



Cultivate Mission

Stephanie Lutz Allen



SEMINARS

Ministering to Young Families in a Multicultural World

Congregations large and small find themselves missing this key demographic in their congregations. How does a church minister to young families, when their numbers are dwindling within congregations? Many young families in our communities today are immigrants (first or second generation) or consist of someone who has chosen to marry a partner of another culture. This means that reaching young families involves crossing not just a generational divide, but a cultural one as well.

How can a congregation engage in learning with young families in their community toward a deeper engagement with this demographic? We examine the generational material in a matrix with cross-cultural issues. Various parts of the country have less ethnic diversity than others, yet there are advantages in considering cross cultural diversity before it fully develops in one's area. Participants will be trained in a process toward building a team to engage in this ministry, anchoring this change in the congregation and keeping this change from upsetting the existing ministries of the congregation.

The Post-Modern Challenge: Moving from Maintenance to Missional

How could a church shift from maintaining "what is" to a *missional connection with its context*, when maintaining "what is" has never been harder? What would it look like for mission to be *theory-in-use* (what we really do) and not just *theory espoused* (what we say we do)? How would a church shift from seeing mission as one *function* of the church, to mission as a description of its very *nature*?

This seminar invites clergy and laity to tread the terrain of change that is deep and system wide, by examining the following progression of a church seeking to participate more fully in God's mission in the world:¹

The church IS (nature and identity).

The church DOES (the ministry and practices).

The church ORGANIZES what it does (organization and structure).

¹ Craig Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000).

This seminar will examine leading change from a theological and organizational framework, in which the leader is both an organizational spiritual director and process facilitator.

Creating Staff Synergy: Building Capacity for Ministering Together

As congregations seek to meet the challenges of the 21st Century, the stress this places on church staff has never been higher. The demands of today call for an aligned staff team that can collaborate instead of compete, and cooperate across functional areas instead of retreating into silos. This seminar assumes conflict to be a natural part of ongoing staff relationships. Therefore the capacity for moving through conflict in a healthy way is cultivated towards the end of experiencing the creativity and spiritual discernment that can come with open communication.

This seminar is designed for clergy/lay staff teams to attend together. Through a guided process of team building, the staff develops a shared language and practices toward synergy and conflict competence. Each staff will complete and receive feedback on two inventories as part of their individual learning contributing to staff relationships (personality and conflict resolution style).



Preaching in a Post-Modern World:

The Art of Delivering a Seasonable Sermon

Clergy have an incredible opportunity which few leaders can boast, the chance to influence followers with a twenty minute talk once every week.² How can leaders capitalize on this opportunity in a changing world? In our audio-visual, fast-paced culture, the preacher as “talking head” is often maligned. Yet the person in the pew still longs for a sermon that connects to their lived experience of faith in the world. The focus will be on building capacity of the preacher to prepare and deliver a seasonable sermon: relevant and captivating.

The seminar will alternate between teaching and coaching. Teaching will cover the aspects of sermon preparation and delivery with the eye toward preacher as spiritual interpreter within the 21st Century context. For coaching sessions, each participant is asked to bring a 5 minute section of sermon to deliver before the group, and be coached on that delivery. The participant will take home a DVD of the delivery and coaching section to further apply the learning.

² Scott Cormode, *Making Spiritual Sense: Christian Leaders as Spiritual Interpreters* (Nashville: Abingdon 2006).

Cormode, Scott. *Making Spiritual Sense: Christian Leaders as Spiritual Interpreters*. Nashville: Abingdon 2006.

Van Gelder, Craig. *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.