

The Shape of 21st Century Canadian Culture

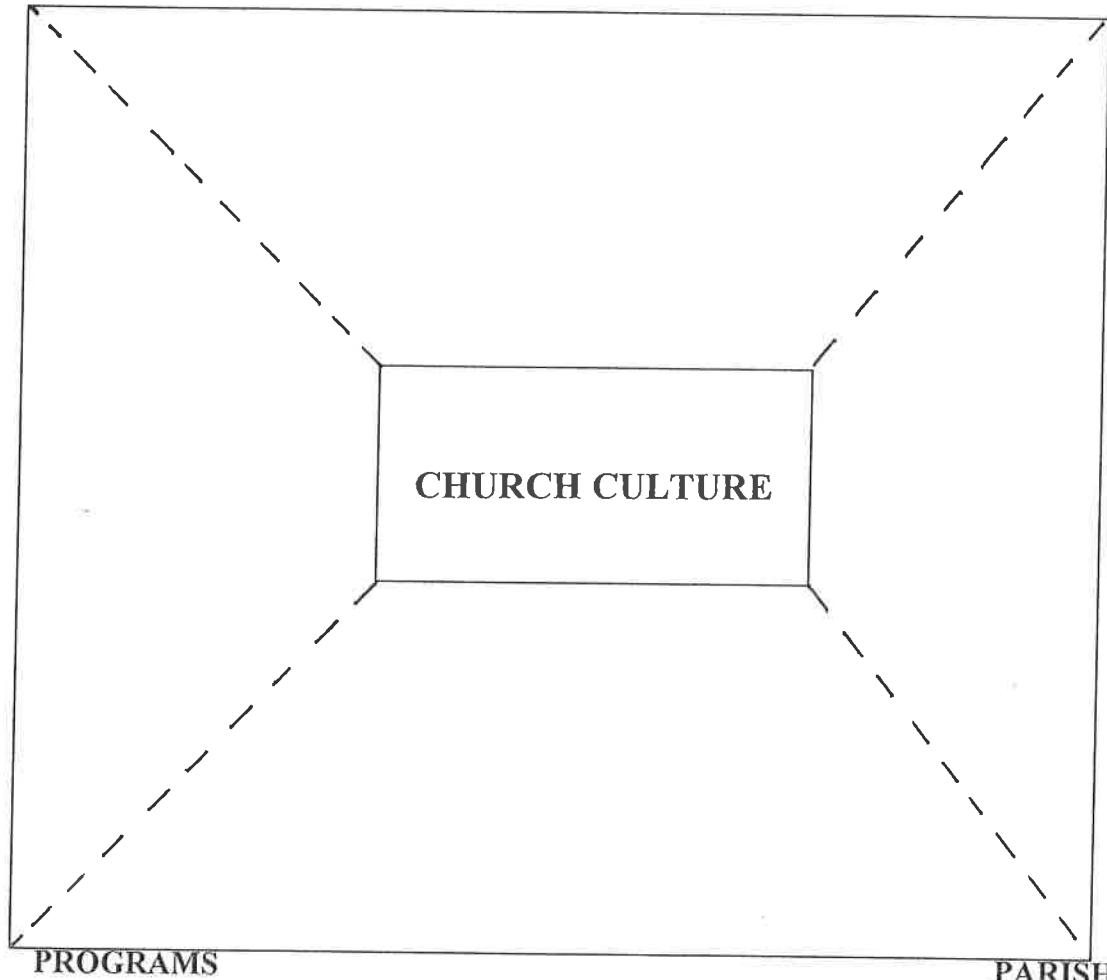
- 1. There is a growing gap between personal spirituality and religious institutions. An increasing number of people view themselves as “spiritual but not religious” or even “spiritual but secular.”**
- 2. The Church has been relegated from the mainline of society to the margins.**
- 3. Apart from the celebration of Christmas and Good Friday at holidays, Christianity has no special or pre-eminent place in the culture. It is now one of many religions on a level playing field with each being treated equally.**
- 4. Religion no longer plays a prominent part in the public square. Sunday is just another day with even banks now open. Churches are no longer given deference on Sunday mornings, with sports and other events now scheduled and businesses opened.**
- 5. As of now, there is no prolonged active hostility against organized religion, only indifference. But that may change as the population becomes increasingly secular and less religious.**
- 6. Church doctrines will become less relevant; experiential elements of religion will become more important.**
- 7. Spiritual seekers will continue to turn to the East for spiritual well-being with yoga and Buddhist meditation becoming increasingly popular. Islam will continue to grow in numbers and become a sizeable presence in Canada.**
- 8. Even religious adherents will increasingly practice a “pick and choose” approach to faith which is consumerist and experiential. There will be a tendency to mix elements of different traditions into hybrid forms as people search for new experiences of faith.**

- 9. Gender spirituality will be integrated into mainstream religion. Gay marriage will become normative in most Protestant Churches and the Church will have to face gender identity issues in a way that will challenge its understanding of sexuality.**
- 10. As the entertainment media becomes the primary conveyer of popular culture, it will compete with religious groups as the main bearer of spiritual and religious insight.**
- 11. There will be a greater appreciation for the connection between spirituality and health – holistic health.**
- 12. More and more congregations will take a market-based approach to find new members and keep the ones they have. Meeting needs, healing hurts, inspiring lives and supporting families of all ages and kinds will be the new focus of the church.**
- 13. Hierarchical churches will continue to decline at a rapid rate while congregational churches will hold their own or grow.**
- 14. Women will change the style and substance of religion, inspiring a faith that is less rigid and hierarchical.**
- 15. Two words will describe the future of Anglican and United Churches – downsized and decentralized.**
- 16. Ministering to the different races and ethnic groups of a multicultural society will be a central concern for religious institutions.**
- 17. Canada will continue its slide to becoming a radically secularized society where God and religion play little role in public decision-making.**

Dynamics of Church Culture

Churchmanship
Manger/Leader/Pastor
Personality Type
People Person / Task Oriented
Successful / Unsuccessful Pastorates
Enabler / Micromanager
Long or Short Tenures
Quality of Preaching & Teaching
PRIEST

Socio-economic status
Education level
Rural/Suburban/Urban
Employed/Unemployed
Families/ Children
Retirees / Male / Female
Public/Private sector
Spiritual orientation
PEOPLE



PROGRAMS
 Self-esteem rapt around key ministries
 What the parish takes pride in and does well
 Activities essential to self-identity and sense of mission
 Diocesan involvement
 Community Engagement
 Service – Worship – Education – Evangelism
 Pastoral Care – Stewardship - Spirituality

PARISH
As a Geography:
 Culture / Politics
 History
 Socio-Economic
As an Institution:
 Traditions
 Sacred Cows
 Traumatic Events
 Defining Moments
 Spiritual Orientation
 Way of Operating
 Conflict / Change

Why Churches Fail to Grow

- 1. Pastor more of a manager than a leader, more a chaplain than an equipper of ministry.**
- 2. Music fails to connect with the surrounding culture. (Note: a church's style of music will determine the kind of audience it attracts.)**
- 3. Lack of parking**
- 4. Poor nursery, church school and youth ministry**
- 5. Insufficient staffing: the church cannot afford to fund the level of ministry required to promote growth.**
- 6. A failure to meet the needs of different generations**
- 7. Traditionalism: the church is so rooted in the way it does things that it is incapable of breaking out and doing things in a new way to promote more effective ministry**
- 8. Inadequate facilities: a church can only grow to the level its facilities allow**
- 9. Unresolved conflict: warring factions and competing agendas in the church result in low morale and an inability to work for common mission.**
- 10. Lack of follow-up with newcomers**

Danger Signs for a Church

- 1. There are more funerals than baptisms and marriages.**
- 2. The pastor spends more time with individuals than groups, acting as a chaplain more than a leader.**

- 3. There is a decline in capital assets and a decline or plateau in member giving.**
- 4. At least one half of the members joined more than a decade ago.**
- 5. People are selected for positions of leadership for reasons other than competence.**
- 6. The church engages in the rental of its real estate to support the operating budget.**
- 7. The majority of people asked to volunteer decline.**

Characteristics of the Members of Growing Churches

- 1. They are willing to grow and pay the price for growth.**
- 2. They let the clergy lead and support the clergy to be effective pastors.**
- 3. They see themselves as ministers: members ministering to members and non-members alike.**
- 4. They are committed to spiritual growth, prayer and ongoing learning.**
- 5. They exercise their spiritual gifts in ministry.**
- 6. They accept theological diversity and different styles of worship while claiming the center in Jesus Christ.**
- 7. The parish leadership has a clear statement of its mission, vision and values which is affirmed and practiced in the congregation.**
- 8. They can deal with transitions: ending ministries that are no longer effective and beginning new ones.**

Characteristics of Declining Churches

- 1. Ambiguous identity – no clear understanding of mission and purpose of the church**
- 2. Low mission emphases – no outreach orientation but a focus on meeting the needs of parish members**
- 3. Unwieldy organization – decision-making is too bureaucratic and takes too long to implement**
- 4. Boring worship – worship is too wordy and too long**
- 5. Demographic homogeneity – top heavy with a certain type of people**
- 6. Little adult spiritual nurture – no growth and development of members**
- 7. Clergy dependency – clergy reduced to chaplains, administrators and micromanagers**
- 8. Little or no lay training for ministry – members are passive**
- 9. Poor communication**
- 10. Low member morale and lack of confidence about the future**

Characteristics of Effective Church Leaders

- 1. Serve as a catalyst to help people encounter the holiness of God.**
- 2. Continually hold up the mission of the church as the basis for unity.**
- 3. Possess conflict management skills and help others to do the same.**
- 4. Practice the spiritual disciplines, especially prayer and Bible reading.**
- 5. Promote a renewed sense of God's mission for the Church.**
- 6. Conduct an honest self-assessment annually.**
- 7. Be accountable to the wardens.**
- 8. Proactively address problems.**
- 9. Engage in self-care, find the right pace and deal with stress by balancing personal, family and vocational life.**
- 10. Develop the vision of the church, modified by the leadership with ownership by the congregation.**
- 11. Be the primary preacher and teacher.**

Clergy Leadership Priorities

- 1. Communicate effectively through good preaching and teaching.**
- 2. Articulate and embody the central mission and vision of the church.**
- 3. Teach true biblical giving and assist with the fundraising.**
- 4. Establish and maintain integrity in the way money is handled.**

5. **Set the environment, culture and attitude that will maintain the church's vitality, its treatment of people and its devotion to worship.**
6. **Maintain your mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health.**

Key Rector Priorities for St. James

1. **Preaching, teaching and worship planning**
2. **Parish leadership**
3. **Pastoral oversight**

A Strategy for Healthy Parish Leaders (From Rabbi Ed Friedman)

1. **Define yourself, but stay connected to others.**
2. **Be a non-anxious presence while differentiating your position from opposing points of view.**
3. **Declare your vision of the future without insisting that you must have your own way.**
4. **View the church as a family system.**

The Plateaued Church: 7 Challenges

1. **Vision Problems** A church with no official mission, vision and values statements will plateau. What is the purpose / vision of your church? Does the congregation “own” it?
2. **No Plan** Without a plan the vision never becomes a reality. What is the plan of ministry for your church?
3. **Spiritual Void** The spiritual maturity of your membership is crucial to growth. What type of spiritual development and leadership training does your church have for the membership?
4. **Competition** The church exists in a highly competitive climate. What is your competition? School events? Leisure time? Travel?
5. **Facilities** Adequate and attractive facilities are necessary for church growth. How is your space being used? Could certain space be better utilized to facilitate renewed growth?
6. **Age** Older churches grow more slowly than newer churches. What new things in your church presently need doing? Do you “see” a future with a purpose?
7. **Relevance** As communities change, a ministry focus may need to be altered. What is your community like? Has it seen significant change in the last ten years? Has your church kept up with those changes in designing ministry strategies to meet people’s needs?

Two Ways of Doing Church: Maintenance Versus Missionary

<u>Element</u>	<u>Maintenance Model</u>	<u>Missionary Model</u>
Inevitable results	Membership decline	Membership growth
Goals	Ministering to church members Maintaining the institution	Making disciples of miraculous expectation Glorious transformation of lives
External focus	Weak or none	Making disciples of unchurched Spiritual development of seekers
Internal focus	Church members	Discipleship and community spiritual development
Role of miraculous	Miraculous sometimes experienced but not expected	Miraculous expected and experienced
Expectations of personal transformation	Occasional at best	Glorious transformation expected and experienced
Membership	Largely restricted, although not by design	Comprehensive & inclusive
Discovery	Confirmation or inquirers' classes with varying content	Discovery classes with a clear content that leads the seeker to accept Christ as Savior and follow him as Lord
Language	Christian jargon – meaningless or confusing phrases to the unchurched	Language that is meaningful to the unchurched
Relevance	Requires the individual parishioner to dig it out	Church & faith made relevant to everyday life of members, seekers and unchurched through sermons, Christian education and small groups
Acceptance of doubt & disbelief	Discouraged	Encouraged

Meaningful worship with a spiritual component	Occasional	Consistent meaningful worship emphasized
Sermon quality	Not as important as other factors	Crucial
Signage	Inadequate signage so that visitors are easily lost or intimidated while finding their way around	Clear signs & maps that welcome visitors & newcomers & point the way to all possible destinations in the church
Biblical studies	Some Bible study	Biblical teaching, regular weekly Bible study classes and small group Bible studies
Prayer	Limited opportunities for Participation in prayer with others	Emphasis on prayer & praying, especially with & for others
Small groups	Some, but not emphasized	Emphasis placed on small groups through which to experience community, fellowship & faith
Lay Ministries	Some lay ministries involving a few members	Many & varied lay ministries, developed to meet the needs of church members & the unchurched
Welcome to visitors	Cold to warm reception	Enthusiastic reception; seekers acknowledged and celebrated
Training of laity	Little or none	Extensive & comprehensive training program to prepare laity for ministries
Testimony	Largely nonexistent	Frequent
Management of Volunteers	Rudimentary	Sophisticated; extensive training
Education programs	Design programs to inform & challenge congregations & serve church members	Design programs to inform & empower congregations to achieve vision; programs serve church members & unchurched

Congregational growth	Lip service only; indifferent; growth actually feared or resisted	Committed to growth & passionate about making disciples
Leadership style of clergy	Hierarchical model; loyalty expected	Servant-leadership model; participatory; trust-driven; loyalty earned
Communication style of clergy	Top-down; dictate; lecture; little feedback sought	Two-way; listen; teach; feedback solicited
Responsibility for Evangelism	Primary responsibility rests with clergy	Primary responsibility rests with laity
Music in worship	Quality not a top priority; traditional music only	High quality music that is diverse
Sermons	Aimed at church members; not necessarily relevant to daily life	Powerful, instructive & inspiring; explain Christian principles that are relevant to daily life; aimed at church members & unchurched
Committee appointments	Reward active, visible members with appointments, regardless of their skills or leadership qualities	Seek leaders who endorse the vision & are themselves visionary & talented
Budgeting & finance	Develop a budget based on the previous years	Reallocate resources to support the vision
Planning	Top-down, with minimal lay input	Solicit input from those to be served; critique present system based on vision; maximize return in accordance with the vision
Youth Ministry	Youth viewed as church of tomorrow; form youth groups	Youth viewed as church of today; make disciples
Communications	Newsletter; pew cards	Newsletter that supports the vision & focuses on the miraculous
Clergy performance standard	Loyalty to the denomination	Clear performance objectives based on vision; accountability for meeting performance objectives

Spiritual Mandate

**How does the church
position itself
to participate best
in what God is doing
in the world?**

Cultural Mandate

Missional Mandate

**Critical Mass of
Active Members**

Effective Clergy and Lay Leadership

Diocesan Culture That Promotes and Fosters Growth

Prerequisites to Church Growth

Four Marks of the Early Church

Kerygma... the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus about the Kingdom of God

- Is a message of faith, hope and love being preached on a regular basis in your church?

Didache... the teaching of the apostles to form and strengthen members as disciples and witnesses of Jesus in a hostile world

- Is the quality of the instruction given to children and the converted worthy of the Gospel?

Koinonia... the experience of Christian community where members care for members in all the ups and downs of life

- Do members of the community care for one another and newcomers in a way that truly represents the compassion of Christ?

Diakonia... the ministry of service and outreach as a witness of God's love for the world

- Is this church reaching out beyond itself in some way to serve the poor, the destitute, the outcast and the like?

The Seven Essentials for Anglican Church Life

1. **Service...** Caring and compassionate outreach ministries that seek to alleviate human need and suffering in the community, diocese, nation and world.
2. **Worship...** worshipping God in the beauty of holiness through word, sacrament, liturgy and music.
3. **Evangelism...** sharing the good news of God's love for all people in Jesus Christ.
4. **Education...** developing people of all ages in Christian faith and practice as disciples of Christ making disciples of Christ.
5. **Pastoral Care...** caring and compassionate ministries, mainly to members but also to non-members that offer a loving and grace-filled response to the joys and pains of being human.
6. **Stewardship...** managing our material resources as God's faithful trustees... giving back to God a portion of all that God has given us... responding to God's abundant grace by giving out of gratitude.
7. **Spirituality...** growing in our relationship with God through rituals, practices and behaviors that foster such a relationship... being in harmony with God, people, nature and ourselves... becoming faithful disciples of Jesus engaged in ministry in the church and mission in the world.

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective and Ineffective Churches

On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), how effective is your church?

Highly Effective Churches:

1. **Strive for excellence in service to Christ** – These churches give God their best, whether in the care of church grounds, the worship on Sunday or the outreach ministries during the week. They do not tolerate mediocrity.
2. **Cultivate the spirit of innovation and experimentation** – These churches make the seven last words of the church – “We’ve never done it that way before” – a distant memory. People are free to develop and try new ministries.
3. **Take the initiative to build relationships with people and groups in the wider community beyond the congregation** – These churches refuse to be isolated. They are involved in their communities both in advocacy and activities. They are constantly inviting people to “come and see” what is happening in the church.
4. **Accept responsibility for mistakes, learn from them, and in all things let grace abound** – These churches know that Christians aren’t perfect; they are forgiven. So making mistakes is not the worst thing that can happen. Besides, we often learn from our failures. In the end, it is God’s grace and not our achievements that matter.
5. **“Always be prepared to give an account of the hope that is within you” (1 Peter 3:15)** – These churches look for where the love, energy and life are flowing and focus on that. They recognize excuses for what they are: a sign of insufficient commitment. They seek to be people of hope, trusting in God to find a way even when we can’t.

6. **Be willing to let people go in order to stay focused on your core mission** – These churches know it is more important to be clear and steady about its core mission than it is to make everyone happy. They accept that some people may be better off in another congregation, and that no church can be all things to all people.
7. **Fund ministry faithfully and generously** – These churches know God loves cheerful givers. They are passionate about stewardship and funding ministry to promote God’s kingdom and fulfill the church’s mission. So they spend money wisely, well and freely in God’s cause.

Highly Ineffective Churches:

On a scale of 1 (low) and (5) high, how ineffective is your church?

1. **Elevate mediocrity to a spiritual discipline** – These churches figure out where the average falls and aim below there. They think that God really doesn’t expect much of the church, just to “get by” and survive.
2. **Take no risks** – These churches love bureaucracy. They think that a successful practice of risk avoidance is often best achieved by sending any and all new ideas to a minimum of four boards or committees who understand that it is their role to say “no” to new ideas for their review and approval. They often reinforce their rejections with remarks noting how a particular idea might make the church liable, cost money or ruffle feathers.
3. **Practice the following evangelism strategy: “If they want us, they know where to find us”** – These churches assume everyone does know where you are and what you are. The building looks like a medieval fortress – foreboding and not welcoming. Ushers and greeters look like palace guards as they perform their roles.

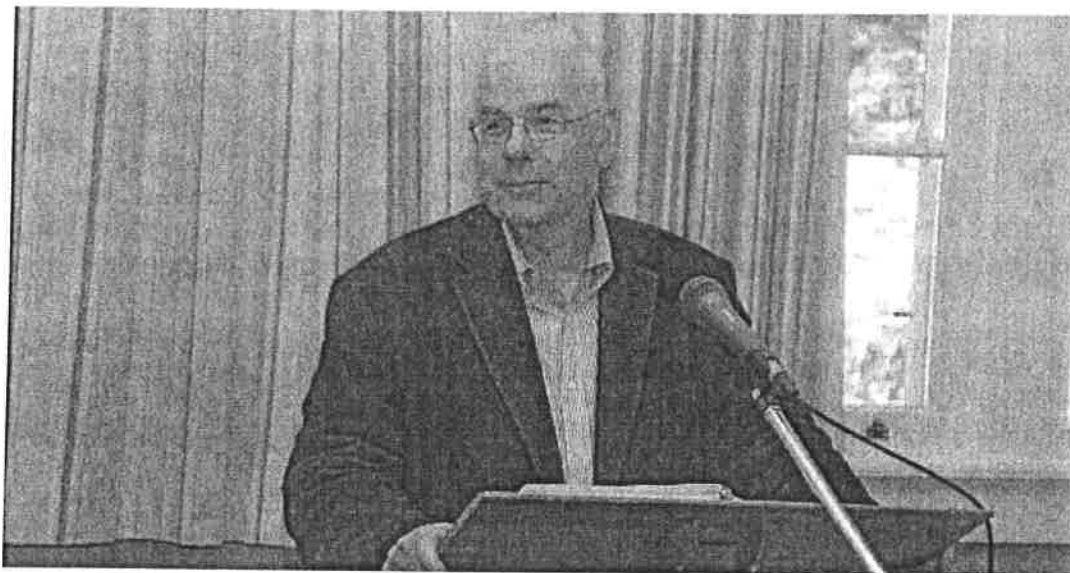
4. **Blame early and often** – These churches maintain dysfunction by regularly identifying scapegoats. In some congregations, clergy make wonderful scapegoats. They may also blame “newcomers” or “people who don’t understand how we do things in this church.” If all else fails, they blame the diocese or the Anglican Church of Canada.
5. **Always be prepared to make an account of the excuses that are within you** – These churches always have excuses why they function so ineffectively. For them it is always some other’s fault, never their own.
6. **Make it clear to all that it is the job of the rector and staff to keep the members happy** – These churches believe that the job of the clergy and staff is keep everyone happy, even if that means the church never moves forward in mission or develops an innovative ministry. They believe that if someone is unhappy, it is a sure sign the rector has not done his or her job.
7. **Spend as little money as possible** – These churches rarely talk about stewardship or funding for mission. They presume that the money will just come, as if magically, without any teaching on the need to give in response to a giving God. The members believe the very best programs cost nothing, and that the church should reflect modesty and simplicity by not being overly funded.



Anglican Church of Canada

News from General Synod

Congregational development: 'It's being a missionary'



By Matt Gardner

The following is part of a new monthly series on congregational development, which features reflections from Anglicans on how they are responding to the challenges and opportunities facing the church today.

Looking out across the landscape of Canadian Anglican churches today, the Rev. Dr. Gary Nicolosi, rector of St. James Westminster Church in London, Ont., sees a “twofold crisis” unfolding—one linked to what he calls a “profound shift taking place in Canadian culture.”

Nicolosi describes the new emerging culture as “multicultural, multi-religious, pluralistic and secular.” Its development has had a profound impact on the Anglican Church of Canada both demographically, as expressed in a gap between the age of the average Canadian (30-something) and the average Anglican (60-something), and financially, since the Anglicans who give the most money to the church are more than 60 years-old with no corresponding group to replace them.

In the context of a strongly secular country that is not so much hostile to church as “indifferent” to it, Nicolosi calls for a church that is more entrepreneurial, market-driven, need-meeting and culturally savvy. In a word, it must engage in evangelism. But as Nicolosi notes, the task of congregational development extends even further.

