

Youth Ministry and Intergenerational Faith Formation

Presented by
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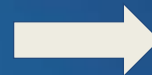
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Three stories that set the stage:

1. The safest place in the world
2. The thank you dinner

3. “Children and youth ministry cannot flourish until the graduation syndrome is eradicated.”

From “Behave-Believe-Belong”
“Belong-Believe-Behave”



A Definition

Discipleship and faith formation: the lifelong (cradle to the grave) journey in which Christ is formed in us, both personally and communally.

Galations 4:19

You are “my dear children for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.”

Philippians 3: 10-12

“I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”

II Corinthians 3: 18, 4: 7

“And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit....But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.”

Our fundamental spiritual needs are the same for all ages.

These include:

The need to belong to Jesus and his people

The need to receive and to give

The need for a safe place where authentic faith has room to breathe and grow

The need for respected uniqueness that makes room for community

We all long to be part of church communities that are shaped by grace.

What might such communities look like?

They have suffered hurt without rancor, are gently corrective toward wrong rather than judgmental, and do not try to set things straight as much as order affairs lovingly, intent upon carrying along joyfully any who may be weak, trustfully biding God's timing.

What might such communities look like?

They live like people raised from the dead; they don't have to prove anything to themselves or to anybody. They are not compulsive people trying to make good or to live up to requirements. They are subject to grace alone, and act clean, singularly pure amid all kinds of complexities that won't go away.

(Calvin Seerveld, meditation on the resurrection of Jesus,
Christian Courier, April 2007)

Youth ministry is like one plant in a beautifully tangled garden that draws on the same nutrients and garden-care.

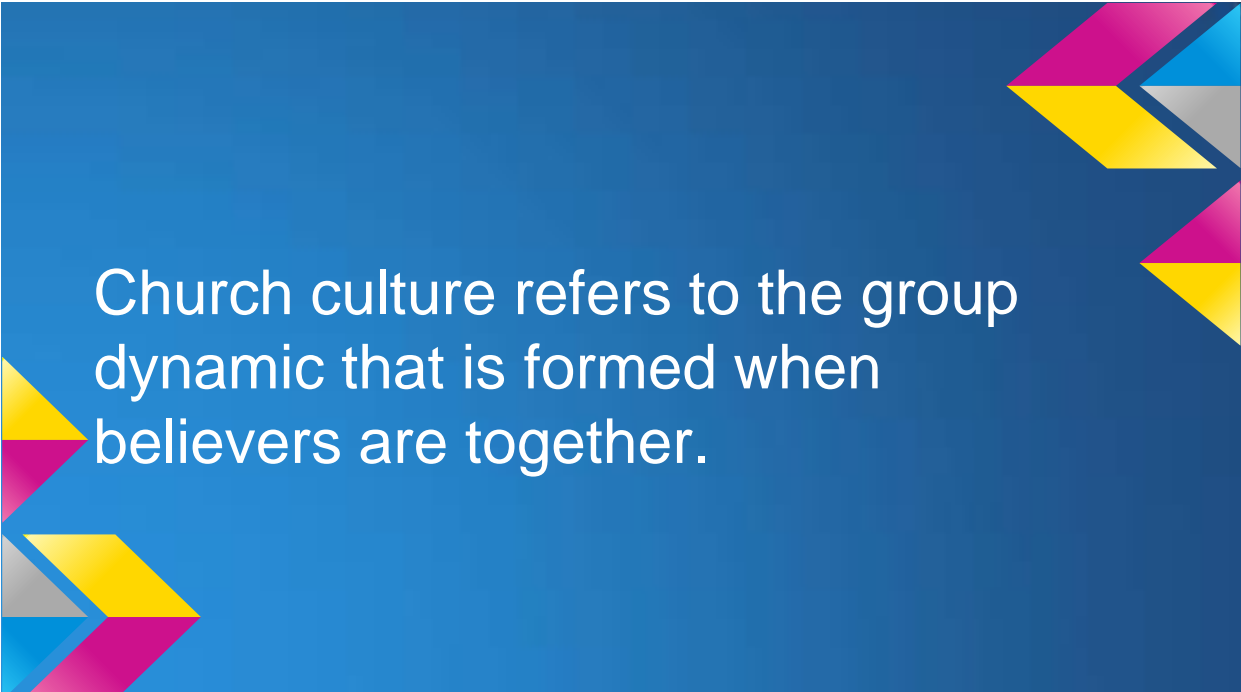


J. E. H. MacDonald 1873-1932
The Tangled Garden, 1916
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Tangled_Garden.jpg
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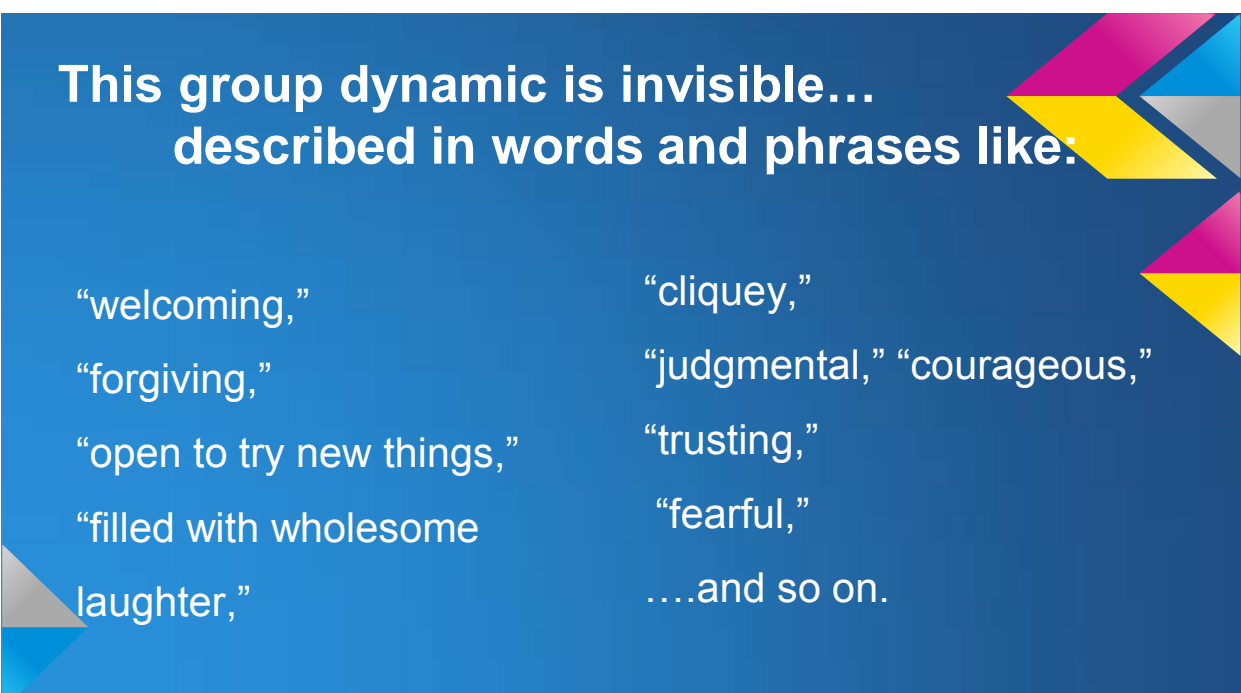
Tending the garden requires “pastoring the congregational culture.”

Working on culture is essential.

If we do not work on culture, the culture will work on us.



Church culture refers to the group dynamic that is formed when believers are together.



**This group dynamic is invisible...
described in words and phrases like:**

“welcoming,”

“forgiving,”

“open to try new things,”

“filled with wholesome
laughter,”

“cliquey,”

“judgmental,” “courageous,”

“trusting,”

“fearful,”

....and so on.

Church culture is always there,
and is one of the most influential
dimensions of church life.

- It is where the Holy Spirit moves or is quenched.
- It silently but loudly declares what matters the most, what our mission is.

Church culture is always there,
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dimensions of church life.

- It tells people how welcome they are and to what extent they belong to the community.
- It silently but loudly declares what matters the most, what our mission is.

Church culture is always there, and is one of the most influential dimensions of church life.

→ It is often ignored, but needs to be intentionally shaped.

This shaping happens when:

- ❖ Someone is appointed to provide leadership in this area. Example: an elder of faith formation.
- ❖ Leadership teams make it a priority by modeling the culture the church is called to have.

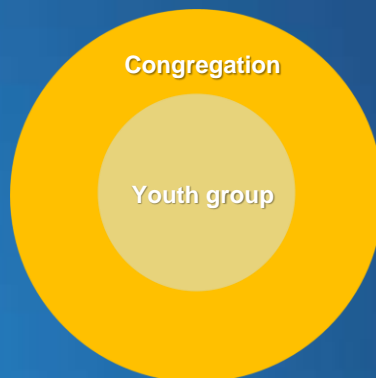
This shaping happens when:

- ❖ Leadership teams learn to experience the church through the hearts of others.
- ❖ Its covenantal character is addressed in some way

This shaping happens when:

- ❖ Culture- toxins are named and ministered to.

The congregation and the youth group each have their own culture, and these two synergize with each other.



The challenge of the important and the urgent:

...culture is important, but getting ready for the next youth group meeting is urgent. The urgent tends to crowd out the important.

Closing reflections



Q & A



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