



The Monthly Heartbeat

The Hope in Christ Church Newsletter

JANUARY 2017 Issue 1

Embrace	Enfold	Encourage	Equip	Exalt
----------------	---------------	------------------	--------------	--------------

What Does a Healthy Small Church Look Like?

Numbers can help us understand some things about the health of a church. But they're not the only thing.

by Karl Vaters

Submitted by Pastor Scott



Small churches can be healthy churches.

But how can we know if they're healthy without the numerical growth to prove it?

If you want to find answers, we need to ask the right questions.

A couple weeks ago I spoke to about 60 church leaders in six sessions at a 48 hour conference. To start one session, I asked them the question in the title of this post: What does a healthy small church look like?

They took some time at their tables to discuss this, then each table reported their results. Here are their responses – in no particular order. Several of the points were mentioned by multiple tables.

The Characteristics of a Healthy Small Church:

- Christ-centered
- Bible-based
- Ministers to people inside and outside the church
- Stays true to the purposes of the gospel
- Makes disciples
- Works through conflict in healthy ways
- Welcomes new people
- Listens to people
- Values everyone

- Gives the glory to Jesus
- Ministers those who are absent
- Combines old traditions with new ideas to make new traditions
- Follows the Great Commission and Great Commandment
- Visible in the community
- Practices good stewardship
- Stays on mission
- Expresses evident love
- Prays together
- Has respect between the pastor and congregation
- Is reaching the next generation
- Is spiritually and biblically healthy
- Is knowing and growing in God's Word
- Has high engagement of its membership
- Values mission over survival
- Friendly
- Adaptable and teachable
- Passionate
- Theologically sound
- Generous
- Clear about their identity
- Practices the spiritual disciplines
- Worshipful
- Open to new possibilities and more

That's a good list! And, even though it's a long one, it's not a complete one. We just ran out of time.

After writing it down, we talked about it. There were several things about it that we all noticed right away. I hope they encourage you as much as they encouraged us.

...continued on page three

Items of Interest from December's Council Meeting

By Lou Kooistra, Sec. Pro Tem

Present were Lou K, Avis K, Don R, Terry VW, Lisa DS, Ali L, Dave R, Joe P, Dan O, and Scott R.

We continued our discussion in the book Sticking Points dealing with working together with different generations.

Reports:

Scott commented on the recent ICR meeting on our campus.

Elders: Will be working on updating church secretary job description in light of Terry's upcoming retirement. Also been in prayer for those in our body who are suffering from ailments, cancer and other health issues.

Deacons: End of year budget numbers looked good. An additional payment of \$2500 was made to Denominational Shares.

Rental team: Jared and Jean Caspari and Vivian Edwards are our new renters in the Ministry house, all connected to LWPC.

Old business:

Comments were shared regarding the recent Epic Conference at our church. Some discussion over how to communicate our process and progress to those not in attendance at workshops. Also discussed whether or not to continue the "Talking about God" meetings in the future. Decided to continue until summer break with Scott leading.

New business:

Discussed upcoming Consecration Service Jan 1st, 2017

Dave and Scott met with Mitch S. concerning their ministry meeting here in this campus in Jan, 2017. Council decided not to charge and rent to Envision Ministry's.

Council made a decision on what our corner sign would look like as we share it with two other ministries on our campus.

Upcoming Meetings:

Jan. 1, Consecration Service

Jan. 1, 6pm—Talking With God, meets in sanctuary

Jan. 4, 7pm—Elders meeting in Admin. Building and Deacons meeting in foyer

Jan. 11, 7pm—Council Meets in foyer

Why I Donate Loans through Kiva

By Megan Speyer

A few years ago, I discovered a new way to donate: Kiva! Instead of giving my money one time to an organization, Kiva.org is a website that allows you, for as little as \$25, to fund loans for people seeking to alleviate their poverty through business ventures, continued education, accessing clean energy, and more. Kiva is an international non-profit organization founded in 2005 – so they have more than 10 years of experience.

Why give via Kiva? Rather than donate a one-time flat amount to an organization, with Kiva you are funding a loan. It is a sustainable way to create economic growth – you fund a loan, you get repaid, then you can use the money to fund another loan! So you can help many people with the same \$25 (or more!) Plus, instead of giving someone a handout, you are providing mutual dignity by helping someone to create an opportunity for themselves to better their lives and positively impact their families and their communities. These are people who would find it difficult, if not impossible, to secure funding through more traditional means, but Kiva works with many organizations in countries all over the world to set up reasonable access to funds.

My initial \$25 loan has been repaid and loaned again twice. So I'm now being repaid on my third loan. That means my initial \$25 is actually worth \$75 SO FAR! I helped a woman in Tajikistan buy four sheep to start a business, I helped a young mother in Azerbaijan buy new garden tools and fertilizer for her vegetable stand, and I helped a mother in Nicaragua go back to school to obtain her engineering degree. It is so exciting to help all these people all around the world!

You get to select the amount of the loan – 100% of which goes to funding loans (Kiva covers operational costs through optional donations in addition to grants and sponsors.) You also get to select the borrower that your loan will support. Kiva makes it possible to set up these loans by pooling money from people around the world and making sure it is available to people who need it most. The repayment plans are set so they are reasonable and Kiva vets both the borrowers and the organizations they work with in each country to manage the loans. They have a 97.2% repayment rate!

If you are interested in joining the 1.6 million people who have funded loans to more than 80 countries, then visit www.kiva.org today!

What is a Healthy Church?...cont. from page one

Six Lessons About Health

1. It's not about numbers

While all the churches represented would love to grow and reach more people, the numerical growth of a local congregation is not an essential element of church health.

The numerical growth of a local congregation is not an essential element of church health.

As long as we're contributing to the growth of the church, that's what matters.

2. None of them were about events or programs

Filling up the calendar was not even a consideration.

3. It's not pastor-dependent

No one said anything like "the pastor needs to preach well, have a good grasp of theology, visit the sick" and so on.

A healthy church makes, activates and behaves like disciples instead of expecting all the ministry to be done by the pastor.

4. A church can be healthy with limited resources

None of the items are dependent on having more money, people or facilities. Any church of any size can do this.

5. Health looks the same in churches of any size

Whether your church is big or small, growing, shrinking or static, this list needs to be considered. We have a lot more in common than we think.

6. The list is big, but doable

Normally, a list of that size would feel overwhelming. There's so much to do!

But, with the specter of increased numbers, programs, pastoral skill and resources removed, this is not an intimidating list. It's an encouraging one.

Instead of telling us to work harder, get smarter and figure out what's relevant, this list of healthy church characteristics reminds us that our entire calling is to lean more on Jesus and draw people to him.

Health Outside the Numbers

It's possible to get a good sense of whether-or-not a church is healthy without relying on spreadsheets or having certain programs in place.

Like the Fruit of the Spirit, this list is not dependent on our hard work, but on staying close to Jesus, walking in the Spirit, teaching the Word and loving people in Jesus' name.

This list is not dependent on our hard work, but on staying close to Jesus.

For some people, the fact that there are no numbers attached to this list is frustrating. I get that. An objective baseline of measurement can be reassuring, and in many situations it can help us see past our own biases.

Numbers can help us understand some things about the health of a church. But they're not the only thing.

Too much reliance on numbers can be like counting the brushstrokes on a Monet. Sometimes you need to step back and see the bigger picture. Enjoy the beauty. Gasp at the wonder. And remember that the most important things in life can't be measured numerically.

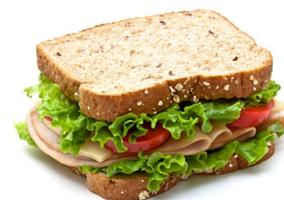
Including a healthy church.

Copyright © 2016 by the author on Christianity Today.

Volunteers needed for CAST food outreach

Submitted by Interfaith Coalition

Our CAST program (Coffee and Sandwiches Together - food on the street) is in need of a few more volunteers. CAST Volunteers bring not only food, but connection and caring to many vulnerable men, women and children.



Food is distributed Monday - Thursday evenings. We have some shifts open for three sandwich makers and two food transporters and server volunteers. You'll commit to a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly shift. It's a meaningful way to spend a couple of hours, and you will walk away feeling as if YOU have been the one gifted!

Email our volunteer coordinator, MaryAnn: maryann.ohara@gmail.com for more information, or call Interfaith - 734-3983.

Deacon's Digest

By Terry Vander Woude

Congregational Birthdays For January

Reminder From the Deacons

The council has designated the offering taken the third Sunday of each month to be given to our "Outreach Fund." Any month having five Sundays, the offering will be placed in the Benevolence Fund. The Deacons request that whenever you put a check in the offering plate that you designate on the memo line which fund it is to be placed in.

At the congregational meeting, the members voted to send the "outreach funds" to five agencies; each agency will receive 20% of the funds collected through the "outreach fund" each month. The agencies chosen were: Envision Mission, International Christian Response, Lighthouse Mission, Seafarers and Streetcorners.

You may also give to these agencies through the collections, as long as you designate on the memo line of your check that it is to be placed in that fund. Any checks that are submitted without designation on the memo line will be placed in the general fund.

Thank you for your generous response to the Giving Tree for the men at the Lighthouse Mission. All the gift tags were taken and items purchased for the men in the long term program. Thank you for blessing the men with a Christmas gift, it will definitely brighten the lives of these men.

Giving in November 2016

	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Year-to- Date</u>
Total Designated Income:	\$ 5,164	\$ 27,714
General Fund Offerings	\$ 13,761	\$189,248
Rent / Utilities Income	<u>3,073</u>	<u>28,622</u>
Total Undesignated Income	16,834	217,870
General Fund Expenses	<u>(21,404)</u>	<u>(205,357)</u>
Income Over(Under) Expenses	<u>\$ (4,570)</u>	<u>\$ 12,513</u>
Total 2016 budget, including ministry quotas		\$ 201,659
Year-to-Date Budget for 12 months		\$ 201,659
Total Undesignated Income		<u>217,870</u>
Income Over (Under) Budget		<u>\$ 16,211</u>

Loan Balances:

Classis: \$ 20,000

- 3 Elaine Wick
- 7 Don Snapper
- 11 Faith Roberts
- 14 Bethany Cunningham
- 18 Avis Kaemingk
- 22 Chris Pike
- 24 Geralyn Cunningham
- 27 Mona Reardon
- 28 Tricia Bravener
- 29 Linda McConnaughey
- 30 Herm Laninga



INTERFAITH COALITION

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

Because of you, we are an example of how powerful love can be when we focus on what unites us and work together. By the numbers...

- **Eighty-eight men, women and children moved out of homelessness in Interfaith Coalition family housing in 2016.** Thirty-six adults and 52 children were able to step out of their cars, tents or other unsafe living situations and into a beautiful transitional Interfaith home until they gained stability and moved on to their own permanent housing.
- **Four more families will move into Interfaith Housing** between now and the year's end, ensuring that they and their children will spend the holidays and beginning of winter in a warm and safe environment
- **Two thousand five hundred coats, 900 hats and 300 scarves distributed** in Whatcom County through our Winter Coat Drive.
- **An additional 500 beautiful hats and scarves,** made by Project Warm Up crafters, have been distributed through: the CAST Program, HeadStart, Opportunity Council, PopUP food banks in two schools and the Lighthouse Mission.
- **CAST (Coffee and Sandwiches Together) has served over 10,300 meals** to people on the street - on a total of **190 nights** through November.
- Two huge boxes of **Thanksgiving meal preparations were delivered to each of the 11 families** in our transitional housing prior to the holiday.
- The week of December 20th, **75 homeless families in our community will receive gifts** for the whole family through our Holiday Gifts program and the generous individuals, business and congregation sponsors of the program.

Blessings of the season to you,
Interfaith Coalition Board of Directors and Staff

What is the goal of the vitality process?

By Pastor Scott

Following Jesus. Following Jesus is the goal of the vitality process. Contrary to what we might think, change is not the goal of the current renewal pathway that we are walking. Change may occur, for as much as I read the gospels and the epistles, and for that matter the whole of Scripture, I am hard pressed to find a story where a person following the leading of God didn't get transformed. Transformation is another word for change, and it is probably a better word, for change carries many negative connotations in the minds of people. But transformation tends to get us thinking about caterpillars becoming butterflies. Transformation is an exciting word implying newness, renewal, life, goodness.

But that is to get sidetracked in a discussion of vocabulary, when in reality my hope was to illustrate all the wonderful transformations that have happened at this church since we began the process of consciously trying to follow Jesus into health and mission. On December 11th I asked the Sunday School to identify all the transformations that had occurred in the past 11 months since beginning with the Veritas Seminar. Here is a partial list that was generated, with 2 or 3 items I have added.

Acknowledge our strengths

Member participation is 50%+ for the seminars

Better Communication

New church plant on site

Learned about church stats in America

Gained Bigger perspective of the Persecuted church

Omak Mission

Nursery gone

Grown in our Understanding of differing communication styles

Giving is up

Understanding that stability is an illusion

Pastor and Parishioners have changed

Aware of our differences and commonalities, strengths and weaknesses

Friendship has grown and has an additional class with updated curriculum

We have honestly discussed our history and its good and difficult moments

These are amazing transformations that have made us more Christ like and grace filled. Some of them may be more difficult and others less difficult for each person in

our body, but all in all, following Christ has been an opportunity for growth in our Christian walk as people and as a group. The result of stepping out in faith to follow Jesus has been that we none of us will ever be the same. This is what it means to be transformed from one degree of glory into another. 2016 has been a foretaste of the kinds of things God wants to do in and through each of us personally and corporately.

Will it always be this easy? Not necessarily. Sometimes the transformation God wants to do with us is harder, but if we can remember that each growth area God presents to us is an opportunity to become more like Christ, then even the difficult tasks he calls us to accomplish can be seen with the silver lining they contain. My hope this year is that each of us will be encouraged to follow Christ more faithfully, more consistently, more courageously. Will you join me for another year of transformation?

Interfaith Coalition Hope Auction is on the Way

Mark your calendar: Interfaith Coalition's Annual Hope Auction happens on Saturday, March 25th, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The auction will again take place at the Four Points by Sheraton, 714 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham.

Whatcom County's friendliest auction fundraiser features fellowship, inspiration, hope and lively bidding on great silent and live auction items. Please join us as we continue in our work of transforming struggling lives. You can help in these ways:

Donate an auction item! A service you offer, your own artwork, gift certificate, tickets to popular sporting events, vacation home getaway, ...let your imagination soar and think of what you might be able to donate, and get in touch with us!

Buy tickets to the auction. Tickets are \$55 each, including dinner.

Become a business sponsor or ask your favorite businesses or employers to support Interfaith with a dedicated donation.

We make a difference in the lives of homeless families and individuals. Partner with us by attending our Hope Auction and lifting up our brothers and sisters! To donate an auction item and purchase tickets, please contact Interfaith Coalition at 360-734-3983 or through our website: www.interfaith-coalition.org.

Working Our Communication Muscles: The Narrative

By Herman Laninga

Of all the steps we have taken on our Vitality Pathway, the one I still hear the most comments about or that is referred to regularly is the Communications Workshop led by Tena Crosby on Sept. 16-17. Tena identified four primary ways people communicate: Direct – Narrative – Empathetic – Logical. Articles describing each of these have been addressed in previous Heartbeats and in each case, it was written by a person who usually uses that “muscle” to communicate. (Pastor Scott: Direct; Scott Emory: Logical; Ev Kooistra: Empathetic) So even if you weren’t able to attend the workshop you now have a sense of what happened at the workshop. Today we will explore the Narrative person and yes, I most often use that form of communication.

Generally speaking these are the percentages of the population who primarily use each style:

Direct: 40% Narrative: 15% Empathetic: 40%
Logical: 5%

At the workshop Tena gave us a tool to inventory our communications tools. It was easy and fun. As is the case, almost everyone learned they use more than one style of communication, but one type was dominant. She then promised the next step in the workshop was going to be an absolute pleasure: We were going to break into small groups of people who were just like ourselves! And it was GREAT!

Since you’ve already read about the other 3 styles, here’s what we learned from Tena about Narratives: They are natural speakers and have high energy communications. Does a particular salesman come to mind? They are flexible and willing to explore the breadth of an issue. Others may think when they say, “That reminds me of the time....” Oh no, here we go again, off on another tangent. But to the narrative using metaphors, stories and painting word pictures is just a way of letting others know we care and want to affirm what they are saying. Does Jesus come to mind?

The parables Jesus used are a good example of the Narrative in action. Many times his listeners wondered just where he was going with his story. Often he took time afterward to review the story with the Disciples to be sure they understood all of the implications. The parable of the Sower recorded in Matthew 13:1-23 is a good example.

We also learned that each style of communication is valuable in the Body of Christ, the Church. We need each style to be effective in ministry. We need the Direct to challenge us with a new idea or direction. We need the Narrative to discuss it, explore the various options and, if adopted, “sell” it to the congregation. Empathetics will ask, but how will this impact this person or that group? Are we sure we won’t bowl someone over in the excitement? Logicals will lay out an orderly path to achieve the goal.

When all four are working in harmony, ministry flourishes. When one dominates, things are out of sync and we need to make a correction. That is the challenge! Romans 12:16 says, “Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position [or other opinions or styles of communication]. Do not be conceited.” Verse 18 goes on to say, “If it is at all possible, as far as it depends to you, live at peace with everyone.”

So it does depend on us. And we are sinners who fall short of what God requires. But fortunately, as Christians we can call on the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome our weaknesses. He can help us to temper our use of our primary muscle and work to strengthen the other three, making us more Christ-like as we work together to fulfill God’s design/role for Hope In Christ Church.

Epiphany of the Lord

The word epiphany comes from the Greek word epiphaneia, which means appearance or manifestation. It is an important word for liturgical churches. Epiphany is observed annually on January 6. It refers to the wise men, who were the first Gentiles to see the manifestation of God’s appearance in the baby Jesus.

In the early church, January 6 was a day for baptism. The central significance of Epiphany is that Christ came as the Light of the World, not just for the Jews but for Gentiles as well. Christ’s light is for all.

In France, to celebrate Epiphany, children from Christian homes often put oats in their shoes on the evening before January 6. The oats are for the camels of the “Wise Men.” When they awake the next morning, the children hope to find the oats gone and gifts left in their shoes.



Preaching Series:

- 1/1 Service of Consecration
- 1/8 Jonah 1:1-2 Wickedness of Nineveh
- 1/15 Jonah 1:3-9 A Fleeing Prophet
- 1/22 Jonah 1:9-16 The God of Storms
- 1/29 Jonah 1:17-2:10 Jonah's Prayer

Greeters Schedule

Outside Doors

- 1/1 Joe and Barb Zylstra
- 1/8 Karen Smith and Chris Pike
- 1/15 Herm and Ali Laninga
- 1/22 Dale and Deloris Perry
- 1/29 Jerry and Faye Hop

Coffee/Snack Schedule

- 1/1 Mona Reardon, Darlys Recker
- 1/8 Ida Richards and Jen Roberts
- 1/15 Rockelle Ruitter and Jan Scholten
- 1/22 Joanne Schultz, Jolene Skovron
- 1/29 Karen Smith and Elaine Snapper

Serving Assistants Schedule

- 1/1 Grace, Zeke, Kylie, Clara
- 1/8 Abee, Thad, Micah Amber
- 1/15 Mattea, Caleb, Faith, Michal
- 1/22 Maggie, Grace, Kylie, Clara
- 1/29 Zeke, Abee, Thad, Micah

Prayer Room

- 1/1 Connie Knutson
- 1/8 Lorraine Brouwer
- 1/15 Christine Speyer
- 1/22 Lanny Speyer
- 1/29 Denise Doezema

Offering Schedule

- 1/1 General Fund
- 1/8 General Fund
- 1/15 Outreach Fund
- 1/22 General Fund
- 1/29 Benevolence Fund

Ushering Schedule

- 1/1 Len Vander Woude and Lou Kooistra
- 1/8 Bud Brouwer and Joe Pruitt
- 1/15 Don Knutson and Deloris Perry
- 1/22 Helen Bowman and Len Vander Woude
- 1/29 Lou Kooistra and Bud Brouwer

*****Volunteers are needed to help usher**

Children & Worship Schedule

- 1/1 Jen Roberts and Amber Obbink
- 1/8 Bekah Roberts and Ali Laninga
- 1/15 Diane Button
- 1/22 Dan Obbink and Kylie Thramer
- 1/29 Jen Roberts and Mairi Bravener

Sunday School Schedule

- 1/1 Darlys Recker and Ida Richards
- 1/8 Darlys Recker and Ida Richards
- 1/15 Darlys Recker and Ida Richards
- 1/22 Darlys Recker and Ida Richards
- 1/29 Christine Speyer and Ida Richards



January 2017

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

<p>1 9:30 Worship Service 6:00pm TAG</p>	<p>2 6:30 GEMS</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 9:45am Women's SG 10am Men's Social Grp 7pm Deacons and Elders Meet</p>	<p>5 6:30am Men's SG 7pm Men's SG 7pm Praise Team Mts</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 9:30 Worship Service 11 am SS for all 4:30 Roberts Grp 7pm Laninga Grp</p>	<p>9 7pm Friendship</p>	<p>10 6:30 Boer's SG 7pm Women's SG in the foyer</p>	<p>11 9:45am Women's SG 10am Men's Social Grp 7pm Council Meets</p>	<p>12 6:30am Men's SG 7pm Men's SG 7pm Praise Team Mts</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 9:30 Worship Service 11 am SS for all</p>	<p>16 6:30 GEMS</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 9:45am Women's SG 10am Men's Social Grp</p>	<p>19 6:30am Men's SG 7pm Men's SG 7pm Praise Team Mts</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22 9:30 Worship Service 11 am SS for all 4:30 Roberts Grp 7pm Laninga Grp</p>	<p>23 7pm Friendship</p>	<p>24 6:30 Boer's SG 7pm Women's SG in the foyer</p>	<p>25 9:45am Women's SG 10am Men's Social Grp</p>	<p>26 6:30am Men's SG 7pm Men's SG 7pm Praise Team Mts</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 9:30 Worship 11am SS Noon: potluck</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>				