

We are a church with one mission: to grow followers of Jesus through grateful worship, genuine community, and generous service to each other and our world. We believe by loving God and loving people we can have an impact that really matters, and would like to tell you more about that. If you are interested in being a part of what God is doing with us, or just have some questions, **fill out the contact card** or ask the person next to you. **Please feel free to call or email too if you have any questions.**

FAMILY NEWS AND NOTES

Indiana church of Christ
225 East Pike
Indiana, PA, 15701

E-mail:
indianacofc@gmail.com

Website:
indianapachurch.org

Evangelist
C J Moffett
985-807-7593

GOD'S FAMILY TIMES

BIBLE CLASSES
Building—9:30 am Sunday

WORSHIP
Building—10:30 am Sunday

GROWTH GROUPS
Grose's -- 6 p.m. Sunday
Irwin's -- 6 p.m. Sunday

BIBLE CLASSES
Building—7 pm Wednesday

Dinner before Class: Wednesday January 25th at 6 p.m. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you plan to attend and what you will bring to share.

Family Weekend: Saturday and Sunday Feb 4-5, 2017. Mark your calendars NOW to be a part of this weekend of edification for the church family. More details to follow.

Please add your name to the original sign-up sheet for the family retreat if you plan to attend and did not sign up in November.

We will be having **lunch together for Family Weekend** and sharing the responsibility of providing food items for that day. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you can serve the family in this way.

2017 sign-up sheets for communion preparation and organizer for Wednesday night meals are posted on the bulletin board. Please consider serving in one of these two ways.

Please remember to give your Betikara donations directly to Sally Duriez if you desire to help with the monthly support of our lamb, Toavina.

Happy Birthday

1/10 Adam Chi
1/13 Jake Grose
1/24 Ron Jewart
1/28 Debbie Kirk
1/29 June Peffer

Announcements for family news can be written on the back of an attendance card and placed in the collection basket or a hand written note can be given to Doug, Paula, or CJ.

FAMILY MATTERS

Indiana

Church of Christ

724.463.7240

January 15, 2017

The Impending Death (and Rebirth) of Cool Church

(another insightful article BY Corey Nieuwhof)

Everything has its season. And the season of the cool church is, in many ways, coming to an end. There was an era when simply being a cooler church than the church down the road helped churches reach unchurched people. There was a day when all you had to do was improve the church you led to gain traction. Trade in the choir for a band. Turn the chancel into a platform. Add some lights, some sound, some haze. Get some great teaching in the room. And voila, you had a growing church. But we're quickly moving into a season where having a cool church is like having the best choir in town: it's wonderful for the handful of people who still listen to choral music. Something is changing. And a hundreds of thousands of dollars in lights and great sound gear are probably not going to impact your community like they used to.

So what's changing? Plenty.

Cool Isn't Enough (Anymore)

You might think I'm against churches have bands, lights, and creating a great environment. Not at all. In fact, as we speak, our team is building a facility for the church at which I serve that facilitates all of that. If you are going to gather people, gather well. My point is not that you shouldn't. My point is that it's no longer enough. And maybe it never was.

The mega-churches many of us watch today didn't get to be as effective as they are simply by being cool. If you really study how most large churches have become effective in leading people to Jesus (and yes—haters step aside—many large churches are effective in leading people into a real relationship with Jesus Christ), they have always been about more than just lights, sound and show. There's substance. More substance than critics would ever give them credit for.

Are mega-churches universally healthy? No. But neither are many small churches. In fact, sometimes the dysfunction in small churches eclipses that of medium sized or large churches.

As Geoff Surratt has so helpfully pointed out, you can't say that just because a few mega-churches have collapsed that they are all the same. Churches like North Point, New Spring, Cross Point, Sea Coast and Life Church, to name a few, have developed great leaders on their local campuses and across their teams. They've moved far beyond a structure based on one 'famous' name.

So why would cool church be fading into the sunset?

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Nathan Irwin and family as they are in Lyon, France for language training, and for the direction of the Lord in their search for new teammates, a place to settle and a purpose for their mission among the Muslim world.
- Jay Stenman, Louanne Brown's husband, who is suffering with rheumatoid arthritis in both of his knees.
- For Mary Fasanya's asylum request to be granted and for the girls as they are in the USA without their husband and father. Also for Ezekiel as he is in Nigeria without his wife and daughters.
- For Mayleen Niehenke's visa approval to come to the United States from the Philippines and for a sponsor so that the procedure can be quickly expedited.
- George Brown, Louanne Brown's brother, who is at the Veterans' Hospital in Pittsburgh being treated for depression, which he has battled with the last several years.
- Bill Tonkin who is at Indiana Square Personal Care Home, 1703 Warren Road. Lois says cards and visits are always welcome.
- Gary Minser for healing after successful heart bypass surgery on November 21st.
- Wayne, Abbey Chi's uncle, who is in a Florida hospital with cardiac problems.
- Jason Canose for healing. He is in Room 319 at the Indiana Hospital and improving with daily physical therapy there.
- Louanne Brown for healing of her vision in her right eye which has been impeded by at least 50%. Swelling from the blood clot is down and her vision is improving slowly. Also for healing of her foot that was injured at work.
- Nick Ruffner, John & Gail Gromley's step grandson, who had another round of chemo in his treatment for leukemia.
- Emma Sesock for pain relief and her doctor's expertise in probable surgery of the fractures in her lower back that are still very painful.
- Nancy Sinclair for relief of the pain suffered from a previously fractured back.
- Winifred Redinger, Vera Brown's sister-in-law, who is doing much better but still in the hospital.
- Ron Duriez who has recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's.
- Kathrine, Lin & Jo Broadway's (former members) daughter-in-law, who has been diagnosed with cancer and anticipating surgery in February.
- Janet Anoyke's mother in Ghana who recently suffered a stroke.
- Greg Douglass, friend of Trina Flamm, whose organs are shutting down and a need to find the reason for it.

Prayer requests can be added to the family prayer book in

3 Reasons Cool Church Isn't What It Used To Be

Decades ago as cool church started to take root among very large, rapidly growing churches, many other, smaller churches and church plants followed suit. And for a season, it 'worked'. Getting some awesome lights, better sound, better music, and a slightly more hip communicator grew churches. Sure, some of the growth was transfer growth, but a big percentage of what many churches experienced was not transfer growth. People invited their friends and their friends came back.

So what's changing?

But now most cities have a great selection of cool churches. Many towns have at least one. It's no longer unusual to have a band in church. It's not even that novel to have lights and great sound or to play all the cool songs. And...in the process of all this imitation, three things happened:

1. Cutting edge keeps changing...fast

What was novel isn't novel as novel for long anymore. The rise of technology and social media means that you now hold access to pretty much anything you want in your hand whenever you want to. You used to have to hire experts or do some exploring to find cool things. Sometimes you even had to travel. Now you just download an app, watch a video, stream a song or follow whatever trend you're passionate about in the moment—whenever you want to. Instantly. Usually for free. Consequently, there's kind of a trend-fatigue or indifference happening. Trends are shorter, less interesting, and we're all growing oh-so-bored with what's novel—which means that it's harder than ever for churches to be cutting edge because cutting edge keeps changing.

2. Indifference to church has grown

As this helpful Barna research points out, even in the US, people are increasingly indifferent to church. That's certainly been true in Canada, Europe and in places like Australia and New Zealand for a while. So a decade ago having a cool church would have gotten you more traction than it does today. If people aren't into church, it doesn't matter how cool, hip or trendy your church is, people won't be that interested. You behave this way. If you're on a health kick, you're not going to order the burger and fries, even if they are the best in town. And if you're not on a healthy kick, the spinach, arugula, kale salad with tuna isn't going to capture your imagination, no matter how healthy it is.

3. Imitation killed innovation

Of all three points, this one probably bothers me the most. To begin with, when churches imitate each other, we rarely borrow all the best practices—we just borrow the ones that are easy to see or seem obvious. But what's made growing churches grow is deeper than the cool factor. Consequently, leaders who finally get what they were longing for—a cool church—are often shocked to discover they don't deliver what they promised. And in the process of all that imitation something even more important is lost: innovation.

What's needed now more than ever is church leaders willing to pioneer...to go deep into a culture that keeps changing to reach people who are increasingly resistant. What's needed most as we look at what's ahead is innovation. And it's sorely lacking among many church leaders. Should you never imitate? No...that's not wise either. To refuse to borrow best practices from others is arrogant and, to a large extent, futile thinking. The point is simply this: don't let imitation kill innovation at your church.

(Article concludes next week)