



the Family Focus

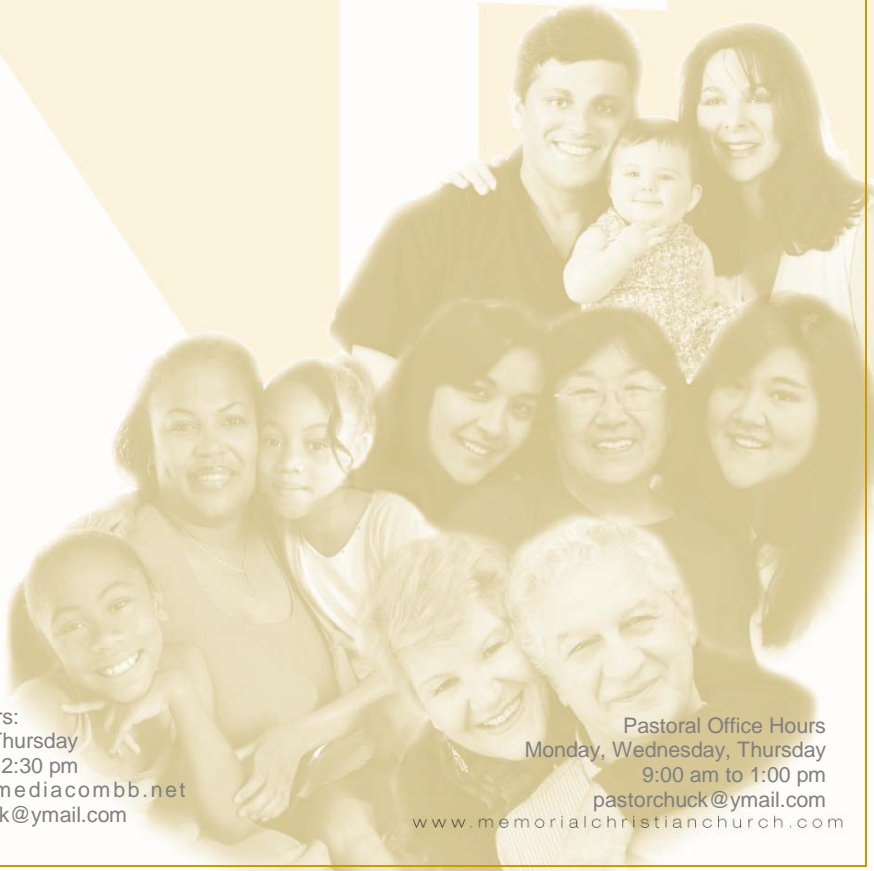
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12 TRENDS FOR CHURCHES IN 2012



Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday
9:00 am to 2:30 pm
mccqc@mediacombb.net
pastorchuck@ymail.com

Pastoral Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
9:00 am to 1:00 pm
pastorchuck@ymail.com

www.memorialchristianchurch.com



Thom Reiner on 12 Trends for Churches in 2012

The beginning of a new year inevitably brings a plethora of predictions, resolutions, and trends. I see no need to alter that course in this article. My assignment is simple; but my conclusions are debatable. I am providing twelve trends for

2012 in the healthiest churches we have observed.

A few caveats are necessary. First, the trends are for healthy churches. They are not inclusive of all 400,000 American churches, much less the millions of churches around the world. Second, the trends are based on both detailed empirical research and anecdotal observations. In other words, I can point to some outstanding research projects for my conclusions in some cases. In other cases, I am simply expressing what I hope is an informed opinion. Third, the trends are not ranked in order of any priority.

1. **The churches have a high view of Scripture.** A number of research projects over the past four decades point to this trend. Healthy churches have leaders and members who believe the totality of the Bible, often expressed as a view called inerrancy.
2. **A large number of church members read the Bible daily.** The simplicity of this trend often surprises church leaders. But we can no longer assume that all of the congregants read their Bibles every day. That is a practice that must be encouraged and monitored. In our research on spiritual health of Christian, we found that the highest correlative factor in practicing other healthy spiritual discipline was reading the Bible every day.
3. **The churches have a priority and focus on the nations.** This priority is manifest in short-term mission trips, in care and adoption of the orphaned, in giving to mission causes, and in the number of congregants who commit their lives to reaching the nations with the gospel.
4. **The churches have a missional community presence.** The leadership and members do not look at their community as a pool for prospects. Rather, they love their community. They serve their community. They live in their community. They have deep relationships in their community.
5. **The congregations have membership that matters.** These healthy churches are high expectation churches. Membership is much more than completing a card or walking an aisle. These churches have entry point classes that set the expectations of membership. Church members are expected to serve, to give, to be in small groups, and to be accountable to others. Church discipline is practiced in most of these congregations. Because membership is meaningful, the assimilation rate in these churches is very high.
6. **The members are evangelistically intentional.** The gospel is central in these healthy churches. As a consequence, the sharing of the good news is natural and consequential. But leaders in these churches do not simply assume that evangelism is taking place. There are constant reminders of the priority of evangelism.

There is inherent in many of these churches some type of accountability for ongoing evangelism in a number of contexts.

7. **These healthy churches have pastors who love the members.**

That love is obvious in their words, their actions, and their pastoral concern. It does not mean that a pastor is present for every need of a member of a church member; that is physically impossible. It does mean that the church has a ministry in place that cares for all the members. Above all, though, you can sense intuitively when you walk into these churches that the pastor deeply loves the members, even those who may often oppose him.

8. **The churches allow their pastors to spend time in sermon preparation.**

Our research has confirmed over the years that pastors in healthier churches spend more time in sermon preparation than those in other churches. For that to take place, the congregation must understand the primacy of preaching, and they must be willing for their pastor to forego some areas of activity and ministry so he can spend many hours in the Word.

9. **There is clarity of the process of disciple making.**

Such was the theme of the book, *Simple Church*, written by Eric Geiger and me. For the healthy churches, the ministries and activities are not just busy work; instead they have a clear purpose toward moving the members to greater levels of commitment toward Christ.

10. **These churches do less better.**

They realize that they can't be all things to all people; and they shouldn't have such a flurry of activities that they hurt rather than help families. So the leaders of these congregations focus on doing fewer ministries, but doing those few better than they could with an overabundance of activities.

11. **The process of discipleship moves members into ongoing small groups.**

A member is almost guaranteed to leave the church or become inactive in the church if he or she does not get involved in an ongoing small group. These groups have a variety of names: Sunday school; small groups; home groups; life groups; cell groups; and others. The name is not the issue. The issue is getting members connected to ongoing groups.

12. **Corporate prayer is intentional and prioritized.**

Prayer is not incidental in these churches. The leadership regularly emphasizes the importance and priority of prayer. The congregation is led regularly in times of corporate prayer.

I realize that many churches, particularly Western churches, are struggling. But I am most keenly aware that God is doing a great work in many congregations. Though my "12 in 12" list is neither inerrant nor comprehensive, just noting these trends gives me great hope. God is not yet done with our churches.

(Source: <http://theoutwardfocusedchurch.blogspot.com>)

February Birthdays & Anniversaries



3	Bob Engelman
3	Ken Lue
7	Don Simmons
11	Kim Dorsey
12	Donna Long
15	Earl Dreon
18	Joanne White
21	Melba Andereck

7	Bob & Bonnie Engelman
14	Daryl & Linda Swartz

Souper Sunday

A 3 Soup luncheon will be served immediately following worship.

Proceeds to benefit our Ministry of apartment remodeling for the Salvation Army homeless housing.

February 5th



In Our Thoughts & Prayers



Please remember these in your prayers:

Dottie Onderbeke, the Roesner family, Darlene Lovell, Helen Slavens, Darry & Colleen Kannenberg, Dan and Christine Koester, Joanne Kline, Donna Wilkins, Lynette Cameron, Peggy Walker, Bernice Hovey, Loretta Smith, Caryl VanHyfte, Cyndee Browner, Charles Willey, Wade Rogers, Nellie Porter, Cecil Dorsey, Matt, Ava, Andy Simmons, Jacque Brandom, Crystal Raun, Al Fortin, Shirley Rudd, Beverley Ducey, Kimberly Delaney, Jan Smith, and to all of those that are not on our Prayer List that are in need of your prayers.

We have recently updated our prayer list, if you or anyone you know would like to be added to our Prayer List or those who would like a "Home Visit", please contact the Church office.

February Serving Schedule

Worship Service

ELDERS

Meditation: Mick Kuehl

Back Table: Julie Guss

DEACONS

Captain: John Allison

Nick Karzin

Russ Reynolds

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Pastor Chuck Dorsey

COMMUNION PREPARER

Margaret Lage

Roberta Brostrom

HOME-BOUND COMMUNION

Doree' Shewell

CONNECTIONS CAFÉ

Linda & Nicole Miller & Co.

EVANGELISM CALLER

Pastor Chuck

Children's / Kid's Ministry

DISCOVERY LAND

Sundays:

1st - Crystal Cutkomp

2nd - Nancy Wagner

3rd - Doree' Shewell

4th - Felicia Sevedge

5th - Sarah Tappendorf

KIDS A BLAZE

Sundays:

1st - 4th - Kim & Megan Dorsey

5th - Ashley Ricker

CHECK-IN DESK

Sundays:

1st - Barb Stinocher

2nd - Felicia Sevedge

3rd - Tonya Weinrich

4th - Kelle Tappendorf

5th - Nancy Wagner



P.O. Box 4390
Rock Island, IL 61204

Faith for **Family**
every

Tel: 309.757.1300

www.MemorialChristianChurch.com



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GROW IN CHRIST**