

Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations – Enthusiastic Worship
Focus: Defining and Internalizing the Tenets of Enthusiastic Worship

Habits of Grace – Chapters 13 and 14
Focus: The Spiritual Disciplines of Corporate Fellowship and Worship

Discerning Your Congregation's Future – Chapters 5 and 7
Focus: The Local Church's Core Values and SMART Goals

Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

Why do people need and seek Enthusiastic/Passionate Worship?

- Worship as people imagine it is why people don't come to church. People who have little or no experience with churches imagine worship as boring, pious, judgmental, impenetrable, poorly planned, empty of meaningful content, irrelevant, and full of confusing symbols, archaic references, and music from a bygone era.
- People imagine worship as something slick and shiny, a polished performance that is inauthentic showmanship and self-serving. And yet, people are genuinely searching for a faith community that is authentic, alive, creative.
- People desire a deeper spiritual life. They are open to experiencing God. People may not want to join a church, but they want to be part of something that matters, something compelling, a faith community that makes a difference in their own lives and lives of others.

What is Enthusiastic/Passionate Worship?

Passionate Worship

- Passionate Worship connects people to God, to one another, and to the world around them.
- People gather consciously as the body of Christ with eagerness and expectancy
- People encounter Christ through singing, prayer, scripture, and Holy Communion
- People respond by allowing God's Spirit to shape their lives.
- Passionate Worship fosters a yearning to authentically honor God with excellence and with an unusual clarity about connecting people to God.
- Passionate Worship is alive, authentic, fresh, and engaging. People are honest before God and open to God's presence, truth, and will. The empty places in their souls are filled and they experience a compelling sense of belonging to the body of Christ.
- Leaders and worshippers expect something significant to take place, and they're eager to be a part of it.

Ways to Approach Renewal

- Evaluation of worship by leaders
- Evaluation by a core group of leaders and members
- Creative initiatives green-lit by leadership

Habits of Grace

Chapter Thirteen – *Learn to Fly in the Fellowship*

- Please review the six sections of Chapter Thirteen and be prepared to discuss each.
- Please review the meaning of the word, “koinonia” and prepare to discuss its significance.
- Please read together the scripture texts in the section “Partnership for the Gospel” and prepare to discuss how each teaches us about true fellowship in ministry.
- Please prepare to discuss the twin texts of fellowship in the book of Hebrews.
- Please prepare to discuss how fellowship is covenantal.
- Please review the Six Lessons in Good Listening and discuss the benefits of each.

Chapter Fourteen – *Kindle the Fire in Corporate Worship*

- Please review the five sections of Chapter Fourteen and be prepared to discuss each.
- Please prepare to discuss how corporate worship is the most important means of grace.
- Please prepare to discuss Mathis’ assertion that we experience corporate worship as a means of grace when we experience the joy of self-forgetfulness and how that might impact our corporate worship.
- Please review the Five Benefits of Corporate Worship and discuss the benefits of each.

Discerning Your Congregation’s Future

Discussing and Defining Your Congregation’s Core Values

Discussing and Defining Your Congregation’s SMART Goals

Specific

Measurable

Achievable/Attainable

Relevant

Time-bound