



GCI *Buzz*

Healthy Church: Ministry Rhythms part 2

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A healthy church utilizes ministry rhythms to invite members of the church and neighborhood to participate in ministry with Christ together.

The Church as a **Community**

Christian Community: a group of believers who share a common life in Christ, through **worship, deepening of relationship, and service to their neighbors.**

Members of One Body

1 Corinthians 12:12

Paul tells us that the church is the Body of Christ. “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12). He explains further, “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it” (verse 27).

This verse emphasizes the importance of unity and diversity in the church. No matter how we or others may perceive our function, our individual role is vital to the functioning of the whole. Paul emphasizes the worth of every Christian with the metaphor of the Body of Christ.

Christian Ecology

We can apply the concept of ecology to the church. Ecology refers to the way created things interact with one another and with their created environment.

The church is the Body of Christ, a living organism that is mutually interdependent. We all need one another, and especially, we need the head, Jesus Christ. Christian life and growth is primarily focused on the community, because the part always contributes to the well-being of the whole.

Christians grow as a result of being nourished and taught.

We see this in the Hope and Faith Avenues.

The role of the church is to provide nourishment and direction that will enhance spiritual growth for individual members.

This then leads us to the Love Avenue. Christ told his disciples to teach what he had taught them. *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).*

Every Christian
has a responsibility
to be a spiritual
environmentalist.

We must bear one another's burdens. Our brothers and sisters are precious resources we should treat and handle with care. Each of us contributes to the health of the church, our spiritual life-support system.

Establishing Rhythms of Community

Jesus demonstrated how life in ministry isn't accomplished in isolation.

Jesus ministered to his disciples by bringing them into a caring community where they spent time with Jesus and with each other. In and through the relationships developed within this community, the disciples found fulfillment of their God-given needs for love, significance and belonging.

This is why we are team-based. The church is a community, and our community relies on rhythms to work. This allows seasons of rest and reflection within each person's ministry.

Jesus showed how all the aspects of ministry are interwoven with community.

As communities and groups follow Jesus, we discern together what regular rhythms and structures we need to preserve our fellowship and continue growing in Christ.

Instead of settling for one-size-fits-all practices, we instead intentionally consider the unique needs and opportunities within our distinct community.

We bring this question before God: What communal rhythms do we need to thrive?

Examples:

1. The pastor of your congregation has to make an emergency trip across the country to be there for their ailing parent. They have an established Hope Avenue team with multiple members who are equipped to deliver the Sunday message. The Pastor contacts the Hope Avenue champion and they ask one of these members to give the sermon Sunday, which is already outlined because they follow the RCL and worship calendar resources.
2. The Faith Avenue team brainstorms their annual calendar and intentionally alternates different types of connect groups to foster spiritual growth and renewal. Knowing each member of the body has different strengths and areas for growth, they provide discipleship opportunities to meet the diverse experiences of their members.

Summary

Establishing community is essential to church renewal. **When we integrate our gifts and lives, we establish rhythms of community and reflect our triune God.** Another benefit of working together as the body of Christ in community is avoiding burnout and providing a solid support system. This looks like avenue champions rotating responsibilities, and leadership teams that are devoted to the growth and spiritual, mental and physical health of their leaders. Consider how different rhythms could benefit your ministry.