



Staying Power: Why People Leave the Church Over Change, and What You Can Do About It

Bob Whitesel

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A guide to working for change in the congregation without losing members .

Change is essential to every Christian congregation's ongoing health and vitality. Yet change is also inherently threatening, and often produces conflict between those who advocate radical and bold change in the church and those who prefer a more careful, incremental approach. Change--or rather conflict about change--is one of the reasons most frequently cited when people leave the church. Sadly, it is often the advocates of change, those who have become excited about a new vision for where the church is going and have worked hard to implement that vision, who choose to leave when conflict erupts.

This pattern of change, conflict, and exodus need not be inevitable. Building on the work of those who have studied organizational change and transition, Bob Whitesel points to 6 distinct moments in the congregation's life when conflict over change (and the departure of members as a result) can either occur or be avoided. In this book he offers specific, helpful ideas for how church leaders can nurture the agents of change in their congregations while also fostering the good will of those who see it as their job to maintain stability and continuity with the church's past.

Filled with numerous examples of actual congregations that have either succumbed to conflict over change or worked through it, *Staying Power* will be helpful to all congregational leaders who wish to introduce substantive new directions into the life of the church without alienating a significant portion of its membership.

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