

## Welcome To Center Church

Most church members don't see their churches clearly. In almost all of Thom S. Rainer's consultations, church members perceive their church to be friendly. But as he surveyed guests, he found that the guests typically saw church members as unfriendly. The perception chasm existed because the members were indeed friendly . . . to one another. The guests felt like they crashed a private party. Bestselling author Thom Rainer (*I Am a Church Member, Autopsy of a Deceased Church*) has a game plan for churches to become more hospitable. In a format that is suitable for church members to read individually or study together, Rainer guides readers toward a practical framework for making a difference for those who visit their church. Churches may use *Becoming a Welcoming Church* to assess and audit where they are on a spectrum between welcoming and wanting. Additionally, churches can use the companion book *We Want You Here* to send guests home with a compelling vision for what pastors want every guest to know when they visit.

The most important disciple a parent will make is within their own home, and yet this is the most difficult disciple to make. *Family Discipleship* by Matt Chandler and Adam Griffin helps readers develop a sustainable rhythm of gospel-centered discipleship through a guided framework focusing on moments of discipleship in 3 key areas: time (intentional time gathering your family around gospel activities or conversations), moments (leveraging opportunities throughout the day), and milestones (celebrating significant life events). Each section provides parents with Scriptures to consider, questions to answer, structures to implement, and ideas to try out as they seek to see Christ formed in their children. Here is a book that begins with the

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end in mind, offering ideas and examples of what gospel-centered family discipleship looks like, helping parents design their own discipleship plan as they seek to raise children in the love and fear of the Lord.

Daniel Hyde traces the historical roots of the Reformed churches, their key beliefs, and the ways in which those beliefs are expressed. The result is a roadmap for those newly encountering the Reformed world and a primer for those seeking to know more about their Reformed heritage.

How many times have we heard these statements... “We can’t compete with the megachurch in our town!” “A new church was started two blocks from us. We’ve got plenty of churches without them!” “The church brought another one of their campuses near us. It’s totally unethical what they are doing.” “We can’t reach young families. They all go to the big church that has all the children’s and student stuff.” “We don’t have the money or the people the other churches have.” Bestselling author Thom S. Rainer (*I Am a Church Member, Autopsy of a Deceased Church*) has heard comments like these hundreds, if not thousands, of times. They are statements of hopelessness. They are statements of despair. They are statements of defeat. Church leaders don’t want to feel this way. They desire to break out of the mediocrity of the same, lame, and tame existence of their churches. They want their churches to make a difference. There is hope. God’s hope. God’s possibilities. What does a scrappy church look like? Let’s take a look together.

A unique journey through the heart of the Deep South, The Natchez Trace Parkway traverses 444 miles from Natchez, Mississippi, across the mighty Tennessee River in northwestern Alabama, to its northern terminus just shy of Nashville, Tennessee. For travelers planning a

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visit or already on the way, Guide to the Natchez Trace Parkway will help them discover all that the historic byway has to offer. From milepost to milepost, discover an ancient trail blazed hundreds of years ago by Native Americans that, in the early nineteenth century, became a trekking road for river boaters, who had sold their goods and vessels and were now headed back to central Tennessee and beyond. Visitors can drive the entire length, sampling the hundreds of scenic areas, restaurants, inns, exhibits, recreation areas, and other sites along the way. Motorcyclists will want to cruise the entire length as well, but will especially savor the hundreds of miles of meandering road between Natchez and Tupelo. For an even more intimate experience, Guide to the Natchez Trace Parkway shows where to hike on over 60 miles of National Scenic Trail, where to camp, and gives tips on bicycling the parkway's scenic length. Whether exploring a few miles or a few hundred miles, visitors will enjoy it most with the Guide to the Natchez Trace Parkway.

To celebrate its sesquicentennial, Central (1858-2008) has gathered a collection of histories, memories and musings from its members as well as former staff and their families. The result is a colorful patchwork quilt of both research and recollection that captures this venerable Atlanta congregation's rich array of ministries, programs and activities through the years. Members and visitors alike receive a warm welcome at Central Presbyterian Church in Atlanta--a church well known for its inclusive hospitality. Within this historic place, at the heart of the old city, all receive strength from the ministries of worship, education, and congregational nurture, and leave equipped to respond to the ever changing needs of the community and the world. Central as it appeared in 1937 provides a backdrop for the Palm Sunday march on Capitol Hill.

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A New York Times bestseller people can believe in—by "a pioneer of the new urban Christians" (Christianity Today) and the "C.S. Lewis for the 21st century" (Newsweek). Timothy Keller, the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, addresses the frequent doubts that skeptics, and even ardent believers, have about religion. Using literature, philosophy, real-life conversations, and potent reasoning, Keller explains how the belief in a Christian God is, in fact, a sound and rational one. To true believers he offers a solid platform on which to stand their ground against the backlash to religion created by the Age of Skepticism. And to skeptics, atheists, and agnostics, he provides a challenging argument for pursuing the reason for God.

Today many pastors are struggling to adapt to a post-Christian culture without abandoning orthodox theology. How do we communicate the concepts of grace and substitutionary atonement in our globalized culture and context? In Center Church, Timothy Keller offers challenging insights and provocative questions based on over twenty years of ministry in New York City. This book outlines a theological vision for ministry - applying classic doctrines to our time and place - organized around three core commitments:

- Gospel-centered: The gospel of grace in Jesus Christ changes everything, from our hearts to our community to the world. It completely reshapes the content, tone and strategy of all that we do.
- City-centered: With a positive approach toward our culture, we learn to affirm that cities are wonderful, strategic and

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underserved places for gospel ministry. • Movement-centered: Instead of building our own tribe, we seek the prosperity and peace of our community as we are led by the Holy Spirit. "In this important book, Tim Keller unpacks the gospel and gently but firmly reminds us that it is nonnegotiable. At the same time, he enables us to think through how we can responsibly interact with the culture, how we can - indeed, must - appreciate good things within it, and how we can firmly and faithfully apply the gospel to it." - D.A. Carson, research professor of New Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

On Sunday morning, we gather together. We are every color. Every age. Rich and poor. Our church is open, affirming, and accepting. We believe in love instead of hate. There's room for everyone! This book celebrates a spiritual community that embraces all people—no matter their age, race, class, gender identity, or sexual orientation—in love and faith.

Jessica Krey Duckworth presents the stark differences between the established congregation, which cares for current members and congregational identity, and the disestablished one, which gains purpose and identity in the task of relating to the newcomer. By allowing the questions, insights, and experiences of newcomers to reverberate through the entire congregation, both they and the church are changed. *Wide Welcome* does far more than point out the faults and weaknesses in current practice. Duckworth intentionally lays out possible designs for newcomer welcome that

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are local and particular. Book jacket.

Welcome to Center Church, New Haven, Connecticut  
A Bicentennial Publication  
Center Church  
Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City  
Zondervan

As conversations abound on social media platforms and in the news media, more people are beginning to wonder why ethnic and cultural diversity is increasing in our cities, yet it is not reflected in our churches. Has it ever been reflected? What caused such separation? Are there cultural and relational barriers that prove too difficult to climb for those different than ourselves? An honest assessment of ourselves could demonstrate that the reason most of our churches remain homogenous in diverse cities is because all are not welcome. Differences tend to separate. Therefore it is easiest to gather with those who are similar, but is that the call of the Great Commission, and is that the outworking of the gospel we observe in the books of Acts? *All Are Welcome* is an attempt to have (and continue) the conversation that looms in our communities. Each contributor in this edited volume is an ethnic minority. These are the voices that are often overlooked, yet they provide ideas and answers for how to create a much more welcoming environment for all people in our local congregations. If you've ever wondered about the discussions that occur between ethnic minorities as we pontificate how to create a more welcoming environment in our churches, *All Are Welcome* is a discussion you don't want to miss.

"Are we for them or against them?" In this wise, practical book on the refugee

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and immigrant crises around the world, Kent Annan explores how fear and misunderstanding can motivate our responses to people in need. Instead, he invites us into stories of welcome, laying out simple practices for a way forward across social and cultural divides.

The perfect book for new church members and anyone interested in the past, present, and future of Episcopalianism. For inquirers and new members, as well as current parishioners who may be unfamiliar with some of the Church's history, beliefs, and practices, this introduction to the history, polity, spirituality, worship, and outreach of the Episcopal Church is an easy-to-read guide that includes study questions at the end of each chapter—making it an excellent resource for adult parish study and inquirers' classes. Included are chapters on: History of the Episcopal Church Worship Traditions What We Believe Reading the Bible Spiritual Life The Organization of the Church Mission and Outreach

A Classic Yet Trendy Church Guest Book or Visitor Sign-in Book This beautiful guest book is a convenient 8.25x6in (21x15cm) size to fit any table. The 100-page paperback book is a soft glossy book and bound with book industry binding (the same standard as your local library books). The quality crisp white paper minimizes ink bleed-through and is perfect for pen or pencil users. The sign in book features 100 Guest Pages with ample space for 400 guests to write:

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Date Name Physical/email address Telephone Special Request (including visit, prayer, other) If you like this guest book, click the brand name to see other classy styles and funky designs! Don't forget to click the buy button to get your copy!

A welcome booklet to the Promise Center Church, Buford, GA Dr. Kluane Spake  
<http://PromiseCenterChurch.com>

Welcome to the Favor Center Church! We are honored that you chose to worship with us today. As you will see, our passion and purpose is to usher in God's Presence and exalt the King – Jesus – and His Kingdom! The Presence of God brings freedom, and the Word of God gives Wisdom and Understanding to know what to do in every situation we may be facing. We will Recover...God will Restore! God is a God of recovery! He is a God of restoration. It doesn't matter what the situation – religious hurt, addictions, marital issues, financial struggle or health problems – God has destined you for more! It is our desire that during your time with us, you will experience the love of Christ and understand that you matter to Him...and you matter to us!

Darrel Chaney made it to the Big Leagues. He played for 7 years on one of the best teams ever to take the field, the Cincinnati Reds—the Big Red Machine. He played in 4 National League Championship Series and 3 World Series. He was in the game that the Major League Baseball Network considered the best game of

the last 50 years—game 6 of the 1975 World Series. But Darrel had a nagging frustration that eroded his belief in his significance. Disappointments, setbacks and opposition attacked his dream. He was a utility player among superstars. Most men are utility players. They face the same battles that Darrel faced. They get frustrated and lose enthusiasm for work and life itself. But, when a man discovers his God given significance, he enjoys life more and does better in it. Then, whatever his game, he is in the Big Leagues.

Is church revitalization and turnaround biblical? Or, is it merely a secular concept? In *Revitalize Your Church*, you will discover that the Bible has much to say about revitalization. Combining biblical scholarship, first-hand research, and personal experience, Pastor Dan Eymann develops a biblical blueprint for revitalization. Utilizing the seven churches of Revelation, Pastor Dan identifies seven crucial biblical building blocks for church revitalization. He also builds a model for turnaround leadership from the example of Nehemiah, one of the greatest turnaround leaders in biblical history. *Revitalize Your Church* will give you hope and biblical insights on turning around a plateaued church. Your church can experience revitalization and renewal.

In this guide for newcomers as well as lifelong Episcopalians, author Vicki Black helps readers navigate the currents of Anglican liturgy and discover its richness and beauty. As we use the Book of Common Prayer, Black says, “we discover we are not alone, and this liturgical current of worship, prayer, and praise will indeed take us where we want to go—union with the God we seek to love.” *Welcome to the Book of Common Prayer* shows readers everything from where

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to find the Sunday collect to how to pray the Daily Office. But it's more than a how-to. It offers history and background that help make the prayer book a more meaningful part of the worship life of individuals and congregations. With thoughtful reflection questions, this is a perfect volume for parish study groups.

Welcome to the Orthodox Church—its history, theology, worship, spirituality, and daily life. This friendly guide provides a comprehensive introduction to Orthodoxy, but with a twist: readers learn by making a series of visits to a fictitious church, and get to know the faith as new Christians did for most of history, by immersion. Mathews-Green provides commentary and explanations on everything from how to “venerate” an icon, the Orthodox understanding of the atonement, to the Lenten significance of tofu. It's the perfect book for inquirers and newcomers, but even readers who have been Orthodox all their lives say they learned things they never knew before. Enjoyable, easy-to-read, and leavened with humor, *Welcome to the Orthodox Church* is a gracious guide to the ancient faith of the Christian East.

In our challenging economic times, it is no surprise that churches must get creative with their resources. But the authors of *The More-with-Less Church* believe pastors, leadership teams, and planning committees should look on times such as these not as hurdles to overcome but as opportunities to reconsider entrenched but inefficient ministry practices that are siphoning time, money, and energy from their churches. Drawn from time- and field-tested strategies, this practical resource helps church leaders avoid costly mistakes and maximize the return on their investment in four areas of church life--ministries, staffing, facilities, and finances.

Practical guidelines to help visitors feel at home in your congregation.

Walking into a church for the first time can be scary. Are you making your first-time guests feel

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welcome? Or are you driving them away—unintentionally—with bad signage, reserved seating, clunky communication and more? In this practical book, Jonathan Malm examines 50 ways churches make first-time visitors feel unwelcome. The transgressions range from insider lingo to awkward transitions, a cold congregation to the over-eager greeter. With all 50 church faux pas, Jonathan suggests ways to not only fix the problem, but also infuse excellence into the situation so churches can put their best foot forward with first-time guests. A few simple changes can help your church roll out the welcome mat for your guests.

Good ground. Rolling rocks. Deep roots. Church in the Making looks to where God is already working and then effectively organizes the work of church planting for maximum success. This at-a-glance practical guidebook offers pastors and church leaders insights on a wide variety of issues to make their ministry more effective. It's like hiring a church consultant at a fraction of the cost.

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