

PRESBYTERY OF CHARLOTTE BUILDING HEALTHY CHURCHES DVD PROJECT

Overview:

What is a healthy church? Why do some congregations grow exponentially and others are in steep decline or facing imminent closure? Why are some churches stuck in the mud exerting tremendous energy and resources, but having no measurable forward movement?

George Barna and George Gallup indicate that 80-85% of churches in the United States are at a plateau or in decline, and that spells trouble. The Presbyterian Church (USA) has lost 458 churches over the past 10-years by way of dissolution, dismissal and merger. The overall membership in the Presbytery of Charlotte declined by 423 persons among its 134 member churches in 2006.

The Church Development Committee (CDC) of the Presbytery of Charlotte believes it is time to reverse these trends. We believe and will challenge our churches to take seriously the Great Commission of Jesus Christ in 'Making Disciples.' The CDC in partnership with the Committee on Ministry and the Congregational Nurture Committee hosted a "Building Healthy Churches Workshop" November 1-3, 2007 hosted at the Hickory Grove Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. A planning team composed of representatives from these committees planned this event for months.

Churches were invited to send teams comprised of the pastor, elders, deacons and members. Forty-Three churches responded from our presbytery and one each from 4-neighboring presbyteries. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive. (*Visit the website: www.presbyofcharlotte.org and click on the "program areas" tab. Select "church development" to view the feedback.*) As participants learned new techniques and cutting edge strategies, they encountered the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit. This was a personal and community transformational experience.

This set of DVD's with study guide have been produced in conjunction with Leadership Development. They share what healthy churches look like and both challenge and enable your church to take seriously the Great Commission, to "Make Disciples for Jesus Christ." When a church becomes committed to making disciples, this is a sign of a healthy church.

About the Workshop Leader:

The Rev. Dr. Paul Borden is Executive Minister of American Baptist Church-West; now known as Building Healthy Churches (BHC) where there are 220 congregations. He is author of two books: *Hit the Bullseye: How Denominations Can Aim the Congregation at the Mission Field* and *Direct Hit: Aiming Real*

Leaders at the Mission Field. He is a highly sought after theologian, church practitioner, church consultant and disciple of Christ.

Caveat:

We have sought to provide a quality instructional DVD for your use and a guide to accompany it, but we do so acknowledging a couple of weaknesses. First, you will discover short interruptions to the audio in a few places. In saying this, we also believe you will be able to bridge the gap between the interruptions with the content given before and after the interruptions. Secondly, there are times when questions are asked by participants that are inaudible on the DVD. Even with these small difficulties, this is still a valuable resource that you will want to use in training every officer and leader in your church.