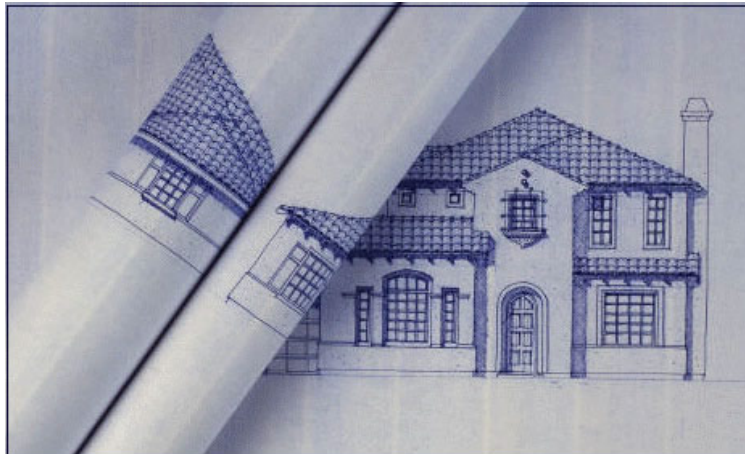


The Shift:



Our experience in re-churching the church

This session will focus on how the gospel shapes who we are and how we live as the church that God loves, Christ died for, and the Spirit transforms. We will share the concepts that have shaped us, some resources that have helped us, and what that has looked like in one rural Maine church.

Brief History

Aligning with the foundation - getting the gospel right.

- Keller, *The Prodigal God*, article [“The Centrality of the Gospel”](#)
- John Piper, [Desiring God](#), [When I Don't Desire God](#), [God is the Gospel](#).
- Michael Horton, [Christless Christianity](#)
- Echo the Story (<http://www.echothestory.com>)

From Consultants to Shepherds – Elder led

- Alexander Strauch, [Biblical Eldership](#)
- Bob Thune, article [“Deacons: A Theological Study”](#).

From Individuals to The People of God - communication, equipping, bus test.

- Paul David Tripp, [Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands](#), [Helping Others Change](#).
- David Powlison, article [“Idols of the Heart and ‘Vanity Fair’”](#)
- Soma Communities (<http://www.somacommunities.org/>) – Soma School, identities and rhythms.
- Steve Timmis and Tim Chester, [Total Church](#).
- Tim Chester, [You Can Change](#).
- Jonathan Dodson, [Fight Clubs](#).

Necessary Admissions

- **Three years** - patience
- **Manna** - less vision, more following.
- **Three priority relationships:** Gathered worship, Missional Community, and Accountability Relationship.

Resources and Concepts

Key Questions:

from Jeff Vanderstelt and Caesar Kalonowski at Soma Communities

- ⦿ What does it look like when you stop going to church and start being the church?
- ⦿ What does it mean to live the gospel in any context?

We don't just attend a service and call that church we are the church. We want to help people be who they are in Christ. People who own the mission – we live out of who we believe that we are!

Our desire is that we would be so transformed by Christ and His work on the cross and His resurrection that we would be a different kind of people who live out what it means to be the church all the time, verses people who just attend a service and call that church. We cannot live to multiply services, we have to mobilize people.

We are a family on mission sent by God to serve our world and continually learn how to walk in His ways.

Identity Markers that flow out of the Gospel.

- ⦿ **Family** - We are children of God who live and care for each other as a family.
- ⦿ **Missionaries** - We are sent by God to restore all things to himself.
- ⦿ **Servants** - We are servants of God who serve others as a way of life.
- ⦿ **Learners** - We are disciples of Jesus who take responsibility for our own development and the development of others.

Rhythms that mark our lives.

- ⦿ **Story-formed** - We understand, experience and intersect with God's Story and Other's.
- ⦿ **Listen** - We set aside regular times to listen to God both backward and forward.
- ⦿ **Celebrate** - We gather together to celebrate God's extravagant blessings.
- ⦿ **Bless** - We intentionally bless others through words, gifts or actions.
- ⦿ **Eat** - We regularly eat meals with others to invite them into the community of God.
- ⦿ **ReCreate** - We take time to rest, play, create and restore beauty in ways that reflect God to others.

WBC vision

We dream that our children would grow up believing that their parents truly loved Jesus more than anything life could give or death could take away.

- ⦿ That we loved our neighbors and fostered deep, caring relationships with them that spoke real, hard-to-believe yet life-changing truth.
- ⦿ ...our fellowship was not organized around big attractational events – that knew that a believer who loves Jesus and is immersed in Gospel-living is way more attractive than any program that we can offer.
- ⦿ ...our desire was not to multiply a service but to mobilize a people.
- ⦿ ...we didn't just attend a service and call that "church", we were the church.
- ⦿ ...we wrestled well with the question: How do we best display who God is and what he's done in and through Jesus Christ appropriately within the culture we are sent to?
- ⦿ ...Teens and Adults, singles and marrieds lived, not as consumers of the church, spectators who watched the "pros", but that we were a community that organized their lives around certain rhythm's to build deeper relationships inside the church and outside in our community/mission field.
- ⦿ ...every person desired to have the character of an elder, and there was a strong network of investment – the older and wiser pouring into the lives of the younger (and vice versa).
- ⦿ ...we didn't treat our comfort, our preferred culture, or our language as holy – its not. Only God is holy. Language expresses culture, so we learned how to speak in a way that people could understand without compromising "closed hand" truths.

Theological convictions

- Jesus is the Sr. Pastor of our church (Eph. 4:4-6; Col. 1:18).
- God is a missionary God (Gen. 22:18; Matt. 28:18-20).
- The gospel makes us part of the people of God (Heb. 8:10; Rev. 5:9).
- We need the gospel every day, many times a day, from many people (Rom. 1:15; 2 Pet. 1:3-9).
- Growth is a function of maturity, not numbers (Eph. 4:15-16).
- God is the provider- He allots people and finances (Gen.2;).