

## Congregational Vitality Annotated Bibliography

Resources regarding the vitality of the church and concepts contributing to that vitality, and ideas for addressing it.

Linda Bobbitt

3/10/17

Ammerman, N. (2005). "Running on empty: the problem of the mainline." Christian Century **122**(13): 8-9.

Mainline protestants spend the least time on Christian Ed and other forms of acculturation compared to other denominations in USA. Spending significant time together sharing food and faith and service is how faith communities are formed. Now that society is no longer predominately Christian, mainline will need to gather people beyond Sunday morning. Mainline protestants spend the least time on Christian Ed and other forms of acculturation compared to other denominations in USA. Spending significant time together sharing food and faith and service is how faith communities are formed. Now that society is no longer predominately Christian, mainline will need to gather people beyond Sunday morning.

Aron, I., et al. (2010). Sacred strategies: Transforming synagogues from functional to visionary, Rowman & Littlefield.

Describes shifts in society and need for change to connect with modern Jews. Followed congregations as they worked to move from functional to visionary. Visionary congregations are those that engage their members and make a difference in their lives. Descriptives of those that changed reflect adaptive change principles. Describes shifts in society and need for change to connect with modern Jews. Followed congregations as they worked to move from functional to visionary. Visionary congregations are those that engage their members and make a difference in their lives. Descriptives of those that changed reflect adaptive change principles.

Atoyebi, P. (2010). From stagnation to revitalization: A study of select turnaround churches in the urban context of Nairobi, Kenya. Nairobi, , Kenya, North-West University. **Ph.D.**

Studied congregations that turned around from stagnation to growth. Identified 8 critical elements and key roles of leaders.

Barrett, L. Y., et al. (2004). "Treasure in clay jars." Patterns in Missional Faithfulness. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Berrenberg, J. L. (1987). "The Belief in Personal Control Scale: A Measure of God-Mediated and Exaggerated Control." Journal of Personality Assessment **51**(2): 194.

Combining and extending previous conceptions of the construct of perceived control, a self-report measure based on a proposed multidimensional model was developed and validated. The Belief in Personal Control Scale (BPCS), measures of locus of control, depression, mania, anxiety, self-esteem, and social desirability were administered to several samples. A factor analysis revealed three interpretable components of the control construct: a general External Control factor, an Exaggerated Internal Control factor, and a God-Mediated Control factor. The results of this article provide preliminary support for the model and for the BPCS as a multidimensional measure of perceived control with reliable and valid subscales. Consistent with the proposed model of control, the three factors correlated differentially with the various measures of psychological adjustment. Of particular interest is the positive correlation between the Exaggerated Internal Control factor and a measure of mania.

Bobbitt, L. (2015). "Creating Shorter Scales to Measure Congregational Vitality." Review of Religious Research: 1-2.

Describes the creation, reliability testing and validation of a 15 item scale to measure the missional vitality of congregations based on an every member or small group survey. Describes the creation, reliability testing and validation of a 15 item scale to measure the missional vitality of congregations based on an every member or small group survey.

Bobbitt, L. D. (2014). "Measuring Congregational Vitality: Phase 2 Development of an Outcome Measurement Tool." Review of Religious Research 56(3): 467-484.

Summarizes the development of the Congregational Vitality Survey which summarizes vitality as the congregation's relationships with God, each other and the world. Summarizes the development of the Congregational Vitality Survey which summarizes vitality as the congregation's relationships with God, each other and the world.

Bosch, D. J. (1991). Transforming mission: Paradigm shifts in theology of mission, Orbis books.

Describes how the Christian understanding of mission has changed age to age from the days of Jesus and the early church to the reformation, colonialists, and enlightenment. Finally it describes the presently emerging postmodern paradigm. Describes how the Christian understanding of mission has changed age to age from the days of Jesus and the early church to the reformation, colonialists, and enlightenment. Finally it describes the presently emerging postmodern paradigm.

Branson, M. L. and J. F. Martinez (2011). Churches, cultures and leadership: a practical theology of congregations and ethnicities, InterVarsity Press.

Briefly summarizes need for all congregations to be contextual. Describes leadership challenges of working in multi-ethnic and multi-cultural congregations. Recommends particular exercises, Bible studies, and conversations to have within such contexts. Uses a praxis of experience, reflection, study and action. Briefly summarizes need for all congregations to be contextual. Describes leadership challenges of working in multi-ethnic and multi-cultural congregations. Recommends particular exercises, Bible studies, and conversations to have within such contexts. Uses a praxis of experience, reflection, study and action.

Butler-Bass, D. (2004). The Practicing Congregation: Imagining a new old church. Herndon Virginia, Alban Institute.

Describes characteristics of practicing/intentional (vital) congregations compared to established congregations. Describes characteristics of practicing/intentional (vital) congregations compared to established congregations.

Center, P. R. (2011). Faith in Flux: Changes in Religious Affiliation in the U.S. , The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

Describes how individuals in USA frequently change religious affiliation and the reasons why. Describes how individuals in USA frequently change religious affiliation and the reasons why.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches, Sage.

Describes how to perform five different kinds of qualitative analysis and provides example research. Describes how to perform five different kinds of qualitative analysis and provides example research.

Davis, M. L. (2015). "SPIRITUAL FORMATION: RETRIEVING PERICHORESIS AS A MODEL FOR SHARED LEADERSHIP IN THE MARKETPLACE." Journal for Religious Leadership **14**(1): 105-126.

Describes how shared leadership isn't simply a new model, it mimics the shared leadership within within the Trinity as described by perichoresis. The natural outcome of mature discipleship is to become more Christlike and since Christ shares leadership within the Trinity, shared leadership is a natural and preferred expression of a Christian leader. Describes how shared leadership isn't simply a new model, it mimics the shared leadership within within the Trinity as described by perichoresis. The natural outcome of mature discipleship is to become more Christlike and since Christ shares leadership within the Trinity, shared leadership is a natural and preferred expression of a Christian leader.

Dougherty, K. (2008). "When the Final Bell Tolls: Patterns of Church Closings in Two Protestant Denominations." Review of Religious Research **50**(1): 49-73.

Looked at impact of age of congregation and age of members on cong. closure. There are three critical times in an organization's life: shortly after inception (first couple of years), and late in life. In later years (around 40 years and again around 75 years) it is about keeping the energy going and remaining relevant as the founders die off. , If the congregation was built by and for the founders and imprinted with their patterns it generally does not remain relevant as the environment shifts. The more out of sync the more difficult it is to maintain - the higher the cost (emotional, physical, and financial) and the higher the mortality. Since congregations become more and more out of sync over time there is increased mortality with age. Looked at impact of age of congregation and age of members on cong. closure. There are three critical times in an organization's life: shortly after inception (first couple of years), and late in life. In later years (around 40 years and again around 75 years) it is about keeping the energy going and remaining

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Elton, T., Ed. (2009). Characteristics of congregations that empower missional leadership: A Lutheran Voice. Missional Church and Leadership Formation: Helping Congregations Develop Leadership Capacity. Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Studied 5 congregations that produced missional leadership to identify 8 common dynamics. Elton recommends a new hermeneutic for Lutheran missional leadership. Studied 5 congregations that produced missional leadership to identify 8 common dynamics. Elton recommends a new hermeneutic for Lutheran missional leadership.

Emerson, M. O. and K. C. Kim (2003). "Multiracial Congregations: An Analysis of Their Development and a Typology." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion **42**(2): 217-227.

Studied multiracial congregations in USA and found that the reasons for becoming multi-racial combined with where the diverse ethnicities came from determined their success or failure. Studied multiracial congregations in USA and found that the reasons for becoming multi-racial combined with where the diverse ethnicities came from determined their success or failure.

Erickson, P. D. (2012). A Study of Missional Renewal in Congregations. St. Paul, MN, Luther Seminary.

Analyzed 4 Midwestern ELCA congregations in the renewal process. Identified keys to successful renewal including leadership, and types of change required. Analyzed 4 Midwestern ELCA congregations in the renewal process. Identified keys to successful renewal including leadership, and types of change required.

Heifetz, R. A., et al. (2009). The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world, Harvard Business Press.

Describes process of adaptive change and leadership responsibilities and practices associated with it. Describes process of adaptive change and leadership responsibilities and practices associated with it.

Herring, H. (2012). Tomorrow's Synagogue Today: Creating Vibrant Centers of Jewish Life, Rowman & Littlefield.

Considers changing societal conditions and how that has impacted modern synagogues. Imagines different ways of engaging modern Jews and the kinds of leadership and structures required to do so. Reflects both technical and adaptive ideas. Considers changing societal conditions and how that has impacted modern synagogues. Imagines different ways of engaging modern Jews and the kinds of leadership and structures required to do so. Reflects both technical and adaptive ideas.

Herring, H. and T. M. Elton (2016). Leading Congregations and Nonprofits in a Connected World: Platforms, People, and Purpose, Rowman & Littlefield.

Inskeep, K. (2014). NCD Research Project Interviews, ELCA: 9.

Followed up on congregations that participated in NCD process. Found that those who fully participated had benefits, but those who did not had fewer benefits. Most were not able to fully participate. Followed up on congregations that participated in NCD process. Found that those who fully participated had benefits, but those who did not had fewer benefits. Most were not able to fully participate.

Keifert, P. R. (2006). We are here now : a new missional era, a missional journey of spiritual discovery. Eagle, Idaho, Allelon Publishing.

Describes PMC model for working with congregations through adaptive change. Describes PMC model for working with congregations through adaptive change.

Krause, N. M. (2007). "Social Involvement in Religious Institutions and God-Mediated Control Beliefs: A Longitudinal Investigation." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion **46**(4): 519-537.

From author's abstract: Data from a nationwide longitudinal survey of older people suggest that both formal and informal church involvement tend to sustain feelings of God-mediated control over time. The findings further reveal that compared to older whites, older African Americans are more likely to have stronger feelings of God-mediated control at the baseline survey and older blacks are more likely to sustain their sense of God-mediated control over time. From author's abstract: Data from a nationwide longitudinal survey of older people suggest that both formal and informal church involvement tend to sustain feelings of God-mediated control over time. The findings further reveal that compared to older whites, older African Americans are more likely to have stronger feelings of God-mediated control at the baseline survey and older blacks are more likely to sustain their sense of God-mediated control over time.

Life., P. R. C. R. P. (2015). "U.S. Religious Landscape Survey." from <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>.

Describes the decline of religious participation in USA from 2007 to 2014. Describes the decline of religious participation in USA from 2007 to 2014.

Marti, G. (2009). "Affinity, Identity, and Transcendence: The Experience of Religious Racial Integration in Diverse Congregations." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion **48**(1): 53-68.

The authors studied 200 multiracial congregations in the USA. They found that the reasons congregations became multi racial and the location of the different ethnic communities influenced their ultimate success or failure. The authors studied 200 multiracial congregations in the USA. They found that the reasons congregations became multi racial and the location of the different ethnic communities influenced their ultimate success or failure.

Nixon, P. (2006). I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church!, Pilgrim Press.

Recommends 6 choices congregations must make to be vital. Choose life over death, community over isolation, fun over drudgery, bold over mild, frontier over fortress, now rather than later. Recommends 6 choices congregations must make to be vital. Choose life over death, community over isolation, fun over drudgery, bold over mild, frontier over fortress, now rather than later.

Osmer, R. R. (2012). Formation in the Missional Church: Building Deep Connections between Ministries of Upbuilding and Sending. Cultivating Sent Communities. D. Zscheile. Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: 29-55.

Explores the idea of a congregation's missional vocation. Explores the idea of a congregation's missional vocation.

Penna, R. M. and W. J. Phillips (2004). Outcome frameworks: An overview for practitioners, Center for Outcomes, Rensselaerville Institute.

This book describes 9 different kinds of outcome measurement approaches and when, why and a little about how to use them. This book describes 9 different kinds of outcome measurement approaches and when, why and a little about how to use them.

Rendle, G. (2014). Doing the Math of Mission: Fruits, Faithfulness, and Metrics. New York, Roman & Littlefield.

Describes process of adaptive change in congregations. Relates it to story of Israelites journey from Egypt to promised land. Talks about the emotional rollercoaster and the role of leaders in managing the energy and emotions of themselves and the congregation. Describes process of adaptive change in congregations. Relates it to story of Israelites journey from Egypt to promised land. Talks about the emotional rollercoaster and the role of leaders in managing the energy and emotions of themselves and the congregation.

Rendle, G. R. (2007). Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual & Organizational Tools for Leaders, Rowman & Littlefield.

Describes adaptive change process using Biblical narrative and shows cycle of change within the larger adaptive process. Describes emotional challenges and leadership roles throughout the process. Describes adaptive change process using Biblical narrative and shows cycle of change within the larger adaptive process. Describes emotional challenges and leadership roles throughout the process.

Robinson, A. B. (2003). Transforming congregational culture, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Describes how society has changed and the need for adaptive change in congregations. Describes a purpose of the church as acting as society's consciousness. Describes how society has changed and the need for adaptive change in congregations. Describes a purpose of the church as acting as society's consciousness.

Robinson, A. B. (2006). What's Theology got to do with it? Convictions, Vitality, and the Church. Herndon, Virginia, Alban Institute.

Ecclesiology needs to be formed based on strong theology. He focuses on the Trinity as a way of understanding God as a living reality present in the world that transforms people. Ecclesiology needs to be formed based on strong theology. He focuses on the Trinity as a way of understanding God as a living reality present in the world that transforms people.

Robinson, A. B. (2008). Changing the conversation: A third way for congregations, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Roozen, D. (2005). National Denominational Structures' Engagement with Postmodernity: An Integrative Summary from an Organizational Perspective. Church, Identity and Change: Theology and Denominational Structures in Unsettled Times. D. R. J. Neiman. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Describes significant changes in religion typically come at times of great social change. The primary challenge to denominations is to clarify their core identity. Denominations' structures reflect their core identity. His research suggests that many protestant denominations in the USA have a relatively weak identity and have lost their distinctiveness. Clarity of identity is important to navigating cultural and social changes. Denominations that prioritize narrative practices over text, doctrine and belief have stronger identities. Denominations that tell their story of mission, accomplishments through print or song have stronger identities. Describes significant changes in religion typically come at times of great social change. The primary challenge to denominations is to clarify their core identity. Denominations' structures reflect their core identity. His research suggests that many protestant denominations in the USA have a relatively weak identity and have lost their distinctiveness. Clarity of identity is important to navigating cultural and social changes. Denominations that prioritize narrative practices over text, doctrine and belief have stronger identities. Denominations that tell their story of mission, accomplishments through print or song have stronger identities.

Seymour, J. M., et al. (2014). "Generating Trust in Congregations: Engagement, Exchange, and Social Networks." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion **53**(1): 130-144.

Identifies specific micro-level social processes that occur in congregations which develop trust in individuals and the congregation. These kinds of interactions are what they say explains why people who go to church are generally more trusting than those who do not. Identifies specific micro-level social processes that occur in congregations which develop trust in individuals and the congregation. These kinds of interactions are what they say explains why people who go to church are generally more trusting than those who do not.

Sharp, S. (2013). "When Prayers Go Unanswered." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion **52**(1): 1-16.

How people understand God's agency(God-mediated control) impacts their interpretation of unanswered prayer and subsequent behavior. Their understanding of God's agency is related to both age, race and participation in congregations. How people understand God's agency(God-

mediated control) impacts their interpretation of unanswered prayer and subsequent behavior. Their understanding of God's agency is related to both age, race and participation in congregations.

Strauss, A. and J. Corbin (1994). "Grounded theory methodology." Handbook of qualitative research **17**: 273-285.

Compares grounded theory to other forms of analysis and describes how Grounded theory is articulated. Compares grounded theory to other forms of analysis and describes how Grounded theory is articulated.

Zscheile, D. (2014). The Agile Church: Spirit-Led Innovation in an Uncertain Age, Church Publishing, Inc.

Describes the need for the church to move through adaptive change and the practices that can help congregations do so successfully. Describes the need for the church to move through adaptive change and the practices that can help congregations do so successfully.