THE GREAT SPIRITUAL MIGRATION

HOW THE WORLD’S LARGEST RELIGION IS SEEKING A BETTER WAY TO BE CHRISTIAN

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THE GREAT SPIRITUAL MIGRATION
A spiritual migration

from system of belief to way of life/
way of love
A theological migration

from violent Supreme Being
to nonviolent Holy Spirit/Spirit of Christ
A missional migration

from organized religion (for self-protection)

to religion organizing for the common good

(institutions and movements in romance, forming & deploying spiritual activists)
1. Congregations need to identify themselves.

- Regressive Churches (nostalgic)
- Conservative Churches [cautious]
- Eggshell Churches [anxious]
- Progressive/Creative Churches [forward leaning]

Why?

Belonging, Amplification, Public Figures, Shared Encouragement & Resources
2. Begin afresh with younger generations

- The reason an awakening takes a generation or more to work itself out is that it must grow with the young; it must escape the enculturation of old ways. It is not worthwhile to ask who the prophet of this awakening is or to search for new ideological blueprints in the works of the learned. Revitalization is growing up around us in our children, who are both more innocent and more knowing than their parents and grandparents. It is their world that has yet to be reborn. - Wm. G. McLoughlin
Begin afresh with younger generations

- An important scientific innovation rarely makes its way by gradually winning over and converting its opponents; it rarely happens that Saul becomes Paul. What does happen is that its opponents gradually die out, and that the growing generation is familiarized with the ideas from the beginning, another instance of the fact that the future lies with the youth. - Max Planck
3. Recruit leaders differently, train them differently, and organize them differently.

- MDiv - $40 - 80K

The Cuban Methodist model ...

The deployment problem
Understanding America
“84% of Americans now live in or around urban areas. But I’m United Methodist, so I speak out of the context of what I know best. 74% of our capital resources (that’s our buildings) are where only 16% of the American population lives. The Methodist Church flourished in the 1800’s and early 1900’s in small towns and rural areas. But now we continue to send pastors to church buildings instead of populations. And if we’re really going to reach people, we’re going to have to radically rethink our paradigms of what it’s going to mean to be missional.” - Rev. Mike Slaughter

More here: http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/1227/interview-w-mike-slaughter
4. Creatively collaborate across silos ...

- Denominational
- Racial
- Political
Along this path, popular movements play an essential role, not only by making demands and lodging protests, but even more basically by being creative. You are social poets, creators of work, builders of housing, producers of food, above all for people left behind by the world market... The future of humanity does not rest solely in the hands of great leaders, the great powers and the elites. It is fundamentally in the hands of peoples and in their ability to organize. It is in their hands, which can guide with humility and conviction this process of change. I am with you. - Pope Francis
Isolated in our silos

PCUSA  UCC  UMC  Episcopal  Christian Church DoC  ELCA

Evangelical Pentecostal Roman Catholic, etc.
In the late 70’s a conservative movement took shape, organized, and grew.
A wing of this powerful conservative movement is becoming an aggressive regressive movement

Conservative Movement of 70’s-80’s

- PCUSA
- UCC
- UMC
- Episcopal Church
- Christian Church
- ELCA
  - Evangelical Pentecostal
  - Roman Catholic, etc.
A wing of this powerful conservative movement is becoming an aggressive regressive movement.

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<tr>
<th>PCUSA</th>
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Traditional Conservatives resist being assimilated…

Traditional “liberals” tend to complain, worry, criticize …
A powerful conservative movement is becoming a powerful regressive movement

Traditional conservatives try to resist being assimilated.

Many simply try to walk on eggshells without offending anyone …

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Many simply try to walk on eggshells without offending anyone ...

Traditional “liberals” tend to complain, worry, criticize ...

A creative progressive spiritual movement is taking shape …
Working in our tribes

PCUSA  UCC  UMC  Episcopal  Christian Church DoC  ELCA

A VITAL SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT

Historic Black, Ethnic/Immigrant, Progressive Roman Catholic, Progressive Evangelical, etc.
5. Needed: Alignment

- Clarity rather than ambiguity
- Intentionality rather than convention/habit
- Meaning rather than checklist
- Mission rather than tradition
alignment
a key ingredient
meaning

theology
gospel
spiritual
experience
celebration

ritual/practice - bonding to meaning

eucharistic liturgy
creeds
announcements

confessions of sin

readings
prayers
litanies
invocations

songs

sermon

instrumental music

benedictions
community
connected to celebrate/embody meaning
formation
more deeply embodying meaning
administrative

supporting the community

- fundraising
- budget
- planning
- communications
- volunteer care
mission
the meaning bearing fruit

recruitment

justice

compassion

vocation
leadership

equipped to build communities who embody the meaning

building multi-faith alliances

mentoring/modeling

professional eval/development

"talent scouts"

seminary/ training
Putting it all together …

- Helping churches identify themselves.
- Beginning with kids and youth.
- Recruiting, training, organizing leaders in new ways.
- Collaborating across silos
- Creating alignment
let’s stay in touch ...

brianmclaren.net

links to Facebook, Twitter, email newsletter, etc.