated by social policies that can shape health in powerful ways.

Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity seeks to delineate the causes of and the solutions to health inequities in the United States. This report focuses on what communities can do to promote health equity, what actions are needed by the many and varied stakeholders that are part of communities or support them, as well as the root causes and structural barriers that need to be overcome.

The Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada

Could we have imagined how much theological education would change in the new millennium? Shifting needs of students, classrooms, and churches have demanded constant revisions of the curriculum, course design, classroom technology, and pedagogical strategies. Saint Paul School of Theology felt the tide of change within our own walls and designed a project called "Proleptic Pedagogy" to address three distinct pedagogical challenges for the future of theological education. First, instead of fitting new technologies into old pedagogies, how are teaching and learning transformed by shifting needs of students who are "digital natives," "digital immigrants," or distance learners? Second, instead of reactive strategies, what pedagogy proactively eliminates "accommodations" because courses are designed with flexibility and openness to diverse learning styles, disabilities, and

needs? Third, instead of engaging student diversity with the tools of the 1960s, what new teaching and learning strategies anticipate future student racial and ethnic demographics and interracial educational experiences? This volume of essays narrates our classroom stories, teases out pedagogical issues, examines pedagogical literature, reflects on theology of pedagogy, and constructs pedagogical proposals--with an open invitation for other theological educators to join our conversation about the future of theological education.

Communities of Joy

Facts Concerning the Work and Progress of the Instrumentalities Toward the Fulfillment of Our Christian World Mission

Spectrum

Doing Justice is an introductory theology of congregational-based community organizing rooted in the day-to-day struggles and hopes of urban ministry and in the author's 14 years of personal experience in community organizing ministries. Drawing from the organizing principles of Saul Alinsky, Jacobsen weaves the theological and biblical warrants for community organizing into concrete strategies for achieving justice in the public arena. Designed to be used by congregations and church leaders, as well as by ministerial students, Doing Justice opens new vistas for community action in support of the poor, the disadvantaged, and the disenfranchised of our society.

Learning Change

Congregations often find themselves in power struggles over two opposing views. People on both sides believe strongly that they are right. They also assume that if they are right, their opposition must be wrong--classic 'either/or' thinking. A polarity is a pair of truths that need each other over time. When an argument is about two poles of a polarity, both sides are right and need each other to experience the whole truth. This phenomenon has been recognized and written about for centuries in philosophy and religion. It is at the heart of Taoism, where we find the familiar polarity of yin and yang energy. In the past fifty years, business leaders have come to appreciate the phenomenon, often called dilemma or paradox. No matter what it is called, the research is clear: leaders and organizations that manage polarities well outperform those who don't.

Accountable Leadership

This book follows the journey of ten churches who underwent church consultancies, and explores in depth both the consultancy and its outcomes. Pre-consultancy and post-consultancy "snapshots," four to five years apart, of vitality indicators and attendance figures (using National Church Life Survey and other data) are used to compare these with churches that have not undertaken church consultancies.

Theologies of church consultancy, church health, and church growth are also developed and examined, intersecting with a wide body of literature, including contemporary ecclesiologies. Consultancy outcomes are examined in detail. This includes interviews with pastors of some of those churches, reflecting on their perceptions of whether and how the church consultancy impacted the health and growth of their church. Conclusions are drawn about the efficacy of church consultancy in influencing the health and growth of churches, as well as contexts for the best use of church consultancy. This is a significant book for denominational leaders, theological lecturers, pastors, and church leaders as they encounter lack of health in churches and seek ways forward for greater health and impact in their local communities.

From Congregation Town to Industrial City

Greening Spaces for Worship and Ministry is a comprehensive guide. The book provides a rationale, strategies, and resources for fulfilling environmental stewardship through the land and buildings of Christian and Jewish congregations. New construction, renovation, and historic preservation projects are addressed. Site development, material choices, energy generation and consumption, water use, interior air quality, green cleaning programs, and beauty are discussed. Ten congregations from across the United States and Canada are featured as examples of excellence in creation care in and through their built environments.

How Your Congregation Learns

Why do some religious institutions decline in the face of racial integration whilst others grow? How do congregations deal with economic distress? This study of congregations in the face of community transformation includes stories of over 20 congregations in nine communities across America.

Living and learning

So much of our attention in congregational development is spent dealing with internal issues and opportunities that we turn more and more inward. Even our “outward” work smacks of our “inward” bias as we invite people to our events and ponder how to make our events more compelling for those who aren’t part of our congregations. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, is known for saying “the world is our parish.” Simply stated, the streets are our sanctuary. Our communities are our congregations. Yet too often congregations ignore their neighborhoods. They don’t consider the vast resource of people surrounding their church and seem to forget that Pentecost, the very event that gave birth to the church, happened in the streets. It’s time for churches and congregations to engage with the people around them—most of whom have not yet made a faith decision but are hungering for the grace that only God can provide. Participate in this study of Nehemiah and discover what people God is asking you to encourage, what walls God is calling you to repair, what ministry God might be calling you to lead or do, and where you should start. This book will give readers inspiration and practical tools for engaging with their communities in ways that help congregations and communities become whole.

The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology

Walking with Nehemiah

How congregations can change into missional, fruitful learning communities "Jim and Trisha understand that profound change roots in individuals before it transfuses systems. Having observed the cycle in themselves as well as in others, they shepherd us into the remissioning work of the Holy Spirit."--Thomas F. Tumblin, professor of leadership, Asbury Theological Seminary In a groundbreaking seven-year experience, Jim Herrington and Trisha Taylor led a cluster of churches in a process of personal and congregational transformation that is producing hope and health. Built on a sound understanding of learning organization theory, adaptive leadership, family systems theory, and recent discoveries in the neurosciences, Herrington and Taylor developed and refined a highly fruitful model of church renewal. This model begins with personal renewal in which congregations learn how to become learning communities and ends with church-wide transformation. Learning Change is the pastor and congregational leaders' field guide to leading change. Each chapter provides training and information, an aspect of the learning change model, stories of real-life experiences in churches, and questions and suggestions for taking this information into a congregational context.

Help and Hope

Norma Cook Everist contends that it is meaningful to say that in ministries of administration, outreach, and pastoral care, the church is functioning as a learning community. Whenever and wherever Christians are being formed into the image of Jesus Christ through ministry, there Christian education is taking place. Christian education is the name we give to that process of formation. Building on this central insight, Everist has written a major new introduction to the tasks and practices of Christian education. Part 1 of the book focuses broadly on what it means to be the church in the world. Part 2 shows how being a learning community requires ongoing growth in faith throughout the span of life. Part 3 shifts focus to the church as it moves into the community and world.

Journey in the Wilderness

Are you and your congregation ready to serve your neighbors when disaster strikes? Storms, earthquakes, violence—it seems each week brings catastrophe to a different community. When that catastrophe arrives, people of faith can make a big difference, just as they did in Joplin, Newtown, Haiti, and countless other scenes of suffering. Help and Hope shares their stories to show why disaster preparedness is a sacred calling and gives you the tools to be healers, places of refuge, enablers of communication—whatever is needed after disaster hits your town.

Pauline Communities as 'scholastic Communities'

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In 1835, Winston and Salem was a well-ordered, bucolic, and attractive North Carolina town. A visitor could walk up Main Street from the village square and get a sense of the quiet Moravian community that had settled here. Yet, over the next half-century, this idyllic village was to experience dramatic changes. The Industrial Revolution calls forth images of great factories, mills, and machinery; yet, the character of the Industrial Revolution went beyond mere changes in modes of production. It meant the radical transformation of economic, social, and political institutions, and the emergence of a new mindset that brought about new ways of thinking and acting. Here is the illuminating story of Winston-Salem, a community of artisans and small farmers united, as members of a religious congregation, by a single vision of life. Transformed in just a few decades from an agricultural region into the home of the smokestacks and office towers of the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and the Wachovia Bank and Trust Company, the Moravian community at Salem offers an illuminating illustration of the changes that swept Southern society in the nineteenth century and the concomitant development in these communities of a new ethos. Providing a rich wealth of information about the Winston-Salem community specifically, *From Congregation Town to Industrial City* also significantly broadens our understanding of how wholesale changes in the nineteenth century South redefined the meaning and experience of community. For, by the end of the century, community had gained an entirely new meaning, namely as a forum in which competing individuals pursued private opportunities and interests.

Managing Polarities in Congregations

Proleptic Pedagogy

This book is a guidebook for leaders of local congregations, both clergy and laity. The book reviews ethical, legal, and financial issues shared by congregations in all religious traditions. The material is applicable to liberal and conservative congregations, to Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist communities of faith. Raising numerous issues, the book offers basic suggestions and recommends resources for additional information.

The Out of Bounds Church?

In our rapidly evolving religious scene, congregations that are open to continuous learning and willing to respond to external and internal change, will be the ones that achieve new vitality and health. Dennis Campbell describes what those congregations will look like and provides four tools to help a congregation shape its community into what God would have it be. Systems thinking, congregational culture, appreciative inquiry, and scenario planning are explained and illustrated, and readers will be shown how to apply the principles to their setting.

Transforming Congregations through Community

Becoming a Praying Congregation is designed to help leaders teach, inspire and example deeper prayer life for the entire congregation through worship, study,

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ministry teams and individual devotion. Using ideas and examples from congregations with active prayer ministries, leaders will be inspired to develop deeper prayer practices in: worship decision-making groups prayer ministry team age-level classes households Tools include: worship prayer activities DVD planning ideas for Sunday School or small groups for children, youth and adults guidelines for building or reviving a prayer ministry team help for special services like healing prayer services, meditations, prayer for the church and its mission Rueben Job's When You Pray can be used as a daily devotional for individuals and small groups participating in the program.

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