

Pastor's Message

The Innovative Church (new and creative)

The innovative church is committed to making the lives of people more meaningful and enriched. Today people are not looking for organized religion, creeds to believe or obey, or church organizations to belong to. People today are looking for spirituality. I would like to give you some definitions of spirituality:

- A way of perceiving which relates to self, to others, to the natural world and to the transcendent.
- An aspect of health alongside physical, mental and social well being.
- "A quality that goes beyond religious affiliation that strives for inspiration, reverence, awe, meaning and purpose ... (Murray and Zetner)
- Spirituality (like pain) is what a person says it is. (Lothian Spiritual Care Policy)
- Somewhere between wind chimes and monasticism (Nick Thorpe – journalist and author)
- The ability to find meaning and find purpose in life
- The ability to make moral decisions and act ethically
- The level of morale

According to Henry Simmons, PhD states that the word 'spirituality' came into common usage in the 1960's. People born before 1935 may experience 'spirituality' as a foreign concept. For some it may even have negative connotations. This group is more likely to be sustained by familiar religious practices.

Spiritual people are looking for innovative and creativity within the Church. The Church has been the birthplace throughout the centuries of great men and women with an innovative spirit; from musicians, architects to scientists. The Church is the place that pushes us to our limits, gets us out of our comfort zone and helps us to be innovative and creative. When the Church becomes comfortable and complex, the people push the Church to the stormy winds of the Holy Spirit and fires passion into the heart of the community of faith. When the people or the Church refuse to be innovative and creative God Himself intervenes and sends newness to the Church; innovation and creativity.

A friend of mine sent an article about this subject written by Eric Marrapodi titled: [A rough decade for American congregations](#) that states this:

"In the measured decade, churches, temples and synagogues told surveyors that congregations that were innovative and contemporary showed the highest amount of "high spiritual vitality." Forty-seven percent of congregations that said their worship experience was "innovative and contemporary" reported high spiritual vitality, versus seventeen percent that said their congregations were "neither innovative nor contemporary."

As we continue being innovative and creative here at Larkspur, as we label ourselves Christians or "spirituals", we must continue searching for creative ways of doing worship. As we are creating a place in which people can find "high spiritual vitality" let's be creative every time we meet for worship. Let's fix, rebuild, and beautify something around our church property. Let's be a relational church by searching for specific needs in our community. Let's build relationships that lead to conversion and spirituality. As we proclaim to be spiritual let's help our community around us through our "Market on the Move." This is the time in which God intervenes in our lives and in our church with creativity and innovation; the good news is that because you have the Spirit of Christ within you, you have been sealed with creativity and innovation. So, you are the chosen one to bring all the newness to this world and to His Church.

Job J. Cobos
Pastor