

# The Living Church

## Cells and Organization

Cells - people

Each person has a purpose/ calling

Ephesians 4 model

Apostle\*

visionary and pioneer

creates and manages new things

Prophet\*

focused on God's Word

understand the times and actions that should be taken

Evangelist

shares the message readily

people-persons

Pastor

the shepherd who cares

provides comfort and encouragement to his people

Teacher

explains, enlightens, and applies truth

excited about the truth and sharing it with other Christians

\*meaning has changed since Biblical times

All gifts are equal (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

More gifts (elaborate)

Gifts are manifested naturally, not forced

Through participation in regular church life

Know and operate in people's gifts and strengths

Everyone has a base gift

Leaders must operate in all gifts when needed

## Organizing Ministry

Held together by prayer and the Holy Spirit (common factors)

Identify who you are

What are your people's gifts? What does your church excel at?

Tap into those things

Church A are great cooks, but church B have great teachers

Don't buy into every church growth fad

They don't work for every church

Work in your context

Prioritize everything based on your churches identity

Sharing Jesus must be top priority in any ministry

Church A – feeding ministries, Church B – teaching ministries

doesn't mean they can't do both, just needs prioritized

Evaluate every ministry based on your priorities

Change based on your evaluations

Process needs repeated every few years

Churches change as new members become active in ministry

## Organizing a Church

Need checks and balances for accountability

Pastor should never make all the decisions  
Methodist Hierarchy  
Annual Conference  
District  
Ad Council and Pastor  
Committees – Finance, SPRC, Trustees, Missions, etc.

### **Growth and Development (Ephesians 4:13-15)**

“Gifts were given for personal growth of the people”  
Culture of Growth – a church that loves to grow spiritually  
Starts with the church leadership (just like anything else)  
Live it *and* preach it  
Study in a public place, pray at every opportunity, etc.  
Must have environment ripe for growth  
Classes, prayer groups, seminars, etc.

#### Principles of Growth

Growth isn't automatic (Hebrews 5:12-13)  
It is deliberate and takes hard work  
Growth takes time (2 Peter 3:18)  
Growth requires discipline (1 Timothy 4:7)  
Daily interactions with:  
The Word (James 1:18-27)  
Prayer (Matthew 26:31-75)  
The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16)  
Fellowship (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)  
Worship (Psalm 42:1-2)  
Evangelism (Matthew 28:18-20)

### **Metabolism**

“Using resources to create energy”

#### Preaching

Change starts at the pulpit  
Create energy with your messages  
Paul and Peter were excellent at doing this

#### Talents and Interests

Put talents and interests to good use in your church  
Emphasize ministries that suit the talents of your people  
People are happy to work at things they enjoy and excel at

#### Positive Experiences – publicize these things:

Ministry Success  
Miracles of God (Acts 3)  
Answered prayers and blessings

#### Meetings

Teach the vision to your leaders first  
You need them to be on board  
Excitement should start in visioning and planning  
You show them the end result; they help show you how to get there

#### Finances

Spend a large percentage on doing ministry  
Fruit creates energy in the church

#### Christ

Nothing in the church creates more energy than the Holy Spirit  
Rely on God: pray, study the Word, worship

### **Reproduction**

“Creating new disciples”

You need a process (Acts 2:38-47)

Evangelism (Acts 2:14-36)

Repentance

Baptism

Integration (Acts 2:42-47)

Sunday school classes

Accountability groups

Mission’s teams

\*just get people involved in the church

Leadership

Encourage development of talents

Pastor shouldn’t have to do *all* the work of the church

Process repeats continually

### **Response to Environmental Changes**

“Temporary changes to better serve the community”

Pay attention to your community's needs

Add new ministries to address new needs

Hosting meetings in different locations (Acts 2:46, Acts 5:12)

Taking in orphans, feeding the hungry, or clothing the naked (examples)

\*ministries are fluid; they start and end

Put others before yourself (Acts 4:32-35)

Pay attention to your church's needs

Incorporate current events into sermons

The demographic in your church will change frequently

Preach the Gospel everywhere

Disciple taught in synagogues, jails, streets, and anywhere they could find

Don’t just respond; respond *appropriately*

### **Adaptation to Environment**

“Permanent changes to better serve the community”

Culture Changes

Every culture is different

Worship, evangelism, and approach vary by culture

Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 (permanent change)

Paul established Messianic Churches *and* Gentile Churches

You must address the culture before you can minister effectively

Preach to their worldview

Everyone understands the world through the lens of their culture

Example: fasting story from 2013 (insert your own story here)

When worldview changes, values change

When values change, behaviors change

If you preach to change behavior first, there is no permanent change

Must start with worldview

Leadership Changes

Finding the right person at the right time for the right job (Acts 1:15-26)

Prayer and petition  
Godly wisdom  
If a person is not the right fit, don't force it  
Even Paul had people who didn't fit  
They are still talented; they just don't fit that particular need  
Do we get leaders from inside our church or outside?  
Both (use wisdom)  
Depends on the position and need  
Inside – familiarity, personally trained  
Outside – new energy, ideas, etc.

## **Homeostasis**

“Maintaining internals while externals are changing”

Our world is changing

Beliefs and principles are based on the Bible, not on what the world says

God rewards faithfulness

We serve a mighty God

The church has stood and will always stand

If we rely on God

Economic Stress – maintaining ministry in poverty-stricken areas

Discipline

God asks everyone to give from what they have been given

Doesn't matter how much we make

Frugality

God has called us to spend our funds wisely

Prayer and wisdom

Fruitfulness

People give to productive ministry

Political Stress – maintaining ministry in political corruption or turmoil

Corruption

The church must set the example of the right way

Accountability

Personal

Checks and balances in all areas

Church

“Does this decision further God's kingdom or our own?”

Church members must walk the walk

Turmoil

Perseverance

Faithfulness

We aren't living for this world; we live for the next world