

Structural Previval
August 27, 2017
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

“Besides, who would patch old clothing with new cloth? For the new patch would shrink and rip away from the old cloth, leaving an even bigger tear than before. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the old skins would burst from the pressure, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. New wine is stored in new wineskins so that both are preserved.” (Matthew 9:16-17 NLT)

When God provides new life and vitality to a Body of believers it always brings about structural previval. As we’ve seen, that previval starts on an intensely personal level, then sets right our relationships with God, others, and ourselves, and leads us into mission in the world. But God’s work also brings structural changes to the way we do business as a church so His Kingdom can continue to grow and expand. This week we will explore the topic of structural previval by answering three questions: Why? What? How?

Digging Deeper

Why is structural previval needed?

- Without the life giving power of the Holy Spirit, we are just a valley filled with dry bones (see Ezekiel 37:1-14). Just as we need God to breathe life into us, so does the church and all of its structures. Why would a church organization need “previval”?
- Can you think of a biblical example of how God has used manmade structures to accomplish His Kingdom’s purposes? Talk about how you can see this being done in the world today.

What is involved in structural previval?

- The strength and vitality of our church structures can either help or hinder our ability to use them to further God’s Kingdom. Think about this: God created the whole world in 6 days, but spent 40 days instructing Moses on the building of the tabernacle. (Exodus 36:8-39:43) How we create and maintain His dwelling places must be pretty important to Him! If we consider the facilities we have been entrusted with as meeting places for God and His people, shouldn’t we treat them with an attitude of reverence? We must do everything we can to maximize their potential so we are equipped to accomplish the mighty works that He is calling us to do in His name. Talk about the many ways in which a church facility can be used to bring God the glory He deserves.

How is structural previval experienced?

PLAN

- Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying, “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail!” How familiar are you with the plans that have been made by the people of LHUMC concerning our Fusion campus and the upcoming Imagine campaign? If you are not aware, take time to find out and join in the effort as we strive to become better stewards of the resources God has given us.

PARTICIPATE

- Every soul who calls this church home plays an important role in its ability to move as one Body. If we are missing an eye, we may not see His plans. If we lack an ear, how can we hear His will? If our feet are motionless, how are we advancing His Kingdom? Jesus has called us to serve one another. In His wisdom He knows that by participating in Kingdom work we bless others, but the greater blessing is felt by the servant. In what ways do you think God might be calling you to become more involved in the activities of the church?

PRAY

- Just as the intricate plans for the tabernacle were laid out for Moses, we too must understand the importance of approaching the tasks of ministry with a clearly defined course of action. However, we must not lean on our own understanding in any of this. How do you partner planning with prayer to discern God's will?

Conclusion

The changes we are making in our church structures are going to position us to reach countless people for Christ and disciple them in the faith. Let us all spend time in prayer this week asking God to continue to use this pile of dry bones called the LHUMC, breathe His life into us, so that we might rise up like a great and mighty army that will win this community and world for Christ!