

LLC Resource List – 2020

January 2020 ***You Found Me: New Research on How Unchurched Nones, Millennials, and Irreligious Are Surprisingly Open to Christian Faith* by Rick Richardson**
[Kindle \$13.29, Amazon hardback \$13.99] Part One – Pages 1-134

It seems there has been an over emphasis on the decline of the American church rather than examining the many churches that are bucking the trend. The combination of a defensive posture towards culture and an assumption that people are generally resistant to the gospel can discourage a congregation from engaging in evangelism. This book challenges the popular notion that unchurched people are closed to personal invitations; that they are closed to checking out Jesus and His claims. This resource balances optimism with a realistic examination of the challenges posed by the current cultural mood. This is an important read offering practical advice that will help Christ-followers grow as effective ambassadors of the Gospel.

The author of this resource is Dr. Rick Richardson. He is an outstanding teacher and researcher. He directs the Billy Graham Center Institute and its Church Evangelism Initiative. He is also the professor of evangelism and leadership at Wheaton College Graduate School.

Amazon Description: We hear a steady stream of reports about how droves of people, especially younger generations, are abandoning Christianity. But new research shows that unchurched Americans are surprisingly more receptive and open to the Christian faith than is commonly assumed.

Researcher and practitioner Rick Richardson unveils the findings of the Billy Graham Center Institute's groundbreaking studies on the unchurched. A study of 2000 unchurched people across the country reveals that the unchurched are still remarkably open to faith conversations and the church. Even unchurched "nones" and millennials are quite receptive if they are approached in particular ways.

In this book you will also find best practices from further research into the top ten percent of churches that most effectively reach the unchurched. People who were previously unchurched share what actually moved them to faith and Christian commitment. And the research shows that churches and organizations can be transformed to become places where conversion growth becomes the new normal.

If people tell you "the sky is falling," don't believe them. In today's troubled world, unchurched and unbelieving people are newly receptive to hearing good news. You can lead the change that will help your church reach people—who then reach others.

February 2020 ***You Found Me: New Research on How Unchurched Nones, Millennials, and Irreligious Are Surprisingly Open to Christian Faith* by Rick Richardson**
Part Two – Pages 135-250

March 2020 **Wild Branches, Deep Roots: Revitalizing the Church in the Blended Ecology by Michael Beck** [Available in Kindle version on Amazon at \$10. 49 and a print version is available for \$15 at www.freshexpressionsus.org website under “Resources”.] Part One – Pages 1-95

Michael Beck will be the keynote speaker for Leadership Tune-Up 2020. He pastors a small mainline UMC congregation in Florida. Through the development of multiple Fresh Expressions gatherings his congregation has experienced both revitalization and effective evangelism. This book is not solely about Fresh Expressions, however, it’s a great example of how FX and other creative efforts can be explored as a path towards effective evangelism regardless of a church’s size.

At the end of each chapter are discussion questions. It is recommended that each LLC use these as a study guide in wrestling with the content of each chapter.

Amazon Description: What is the future of the church in North America? Churches are closing faster than new ones can be planted. Existing churches engaged in effective evangelism beyond the tired tactics of attractional approaches are increasingly rare. One of the major pitfalls of the past few decades is “either/or” thinking—either attractional or missional; traditional or contemporary; old or new. In *Deep Roots, Wild Branches*, missiologist and church planter Dr. Michael Beck contends we must cultivate what he calls a “blended ecology” of church that has both deep roots and wild branches. Beck introduces us to present-day models and examples that don’t leave traditional forms behind, but harness the power of “both/and.” It honors vintage models while blending fresh expressions of real evangelism.

April 2020 **Wild Branches, Deep Roots: Revitalizing the Church in the Blended Ecology by Michael Beck** Part Two Pages 97-177

May 2020 ***LLC and Mentor Pastor Choose an Option in Advance** Knowing that each LLC has a unique makeup each LLC is encouraged to customize the resource assignment for the month of May. The selection should be chosen far in advance of the meeting so that LLC members will come prepared. Consult the options at the end of the reading list.

September 2020 **Pastor Paul (Theological Explorations for the Church Catholic): Nurturing a Culture of Christofornity in the Church** by Scot McKnight Part One – Pages 1-102

Scot McKnight is a leading New Testament scholar who has examined the themes that Paul emphasized through his teaching and lifestyle that established a well-balanced, Christ-formed, approach to shepherding the church. An essential, often missing theme, in the pursuit of growing healthy churches is the need for God’s people to yield to Christ as the head of His church. McKnight has identified seven practices, that if put into action, will

shape the pastor and the church into a Christ-formed body. Pastors would be wise to pursue these pastoral practices as foundational to developing healthy church cultures.

From Amazon: According to popular New Testament scholar Scot McKnight, pastoring must begin first and foremost with spiritual formation, which plays a vital role in the life and ministry of the pastor. As leaders, pastors both create and nurture culture in a church. The biblical vision for that culture is Christoformity, or Christlikeness. Grounding pastoral ministry in the pastoral praxis of the apostle Paul, McKnight shows that nurturing Christoformity was at the heart of the Pauline mission. The pastor's central calling, then, is to mediate Christ in everything. McKnight explores seven dimensions that illustrate this concept--friendship, siblings, generosity, storytelling, witness, subverting the world, and wisdom--as he calls pastors to be conformed to Christ and to nurture a culture of Christoformity in their churches.

"With careful exegesis of Paul's world, Paul's letters, and our own world, McKnight shows how pastoral ministry in the spirit of Paul is focused on nurturing a culture of corporate Christlikeness. Full of wisdom concerning critical aspects of both Pauline and contemporary pastoral ministry, this is a book that will help form more faithful ministers of the gospel and, through them, more faithful churches."

--Michael J. Gorman

October 2020 ***Pastor Paul (Theological Explorations for the Church Catholic): Nurturing a Culture of Christoformity in the Church*** by Scot McKnight Part Two – Pages 103-195

November 2020 ***The Road Back to You: An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery*** by Ian Cran & Suzanne Stable Part One – Pages 1-110

Are you a 1, a 3 or a 9? Study this resource and you will discover your Enneagram number. Why? The most effective pastors are those who minister out of their strengths and self-manage their weaknesses. Every pastor is a unique combination of personality, gifting and passions. However, each combination has a shadow side that has the potential to pull the rug out from under a pastor's effectiveness. To better manage oneself wise pastors invite mentors to speak into their lives. They use tools like the well-known DiSC and Meyers-Briggs inventories. The Enneagram is one such tool. It's extremely helpful for self-awareness and self-management. It has been increasingly used of late with many reporting how helpful the system can be. This resource came highly recommended from one of our pastors. This pastor is not only convinced of its usefulness but also advocates employing it as a way to connecting with millennials who are fascinated by the insights the enneagram offers.

From Amazon: The Enneagram is an ancient personality typing system with an uncanny accuracy in describing how human beings are wired, both positively and negatively. In *The Road Back to You* Cron and Stabile forge a unique approach—a practical, comprehensive way of accessing Enneagram wisdom and exploring its connections with Christian spirituality for a deeper knowledge of ourselves, compassion for others, and love for God.

Witty and filled with stories, this book allows you to peek inside each of the nine Enneagram types, keeping you turning the pages long after you have read the chapter about your own number. Not only will you learn more about yourself, but you will also start to see the world through other people's eyes, understanding how and why people think, feel, and act the way they do.

Beginning with changes you can start making today, the wisdom of the Enneagram can help take you further along into who you really are—leading you into places of spiritual discovery you would never have found on your own, and paving the way to the wiser, more compassionate person you want to become.

December 2020 ***The Road Back to You: An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery*** by Ian Cran & Suzanne Stable Part Two – Pages 111-230

***OPTION 1: Select another preaching book.** Check out these excellent, practical resources: *Preaching Killer Sermons* by Lane Sebring or *Preaching Sticky Sermons* by Brandon Kelley and Joe Hoagland. Or *Experiential Storytelling* by Mark Miller

***OPTION 2: Select 3 good leadership articles on a particular subject.** Mentor Pastors have access to a large folder of articles compiled by our executive minister, Charles Revis, on various important ministerial and leadership topics. Here's the [LINK](#).

***OPTION 3: This book on board development is very good: *Elder Teams and the Mission of God* by J.R. Briggs and Bob Hyatt.** Increasingly the region staff is receiving requests to help church boards coalesce as a team and navigate the complexities of their work with wisdom and grace.

***OPTION 4: Choose one of the previous LLC books to revisit.** Dr. Revis especially recommends reviewing one of these two books that deal with the spiritual and emotional development of the pastor: *The 21st Century Pastor* by David Fisher, or *A Work of Heart* by Reggie McNeal. See the list of top LLC books on the LLC page of our website.

***Option 5: A resource on the power of music to inspire and influence.** This resource was suggested by Pastor Ross Lieuallan, *The Power Of Music: God's Call to Change the World One Song at a Time* by Michael Brown.