

COMMUNICATOR

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

Changes at Old Eastside Church

Old Eastside Church is a congregation that in its way of “doing church” seems to expect that next year will be 1957. Which means that Old Eastside Church is strategically positioned if 1957 ever rolls around again!

Last summer at each of the *PALCON* events around the country we were challenged with a presentation by Dr. George Hunter III, Distinguished Professor of Evangelism and Church Growth at Asbury Theological Seminary. The question guiding his presentation was, “What are the common qualities of churches that are successfully engaging their culture today?”

Out of his personal experiences in evangelism and his observations of effective congregations, Hunter identified four barriers that block our efforts to reach secular people. The first barrier is the *image barrier* (the popular and often negative assumptions secular people make about Christians). The second barrier is the *culture barrier* (customs, language, and habits of Christians). The third and fourth barriers are the *Gospel barrier*, and the *total devotion barrier*, respectively. Hunter made the point that the most effective churches today have learned how to remove the first two barriers so that secular persons can effectively confront the last two barriers. He listed a number of strategies and styles that characterize the life and ministry of these kinds of churches and contrasted them with a fictitious composite congregation that he called “Old Eastside Church.” Old Eastside, he said, is a congregation that in its way of “doing church” seems to expect that next year will be 1957. We all had a good laugh.

Dr. Hunter went on to outline a number of strategies that effective congregations use to reach people in what he called “North America’s mission fields.” This was an important and helpful presentation that many of us appreciated. I heard it eight times and enjoyed it every time!

Near the close of his presentation Hunter asked a critical question that applies exactly to where most Nazarene pastors find themselves in ministry. “What if I become the pastor of a church whose leaders expect

next year to be 1957?” Many of us can identify. His answer: “Do not try to change a traditional service that engages a viable congregation. Instead, build a second more apostolic congregation [alongside the first].” At least one of the implicit reasons for this suggestion is that often the traditional congregation is the source of most of the funding! His answer seemed to meet with general approval.

I believe there is a critical and unanswered question at this point. If my solution is to let the “Old Eastside” congregation have its way while seeking to reach unchurched persons with another way of “doing church,” what did I just teach both groups about what it means to be the church? Did I teach that what really matters most of all is for personal preferences to be honored? Did I teach the congregation that the kingdom of God is mostly about meeting their needs and making folks happy? How will these people learn the principle of hospitality that includes not only breaking bread but also things like singing each other’s songs, hearing each other’s struggles, and celebrating each other’s stories of faith?

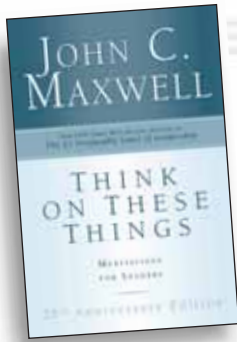
My own pastoral experience has taught me that when faced with the dilemma of pastoring “Old Eastside Church” there is another option. It is possible to guide a process of integration and transformation so that new and vital ministries of evangelism can be embraced *while* preserving everything that is good and positive about the identity and even tradition of an existing congregation. The problem with this approach is that it takes a long time and great patience to see it accomplished. It takes more years than many pastors seem willing to commit to a single congregation. I would simply suggest that the rewards of helping “Old Eastside” to become an authentic expression of the kingdom of God are worth it!

—Jeren Rowell



Think on These Things: Meditations for Leaders.

FEATURED BOOK



By John C. Maxwell

This is the 25th anniversary edition of Maxwell's first book. The premise of this book is acknowledgement of the fact that the mind is a powerful thing. How you think determines who you are. Effective leadership begins with healthy and clear thinking. Successful leaders have learned how to focus on the essentials. In this book, Dr. Maxwell shared 33 meditations challenging leaders to reach their full potential as servants of God. The meditations are divided into four categories under the titles: "Wisdom from the Word," "Pointers on Potential,"

"Statements on Success," and "Look Out for Your Outlook." Maxwell says, "As I sat down to reread this book, I was delighted to see that the principles are as relevant today as they were when I first wrote them."

John C. Maxwell is the founder of several organizations, including Maximum Impact, dedicated to helping people reach their leadership potential. He is the author of more than thirty books, including *Developing the Leader Within You*, *Your Road Map for Success*, and *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, which has sold more than one million copies.

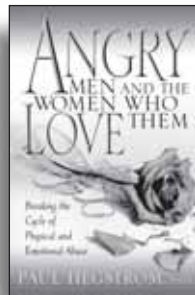
Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2004, 152pp., \$14.99, cloth, COZZ083-412-1506.

BOOK BRIEFS

Resources for Pastoral Ministry

PASTORAL CARE

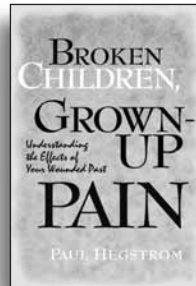
Angry Men and the Women Who Love Them by Paul Hegstrom. (Beacon Hill Press, 2004 [2nd printing], 152pp., \$13.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1522). Originally published in 1999, Dr. Hegstrom has updated and revised this helpful and popular book for its second printing. This book is subtitled: "Breaking the Cycle of Physical and Emotional Abuse." Through a fascinating, thorough examination of the psychological components of various types of abuse, along with true examples from his own life and others, Paul Hegstrom points the way back to wholeness and freedom. An invaluable aid for the man who batters, the woman who feels trapped, and the pastor, counselor, or friend who desperately wants to help them both. This book offers straight answers for those willing to overcome the cycle of violence.



COZZ068-702-0840). Church leaders often hear advocates of change speak in absolute or revolutionary terms—the board must be wiped clean. According to Weems, the problem with such calls for radical change is that they are not true to the way that genuine and lasting change takes place. Transformational leaders know how to build on the congregation's identity, discovering a bridge from their history to new ministries. They know how to make the story of change the next chapter in the book of the congregation's life, rather than throwing the book away and trying to start over. An astute student of management and leadership theory, Weems offers congregational leaders essential ideas about how they can work *with* and *through* their churches' ministries to bring about faithful growth toward the Reign of God. *Take the Next Step* includes congregational case studies, visual illustrations of key ideas, and a harvest of significant insights from other leadership experts. Lovett Weems is Director of the G. Douglass Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

PASTORAL CARE

Broken Children, Grown-Up Pain by Paul Hegstrom. (Beacon Hill Press, 2001, 136pp., \$13.99, paper, COZZ083-411-9102). Here is another very helpful volume from the author of the book highlighted above. This book is about "Understanding the Effects of Your Wounded Past." When you're hurt in childhood, the pain can affect your whole life and can even shape the person you become. But that doesn't mean you have to let the wounds of your childhood destroy your present and future. In this informative, challenging book, Dr. Hegstrom examines the result of childhood pain and pinpoints solutions from God's Word. If you or someone you love, or someone you are working with in pastoral counseling was wounded as a child, you'll find hope and help to deal with that childhood trauma as you help them to reach for a healed future.



YOUTH MINISTRY

Call Waiting: Connect with God's Plan for Your Future by Doug Samples. (Beacon Hill Press, 2001, 80pp., \$7.99, paper, COZZ083-411-8904). Every pastor knows what it is to have a young person in our congregation come to you and ask, "Pastor, how do I know God's will for my life?" What a wonderful opportunity it is to guide a young life toward living in the joy of full obedience to God's plan. A good resource to help along the way is this little book by Doug Samples, a professor at Southern Nazarene University. *Call Waiting* can help young people discover the truth—that God already has a plan for their lives and that God is inviting them to partner with Him to make a major impact on the world. The focus is on calling young people to become ministers of God's grace wherever they happen to work, whether or not they feel called to vocational ministry. Questions in focus are: What does a call feel like? How do I hear God's call? How do I know if it's really from God? What if I have doubts?



PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Take the Next Step: Leading Lasting Change in the Church by Lovett H. Weems, Jr. (Abingdon Press, 2003, 168pp., \$18.00, paper,

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Some of the books featured in *Communicator* have not been reviewed for theological content and are not endorsed by Nazarene Publishing House or the Church of the Nazarene. They may have significant value, but readers should exercise theological discretion.



Worship His Majesty Through... *Everlasting Praise*

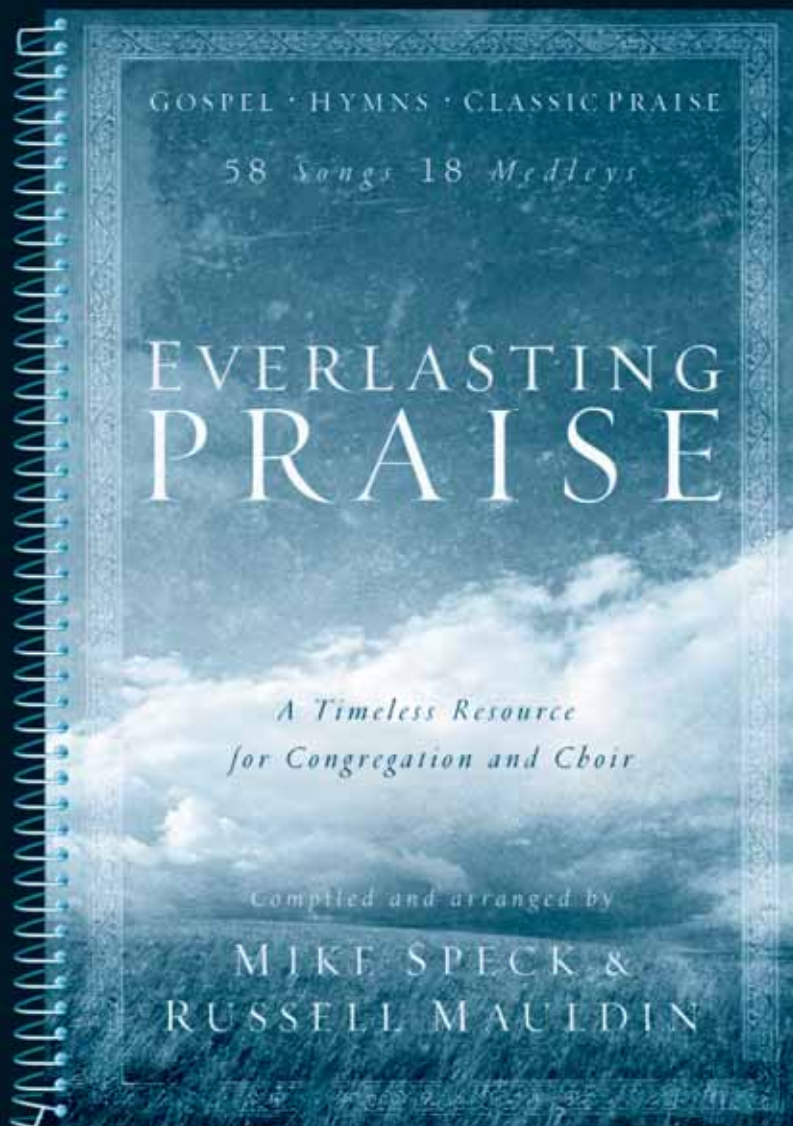
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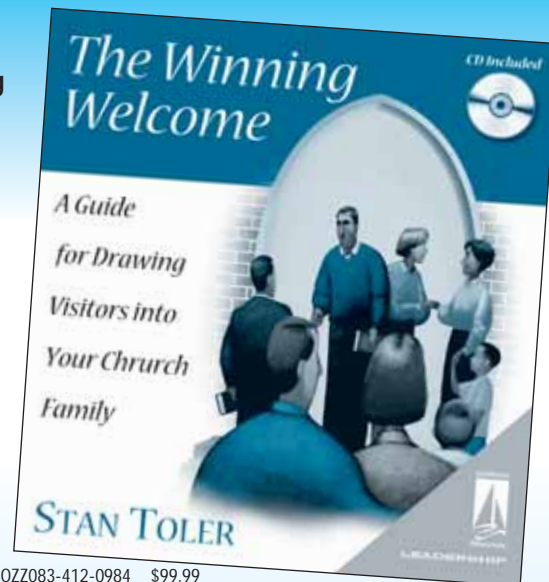
- Develop a plan to effectively welcome visitors
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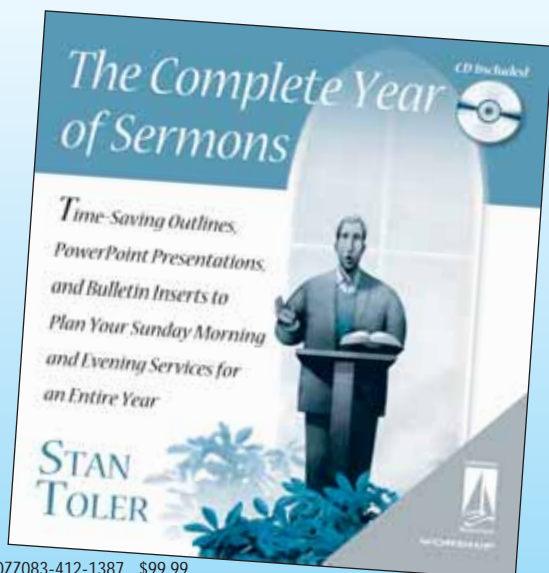
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