



LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HOPE

Pastor's Update

Mike Housholder & Merv Thompson, Editors

925 Jordan Creek Pkwy ■ West Des Moines, IA ■ March 4, 2005

By Pastor Merv Thompson

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

We have rambled on several times in the past about the exciting phenomenon of the "teaching congregation." While this is a rather new development in the history of the Christian church, it is quickly re-making the ecclesiastical landscape. Such teaching congregations as Willow Creek and Saddleback Community Church's are truly the elephant in the living room in terms of their impact. No doubt it was the prominence of Saddleback that made it possible for Rick Warren to sell more than 20 million copies of his book, Purpose Driven Life.

Church analyst and author Lyle Schaller in his new book, From Geography to Affinity, describes the purpose of the teaching congregation:

"A small but growing number of large congregations have earned a reputation as a model for the American Protestant church in the 21st century and has been designing and offering two to six-day events. The basic theme of these teaching churches can be summarized in one brief paragraph:

Come and learn from us. This is what we have discovered. It has worked for us and you may want to adapt what we have learned to your situation back home. The event will be staffed completely by our own people, both volunteer and paid staff. We are prepared to share with you what we have learned and the mistakes we made that have to be corrected. We will be glad to answer all your questions, and we expect to learn from you as you push us to explain the why, the what, and the how of our ministry."

With the above as prologue, Lutheran Church of Hope is now planning its very first teaching congregation event on April 21-23. The theme of the seminar is "God's Vision: Your Congregation." The purpose of the event is to help pastors and lay leaders discern God's vision for their own congregation. We will provide a mixture of plenary sessions,

workshops, worship, small groups, and consultation time with our guests.

One item of note; we are turning the normal teaching congregation event upside down in terms of cost. Most conferences charge \$100 to \$300 per person, with housing extra. But we want this to be accessible to everyone, even the leader in the smallest church. So we are charging \$50 for the first person, \$100 for two people, and every participant beyond two is free. In other words, if a congregation brings 10 people, it will cost them \$10 per person for registration. And we waive the fee for anyone who cannot afford it.

Also we are going to offer people the option of staying in homes of our members, thus relieving them of any motel charges as well. So it is conceivable that many people will come to the conference and the only charge will be \$5 for lunches.

The schedule for this conference is as follows:

Thursday, April 21

Pre-Workshop, for those who would like to experience Immersion.

5:00 – 7:00 pm	Registration, Building Tours
7:00 – 8:00 pm	Pastor Richard Webb, "Introduction to Immersion, Reflections on Post Modern and the Emerging Church"
8:30 – 10:00 pm	Immersion Worship with Holy Communion
10:00 pm	Host Families pick up participants

Friday, April 22

8:00 – 9:00 am	Registration, Gathering Time, Refreshments
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9:00 – 9:15 am	Opening Devotions
9:15 – 10:15 am	Pastor Mike Housholder "Discerning God's Vision for Hope"
10:15-10:45 am	Break Time
10:45 – 12:00 pm	Workshops
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Pastor Merv Thompson "The Power of a Vision"
2:00 – 2:30 pm	Break Time
2:30 – 3:45 pm	Workshops
3:45 – 4:30 pm	Small Groups
6:30 – 8:30 pm	Consulting Sessions with Hope Leaders
8:30 – 9:00 pm	Prayer/Vespers in Chapel

Prayer Ministry
Mission Outreach
Children's Ministry
Media Ministry
Church of Irresistible Influence
Christ Life, Support Groups
Financial Peace University
Small Groups
Effective leadership
Preparing for Pastoral Ministry
Hope Leadership Center
Empowering Lay Leadership
Marriage/family Ministry
Administration
Inner City Partnership

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Saturday, April 23

9:00 – 9:15 am	Opening Devotions
9:15 – 10:15 am	Pastor Mike Housholder "Discerning God's Vision For Your Church"
10:15 – 10:45 am	Break Time
10:45 – 12:00 pm	Workshops
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Pastor Caroline Boehnke-Becker "The DNA of God's Vision"
2:00 – 2:30 pm	Break Time
2:30 – 3:45 pm	Workshops
3:45 – 4:30 pm	Small Groups
4:30 – 5:30 pm	Saturday Worship

We will finalize the workshops when we have some idea how many people are attending. Possible ideas are as follows:

Powerlife Confirmation, Grades 7 – 8
Ignition, Grades 9-12
Alpha
Immersion
Men's Ministry
Women's Ministry
Planning 8 Worship Services
Music Ministry
How to create a vision

- Pray for this new venture, for the leaders, for the speakers, for the participants, for the congregations represented.
- Submit names for our mailing list of people who might be interested. Think of friends, people from your home church, relatives, etc. We will be sending the brochure to most Lutheran Churches in Iowa, also possibly eastern Nebraska and northern Missouri. But invite people to come, even offer to have them stay with you where possible. Contact Lela Griffin 222-1520 ext 149 or email lela.griffin@hopewdm.org with names.
- Offer to be a host family. A host family will not only provide a bed, but also will help interpret what is happening at Hope. Call Intern Pastor Molly Juntunen 222-1520 ext 162 or email molly.juntunen@hopewdm.org to be a host family.
- Come and attend some of the sessions. There is no charge for members.
- Come and hang out at the conference, greeting visitors, welcoming people.

Thanks for your partnership in this event. We can hardly wait to see what God will do through this initial conference.