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Fresh Expressions: A New Kind Of Methodist Church For People Not In Church



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Synopsis

A wave of new Christian churches are emerging to reach unchurched and dechurched people who live in a culture that is increasingly non-religious and multi-religious. These new forms of church gather and network with people who typically have never been to church. The new faith communities listen to people and go where they are on the journey toward Jesus. They are deeply ecumenical but do not lose their distinctiveness because they learn fresh ways to communicate their identity through discipleship. Fresh Expressions began in the United Kingdom where it ignited over 3000 new faith communities. In the United States the movement is putting down roots in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Ken Carter and Audrey Warren offer this book as a group study for church leaders and congregations who are in the grip of Holy Spirit motivation to renew their tradition by reaching people who are dechurched or not yet in a discipleship relationship with Jesus. Each chapter includes two Bible study experiences for group conversation. "I have been an observer of and cheerleader for the Fresh Expressions movement ... from the beginning, and I've lamented how slow US congregations have been to welcome and adapt this movement for our setting. Now, as an admirer and ally of the United Methodist mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, I am thrilled to see Fresh Expressions gaining this hearing in United Methodism in the United States. May thousands of congregations be inspired and equipped by Audrey Warren and Kenneth Carter's new book!" - Brian D. McLaren, author of The Great Spiritual Migration "I was most fortunate to have Ken Carter and Audrey Warren as my guides as we explored Fresh Expressions of Church all across England. Now you are fortunate enough to have them lead you on a similar journey through the pages of this book. I hope you will be as excited as I was to find Church as I always dreamed it could be, moving outside the walls of sanctuaries and radically following the Holy Spirit's lead to new spaces and new people. This is the Church of Acts and the early Methodists. I hope it is also the Church of the twenty-first century.Ã Â Enjoy your journey!" --Sue Haupert-Johnson, Resident Bishop of the North Georgia Episcopal Area, The United Methodist Church Ã¢â ¬Å“If youÃ¢â ¬â„¢ve felt God calling your church into a new kind of mission but you havenÃ¢â ¬â„¢t been sure how to go about it Ã¢â ¬â • this book is a great place to start. Get ready for a dose of hope.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Kenda Creasy Dean, Mary D. Synnott Professor of Youth, Church and Culture, Princeton Theological Seminary Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“This book is an essential group study for United Methodists who are serious about GodÃ¢â ¬â„¢s mission. Well researched, clearly written, and insightful, this volume includes carefully developed Bible studies and reflection questions for every chapter. Ã¢â ¬â •Elaine A. Heath, dean, Duke Divinity School Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“I owe my spiritual life to a group of pioneer missionaries who followed Jesus

into my world. Fresh Expressions is a new way to do this.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Jorge Acevedo, lead pastor, Grace Church, a multi-site United Methodist congregation Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Marvelous stuff! Pray God this timely book, with its readable and inspirational content and Bible studies, finds its way into the hearts, minds, and decisions of every congregation in every conference!Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Martyn Atkins, former General Secretary of the Methodist Church in Britain "The traditional church should not fear the loss of their traditions in fresh expressions of church, but rather find hope that their traditions can be passed down to generations to come." - Luke S. Edwards (http://www.lukesedwards.com)

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Customer Reviews

Kenneth H. Carter Jr. is Resident Bishop of the Florida Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. He is a moderator of the Commission on a Way Forward and in 2018Ã¢â ¬â œ2020 will serve as president of the Council of Bishops. Bishop Carter is the author of ten books, including Pray for Me, A Way of Life in the World, The Gifted Pastor, and Near the Cross. He is a contributor to Feasting on the Word and The Wesley Study Bible. He formerly served as senior pastor of Providence United Methodist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, where his ministry was described by the American Religious Historian Diana Butler Bass in her Christianity for the Rest of Us, and superintendent of the Smoky Mountain District in Western Northern Carolina, which included seventy churches across seven counties, all in the region of Appalachia.Ã Â Rev. Dr. Audrey B. Warren, a native Floridian, did not venture too far from her hometown of Naples to plant some roots.

Audrey currently resides in Miami, FL Ã Â where she and her husband Jose Luis are active members of their very diverse downtown community.Ã Â Audrey earned her Bachelor of Arts from Florida Southern College where she majored in Religion, and then ventured out of Florida for only a few years to earn her Masters of Divinity from Duke Divinity School in Durham, NC.Ã Â Audrey then continued her studies at Wesley Theological Seminary where she earned her Doctorate of Ministry focusing on Children and Spirituality. She is an ordained Elder in the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church and currently serves as Senior Pastor at First United Methodist Church of Miami.Since 2013 Audrey has co-convened the Fresh Expressions movement in the Florida Annual Conference. Audrey's greatest joy in ministry is teaching Yoga Chapel in Downtown Miami as well as visioning with her congregation new ways to be church in a growing and diverse city.Ã Â As a fluent Spanish-speaker Audrey enjoys going to see Latino Rock Band concerts in her free time. You also might find her biking with her husband or at the beach on her days off.Ã Â

As the pastor of a new form of church in a traditional mainline denomination, the last three years have felt lonely at times. Was the Holy Spirit indeed leading our chaotic little church forming in the saloon, or was I way off? A constant question echoing in my mind was, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Is this ok?ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•Encountering the Fresh Expressions movement assured me that I was not alone. Theologians steeped in the rich traditions of the church had worked through theological questions about new forms of church arising alongside traditional church and had come to the conclusion that not only was this ok, but that we were witnessing the next great movement of the Holy Spirit in the Mainline Church.The greatest gift the fresh expressions movement gave me was language. I had a new form of church that met in a saloon, connected to a high-steeple Methodist church, but I had no idea how to describe it. The fresh expressions movement gave me the language of the mixed-economy: Boone UMC was an inherited church and King Street Church was a fresh expression of church, sent out, yet tethered for support and accountability.In their newly released book, Bishop Ken Carter and Rev. Audrey Warren offer the additional gift of tailoring the language of the fresh expressions movement to the United Methodist Church. The importance of this language is emphasized by a glossary of terms at the end of each chapter. With the spreading of this book at annual conferences this summer, I eagerly anticipate the language of Fresh Expressions seeping into our denominationÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s structures, missional strategies, and practice.In this book, Carter and Warren have offered United Methodist churches an accessible introduction to exploring fresh expressions in the Methodist tradition.It is not difficult for United Methodists to find the Wesleyan roots of the Fresh Expressions movement in nearly all previously

published materials, but it is indeed helpful to have a book written for United Methodists by United Methodists in a language that we can fully understand and embrace.This book offers the reader a wide view of the movement. Carter and Warren explore the sociological background necessitating the fresh expressions movement as well as a thoughtful introduction in how to start fresh expressions in various contexts, all the while connecting the movement to our denominationÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s past, present, and future. Each chapter opens with a story and closes with a Bible study, making this an excellent resource for the local church.I highly recommend this book for conferences and churches that are ready to explore a new journey in engaging their communities. This book makes an excellent short-term book study with an evangelism committee, mission committee, or any group of folks interested in reaching outside of the walls of their church. The engaging content, timely Bible studies, and thought-provoking questions will lead to invigorating conversations for churches growing weary of the same way of doing things.

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