

The Rev. Jay Lawlor on "Considerations for Change" in Congregational Development and Vitality

The Rev. Jay Lawlor focuses on the life cycle of congregations and why it is important for leaders to consider.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, US, March 7, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rev. Jay Lawlor](#) looks at

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[Considerations for Change](#) as he writes "There has been a lot of attention paid over the years in congregational development research on understanding the various cycles in the life of the congregation and their willingness to change." He then references the work of Arlin J. Rothauge on "The Life Cycle in Congregations." Rothauge pointed out that a congregation is in one of the four stages of the life cycle:

1. Birth and Formation
2. Stability and Redefinition
3. Decline and Redevelopment
4. Death and Rebirth

The Rev. Lawlor discusses each of the four cycles based on Rothauge's work. He then looks at how Alan Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk have contributed to the research on congregational cycles in their book "The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World." In it they describe how congregations move through three zones (or phases) of change. They posit that congregations are making decisions more out of choice or crisis depending on which zone (phase) they are in as they journey along the cycle of congregational life.

Next, the Rev. Jay Lawlor explores the work of Linda Bobbitt with the Congregational Vitality Project of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and what Bobbitt calls her visual "Dimensions of Congregational Vitality" and how she organizes them into grouped blocks (based on the concept of the game Jenga). The concept is that different factors (dimensions) are grouped together with respect to the type of change needed in addressing those factors for congregational vitality.

To conclude, the Rev. Lawlor observes "Anyone who has gone through change in a congregation knows the work is not easy. There will likely be starts and stops, failure, and even unfinished change in some congregations." He looks at "Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leaders" Gilbert Rendle and "The Diffusion of Innovations" by Everett M. Rogers.

To learn more you can visit

<https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/missionprojects/congregationalvitality/considerationsforchange/>

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