



The Grapevine

CONNECTING THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DETROIT

April 2012

Back to Zero



by the Rev. Dr.
Allen D. Timm,
Executive
Presbyter

Gil Rendle says the church must go “back to zero.” We must think of the early church. People with gifts who heard God’s call to ministry led it. People were part of a movement and involved in ministry. Once again people want to be involved in ministry that will change lives. They want to be involved in mission. We need a new model for ministry. Congregations need mission and visibility that show neighbors they care. Rendle stresses that churches need to know who they are and the needs of folk in their neighborhood. They need to ask God to help define the purpose for the congregation. Once they hear the call, congregations need more flexibility to make a clear difference. They need plans that can measure results and outcomes.

Members need to be citizens who make new rules. Citizens are people whose work aims to make the whole better. Citizens put their oar in and look

for what can happen rather than what is not happening. Rather than complain about what others don’t let them do, or what others do to them, citizens work “for the whole of the enterprise.” The early church testified to what God was doing in their lives and in their communities. Congregants need to tell Christ’s story so that they make disciples who change the world.

Rendle poses a question: What will be different because of the ministry of this congregation or presbytery? His question is on target. It is not about the number of meetings leaders attend. It is about being a catalyst to help change lives, through members who step out the door and show Christ to their neighbor. How many are fed? How many are warm because a congregation sheltered the homeless? How many advanced a grade level at their school? How many know these efforts come from faith in Jesus Christ, the light of the world, the Savior who brings hope to the lost?

“Back to Zero.” What can a presbytery or congregation do to make disciples who change the world? Leaders need to act as catalysts, storytellers and


gatherers of like stories. They will represent and gather people from all ethnic and racial backgrounds. They will foster movements within an institution, so that when disciples hear a call, they can act quickly. They need permission to get to work and the resources required to make a difference. Institutions give us direction and resources. But rather than focus energy on changing the institution, leaders need to foster entrepreneurs, giving them permission to start ministries that touch lives.

As in his other works, Rendle reminds us that we need to respect traditions, but if we are to reach the world, we need to allow fresh visions and ministries to emerge that touch lives. But how can we change lives? When our ministries hear the cries of our neighbor and show the love of Christ. I believe Gil Rendle is right. We need to go back to zero. We need to make disciples of Jesus Christ who change the world.

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OUR MISSION:
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For We are what He has Made us, created in Christ Jesus For good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our Way of Life.
EPIPHANUS 2:10 (NRSV)

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Distribution at the November Presbytery meeting.



Presents...

2nd Annual Live Art Auction

"HOPE IS A MASTERPIECE"

Benefitting
The Second Mile Center of Detroit

When: Saturday, May 19th 6-10 PM

Where: Northbrook Presbyterian Church
22055 W. 14 Mile Rd.
Beverly Hills, MI 48025

Come support local artists and The Second Mile Center with your attendance, bid on art pieces and silent auction items.

'Silent/Live Art Auction' Live Music
'Appetizers/Desserts' Free Childcare
For questions or donations, contact
The Second Mile Center at: thesecondmilecenter@gmail.com
Or contact, Hope is Clear at: hopeisnetwork@gmail.com

Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church to be honored by Ecumenical Theological Seminary

Kirk in the Hills, organized by the Presbytery of Detroit in 1947, will be given the Distinguished Church Award at Ecumenical Theological Seminary's (ETS) Sixth Annual Spirit Awards Banquet on May 20, 2012. The award was established to recognize and honor the vital work done in the area of faith leadership and community cohesion. The award is given annually to a church that exhibits the ideals of community building and good citizenship. It honors churches that have made significant contributions in the area(s) of community outreach, Christian education, pastoral care, and spiritual direction. The event is open to the public. It will be held at the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries (DRMM) Hall, 3606 E. Liberty Street, Detroit 48207, from 5:30 to 8:00 pm.

Hands-On Service Projects
By Presbyterians Men with Focus Hope



Plenty of work for men and women of all ages & skill levels to fix up a community park, which needs some tender loving care as a community center.

Saturday, May 19th 2012
From 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
(registration: 8:30 am)

Hope Community Park
Corner of Woodward Wilson Road and Oakman Blvd.
14000 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit, Michigan 48238

If Interested, please call at 313-815-8738 or 248-703-5855
or send an e-mail to podmensfellowship@gmail.com



Clergy Ordination Anniversaries

April

AMY MORGAN	05
TRACI SMITH	05
BYEONGJIN WOO	15
R. JOHN HARRIS	40
ELDON BEERY	55

May

ANTHONY DE ORIO	30
RICHARD BROWNLEE	40
HENRY BORCHARDT	50

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THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

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How to Turn Bystanders into Active Disciples

Every congregation faces the same challenge—a fraction of the members carry the majority of the load. These loyal few attend services weekly, participate in church programs, support the church financially, take on leadership roles, and volunteer for mission and outreach activities.

Is it true that a mere 20 percent of the congregation's members do far more than the other 80 percent? What can leaders do to encourage spiritual growth and discipleship among the other 80 percent?

Testing the 80/20 Rule

Researchers Scott Thumma and Warren Bird put this 80/20 notion to the test in *The Other 80 Percent: Turning Your Church's Spectators into Active Participants* (Wiley Press, 2011). They found that the statistic varies widely but every church's membership list reveals uneven levels of involvement.

Yet some congregations find ways to shrink the numbers of those who observe church life from the sidelines. The remedy for converting bystanders into highly involved participants engaged in meaningful ministry depends on the type of nonparticipant—each spectator type requires a different strategy for reengagement.

Types of Bystanders

Thumma and Bird's research reveals several distinct groups of spectators:

The underinvolved member. This category describes those who are minimally active. Their worship service attendance may be steady, but they are rarely spotted at anything else that happens at church. They do not participate in a small group—such as adult education, prayer groups, or Bible studies. They have never taken on any kind of lay leadership role—chairing a committee, working on a mission project, teaching a class, or sponsoring a youth trip. Their financial giving is occasional and typically modest. However, the reasons behind their lack of involvement remain a mystery.

The decreasingly involved member. This category describes those who were once active members, but who slowly become less and less involved. Many times this decreasing involvement stems from complications at home—a husband who loses his job and continues to look for employment or a wife's declining health.

Changes in work or health, new family responsibilities, or other challenging personal circumstances take their toll on the once active. Others curtail their involvement for other reasons: a negative church experience such as a change in the worship service, a pastor or staff member who failed to meet their expectations, or a sense of disillusionment resulting from continuing church conflict.

The waiting to be asked member. Church leaders often overlook members in this category. Newcomers to the church, especially first-time church members or denominational switchers, need special attention to help them figure out the mechanics of involvement. Because they wait to be asked, a sign-up sheet or self-nomination strategy rarely works for them. Introverted members or those uncertain about taking on a new role need targeted encouragement too.

The disconnected member. One church expert refers to this group as "mental members."¹ Those missing in action think of themselves as church members, even though they have not attended in years, and have yet to meet the current pastor.



"...AN INTERESTING CASE...
THEY ALL SHARE THE SAME SYMPTOMS,
BUT GIVE AN AMAZING VARIETY OF EXPLANATIONS..."

These paper-members receive some reward for their loose affiliation—such as connecting them to memories or family history, secure reservations for future weddings or funerals, or an easy way to maintain a Christian identity.

The virtual member. These attendees may be regular participants but they have never officially joined. However, in their heads and hearts, they are members. Their lack of involvement may stem from their uncertainty about what roles nonmembers can legitimately perform.

Strategies for Creating Greater Participation

The multiple reasons for nonparticipation require multiple strategies for reaching the 80 percent. Because every church has a unique profile of lightly involved members, the first task involves identifying your congregation's participation profile. Find out:

- What percentage of your church's membership is highly involved?
- How are these actively engaged members different from other members?
- What percentage of your church's membership is less involved?
- What types of bystanders do you observe in your church?

Thumma and Bird recommend that after leaders answer these questions they should follow a three-part strategy:

1. Listening to bystanders. The listening team interviews two or three members that fit the profile of each bystander category. The conversations with nonparticipants focus on three questions:

- How do they grow spiritually?
- What are their gifts and passions?
- What would increase their involvement?

Remind team members that there is only one goal: *listening to the member's story*. Coach interviewers to reign in any defensive responses.

2. Learning from bystanders. The team's second step involves reviewing and discussing what they learned from those conversations. For example, the researchers found in many congregations that the underlying conditions and circumstances for decreased involvement seemed to have more to do with *spiritual* issues than it did with circumstantial issues (such as work demands) or experiential issues (like feeling neglected during or after a personal tragedy).

According to responses from the least involved, they would be reengaged if the church strengthened three spiritual aspects of the church: meaningful worship; pastoral care; and ministry to the sick, shut in, and bereaved.

3. Engaging bystanders. Building the spiritual life of the other 80 percent should be the motivation as leaders creatively accelerate their efforts to reach by-

standers. Too few churches offer vigorous programs for helping people to develop a life of faith. Many congregations have discontinued any form of adult education or have greatly diminished it. Leaders should review every church ministry and ask, Does it make disciples?

More Strategies For Making Disciples

Additional action steps boost participation for all groups in the church:

- Create ministry teams to replace committees.
- Train leaders to make every group's experience spiritually formative.
- Encourage experienced leaders to recruit and mentor a less-experienced co-leader.
- Help members find their spiritual gifts and celebrate their contributions.
- Start new ministry teams and groups often.
- Hold a ministry fair to connect people with groups and ministry teams.
- Invite people to participate in a single-day ministry project.
- Provide opportunities for families and friends to do ministry projects together.²

The Bottom Line

Take comfort in the fact that no church engages 100 percent of their members at a 100 percent level. Keep a balanced focus on the church's entire ministry. "Do not neglect the team on the field (present active members) and the potential team on the bench (prospective active members) by focusing all of your attention on the ex-team that has retreated to the bleachers (inactive members)."³ If some members choose to return as active disciples, welcome them. If they choose to remain on the sidelines, love them anyway.

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1. C. Kirk Hadaway, *What Can We Do About Church Drop-outs?* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1990), 35.
 2. Visit the Center for Church Leadership Web site (http://www.churchleadership.com/resources/50_ways_to_build_strength.htm) to download materials from the "50 Ways to Build Strength in Participation" series.
 3. Herb Miller, *Church Effectiveness Nugget, Volume 6: How to Shrink Your Church's Inactive Member List*, 24. Download free at www.TheParishPaper.com/free-resources.

Presbytery of Detroit Calendar of Events

To have your Churches event posted please send the information to sandy@detroitpresbytery.org.

April 2012	
27-28	HELP Retreat sponsored by CEFD at the Westin Hotel, Southfield. Click here for more information
28	NCD/RD 2012 Spring Transformation Gathering at Detroit, Westminster, 17567 Hubbell, Detroit, MI 48235 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Click here for more information
28	2nd Annual Detroit Prayer Walk at Comerica Park 9:00 am. Click here for press release . Click here for video .
May 2012	
1	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
1	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
5	Ann Arbor, First is hosting an area wide Stephen Ministry Training Workshop 9:00 am - 1:00 pm at the church 1432 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Click here for more information
6	Author Anne Lamott at Grosse Pointe Memorial Presbyterian Church for a presentation, Q & A and book signing. Click here for more information
12	Hands-on Mission work day at Barnabas Youth Center at 3530 Grand River, Detroit, MI 48208
19	Clerks Training at the Presbytery Office 9:00 am - 11:00 am
19	Presbyterian Men's Fellowship workday at Focus Hope.
19	Kirk of Our Savior, 36660 Cherry Hill Rd., Westland, MI 48185 holding a Flea Market 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
19	Second Mile Center Live Art Auction at Northbrook PC, 22055 W. Fourteen Mile Rd., Beverly Hills, MI 48025 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm. Click here for flyer
20	ETS to honor Kirk in the Hills at their 6th Annual Spirit Awards Banquet at the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries Hall, 3606 E. Liberty Street, Detroit, MI 48207 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm. Click here for the press release
28	Presbytery Office Closed in observance of Memorial Day
June 2012	
5	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
5	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
11-16	Hands On Mission Faith Build with Habitat for Humanity. Click here for flyer
21-24	Synod of the Covenant Multicultural Youth Conference in Ohio. Click here for Brochure Click here for Registration
25-29	2012 Youth Mission Blast week 1. Click here for flyer
26	Presbytery Meeting at Novi, Faith Community, 44400 W. Ten Mile Rd., Novi, MI 48375; 248-349-2345
27-July 8	Summer Youth Institute at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Apply at www.pts.edu/syi
30-July 7	General Assembly meets in Pittsburgh, PA
July 2012	
3	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
3	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
4	Presbytery Office closed in observance of Independence Day
9-20	Fort Street PC, 631 W. Fort Street, Detroit, MI 48226 holding Peace Camp 2012. Click here for flyer
10-14	Hands On Mission Faith Build with Habitat for Humanity. Click here for flyer
16-20	2012 Youth Mission Blast week 2. Click here for flyer
30	Synod Mobile Health Van at Second Mile Center. Click here for list of needs

August 2012	
7	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
7	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
28	Presbytery Meeting at Livonia, Rosedale Gardens, 9601 Hubbard Ave., Livonia, MI 48150; 734-422-0494
September 2012	
3	Presbytery Office closed in observance of Labor day
4	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
4	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
October 2012	
2	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
2	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
23	Presbytery Meeting at Allen Park, 7101 Park Ave., Allen Park, MI 48101; 313-383-0100
27	Month of Mission Breakfast will be held at Plymouth, First 701 Church St., Plymouth, MI 48170 from 9:00 am - Noon
November 2012	
4	Daylight Savings Time Ends - set clocks back one hour
6	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
6	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
22	Presbytery Office closed for Thanksgiving Day
22	Detroit, Westminster 30th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner 11:00 am - 4:00 pm
27	Presbytery Meeting at Detroit, Westminster, 17567 Hubbell, Detroit, MI 482235; 313-341-2697
December 2012	
4	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
4	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
8	Men's Advent Communion Breakfast Keynote speaker is Chuck Gaidica, Channel 4 WDIV TV weatherman.
24-25	Presbytery Office Closed for Christmas Holiday
31-Jan1	Presbytery Office Closed for New Year Holiday
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