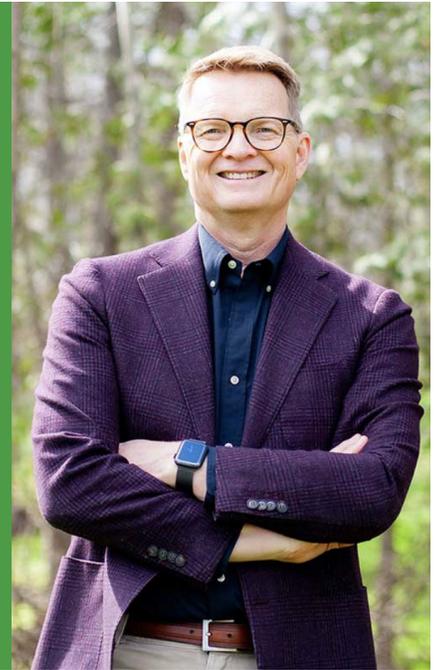


partners

THE KINGDOM EXTENSION NEWSLETTER OF THE EC CHURCH

OUR NEW OLD CHURCH

The doors are open. Long-time members are eager to be back in their favorite pew, to socialize with their church friends, and to see their favorite activities back on the calendar. So are we. But as church leadership guru Carey Nieuwhof reminds us: "Churches that over-focus on the needs of insiders will eventually only have insiders. And when that happens, you missed the mission." We have a commission from Christ to bring the message of salvation to our world, a world that has changed. The four articles from Carey that we've included here can help us build relationships with the unchurched, create an environment where they meet Jesus, and develop newcomers and old-timers into leaders for his Kingdom. The KEC is excited to see how God re-creates your church into the Kingdom presence that transforms your community! If we can help you get there, please contact us.



How To Reach Unchurched People Who Don't Think They Need God

USED BY PERMISSION

A few years ago, I read a survey that made me literally sit up straight as I took notice.

The number of people in Canada (my country) who profess "no religion" is now at 24%, up from 16.5% a decade earlier.

That's a **massive** shift in a mere ten years. As I reflect on it all, I'm left with this growing realization.

People are learning to live comfortably without God.

Want to see where this might be heading? Go to Western Europe, where people have very comfortable lives and only a splinter regularly attend church. They just don't see their need for God.

Rather than being met with a wall of hostility, Christians are mostly being met with a wall of indifference and perceived irrelevance.

I believe that means a massive shift in attitude and approach for those of us in leadership in the local church.

Much of the church's outreach over

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Carey Nieuwhof is a bestselling leadership author, speaker, podcaster, and former attorney. He hosts one of today's most influential leadership podcasts. His podcast, blog and online content are accessed by leaders over 1.5 million times each month. He speaks to leaders around the world about leadership, change and personal growth. Carey and his wife, Toni, live north of Toronto.

the last 60 years has been based on a few assumptions that are less and less true every year:

- **Young adults will return to church when they have kids. People will turn to God when they hit a crisis.**
- **Most people will come back to what they left when they were young.**
- **When people have spiritual needs, they will look to the church to fulfill them.**

Instead, here's what I see as increasingly true among unchurched people who are learning to live comfortably without God:

- **Affluence (even many of our poor are affluent from a global perspective) has left people with a sense they have all they need to face life.**
- **People don't always turn to God in a crisis; they honestly don't think the church can help.**
- **You can only come back to something you knew; when you are on your second or third generation of 'unchurched', there is nothing to come back to for many people.**
- **Personalized, google-able spirituality doesn't demand the assistance of anyone or anything else.**

So how do you reach a growing number of people who are learning to live comfortably without God?

People are learning to live comfortably without God.

1 BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Jesus was deeply relational, and it seems he liked relationships with people outside the 'church' more than he liked hanging around people

inside the 'church'.

One of the best ways to encourage people to build relationships with unchurched people is to stop running ministries in your church every night of the week.

Encourage the Christians in your church to get involved in their kids schools, to play sports in a community league, to get to know their neighbours.

Pick a few key ministries and do them well (we encourage people to serve on Sundays and be in community group one night a week; that's about it).

Salt only realizes its purpose if it gets out of the box and into the food it needs to season. You can't influence people you don't know.

You can't influence people you don't know.

2 SPEAK TO SUCCESS, NOT JUST FAILURE

In your preaching and in your conversation, if you are only prepared to speak to people in their moments of weakness and despair, you're going to miss a big chunk of your city.

If every example you share is of someone in a crisis or who has deep problems, you will never connect with people who like their lives or who have decent marriages, even without God. That kind of talk is also a bit of a guy-repellant.

So what might you say? A few ideas:

i. Talk about success, but ask questions about its emptiness.

Most successful people I know are always on a quest for more. Success promises, but never (quite) fully delivers. Speak to that. Ask questions like "do you ever wonder if there's more?" Or "ever wonder what that gnawing desire is really all about?"

ii. Assume people are doing their best. The derogatory and condescending caricatures of unchurched people by some Christians are just insulting... especially if you have unchurched people in the room. Most people are doing their best. They really are. If you start with acknowledging that and empathizing with them, they will accept your challenge at the end. Even value it.

iii. Respect their intelligence.

Most people have done some homework. Often quite extensive. They believe what they believe or don't believe for what they see as good reasons. When you respect them, they are more likely to respect you and your views.

Most successful people I know are always on a quest for more. Success promises, but never (quite) fully delivers. Speak to that.

3 VALUE THE GOOD YOU SEE

The everything secular is evil attitude of many religious leaders is not only a bit off base biblically, it's also ineffective. Common grace is still at work in the world.

If you read Acts 10, God appears to have valued people like Cornelius for his prayers and his gifts to the poor, even before his conversion.

Jesus never started a conversation with an outsider by condemning them (that's actually how he started his conversation with insiders...think about that), even if he finished it with a challenge ("go and sin no more"). Maybe that's because Jesus actually loves unchurched people.

It's going to take a lot of us rethinking our cultural assumptions as we move into this next era.

Almost every church leader

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wants to grow their church by reaching more people.

As culture continues to change rapidly into a post-Christian era, though, it's left many leaders feeling like they're not accomplishing their mission. For too many churches, things aren't going as hoped.

After you complete the assessment, you'll receive a detailed breakdown of your results and get access to a free teaching series that will help you take practical steps

forward in each of the five areas. When you're done, you'll be far more equipped to accomplish your mission. Don't be discouraged. You can still reach people. 📌

Take the free assessment now:

<https://careynieuwhof.com/church-outreach-assessment/>

This article can be found at: https://careynieuwhof.com/how-to-reach-unchurched-people-who-dont-think-they-need-god/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=How+do+you+reach+people+who+are+completely+comfortable+living+without+God%3F&utm_campaign=5%2F30+Reach+people+who+don+t+need+God%3F

3 Ways Attractional Church Needs to Change to Reach the Next Generation USED BY PERMISSION

In an era in which everything is changing so fast, it can be really difficult to discern what's next.

That's doubly true in church world. While the mission stays the same, the expression or model keeps changing.

The dominant model for growing churches over the last two decades is what many people call attractional church.

Often (but not always) attractional church takes the form of a little less worship (3-4 songs), hosting that explicitly welcomes unchurched people into the room, running everything through a filter with the guest in mind and often (but not always) includes topical preaching. Over the last few decades, that approach has helped thousands of churches reach hundreds of thousands—or millions—of previously unreached people.

But as culture changes, the

church needs to adjust. When what used to connect doesn't connect anymore, you either change or you settle for reaching fewer people.

So what exactly is changing?

For several fascinating reasons, attractional churches aren't growing as quickly as they used to and churches with a more charismatic expression seem to be on the rise.

These trends are borne out by Barna research that shows Millennials are the most likely generation to lean toward charismatic worship and more contemplative forms of expression.

To take the dialogue further, there are three pivots attractional churches can make that will help churches reach more people.

In the past, churches reached unchurched people by doing a little less on Sunday morning. Less worship. More careful language.

Less intensity. And for a decade or two, that was effective.

The changes that need to happen to reach people all focus around this surprising but challenging truth. In today's changing culture, unchurched people don't want **less** of God. They want **more**.

Here are three adjustments attractional churches can make to reach today's post-Christian culture.

Naturally, in a COVID and post-COVID world, church leaders are going to have to figure out how to do all of this online as well as in person, but that is more than possible.

A generation that's sick of hype is ready for hope.

1 LESS PRESENTATION. MORE PRESENCE.

There is something really powerful about the Christian church that's hard to deny: it's a dance between what we do and what God, in his sovereignty, does. 📌

This whole article can be found at: https://careynieuwhof.com/3-ways-attractional-church-is-changing-why-presence-beats-presentation/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=What+specific+changes+can+you+make+to+reach+more+young+people%3F+Here+are+3%3A&utm_campaign=5%2F31+attractional+changes+to+reach+next+gen

7 Ways to Build Teams of Great Leaders (when you feel like your team is lacking)

USED BY PERMISSION

Ever done this: looked at other churches and organizations and thought to yourself "I wish I had their leaders?"

And then you look around your church and think..."But I don't have leaders like that. And I have no idea how to get a great team to take us into the future."

If you've thought that, you're not alone. In a connected world, it's easy to look at churches that have amazing leaders and then focus on the leaders you don't have.

According to a survey I did of over 1400 senior church leaders, developing teams was their #1 pain point. They just don't feel like they have enough great people.

Not having enough people and not having the right people also keeps your church from growing. It's almost impossible to reach more people without the right teams.

This impacts church plants, existing churches, stuck churches and churches in transition alike. Not having enough team or the right team is a significant mission-inhibitor.

I can empathize.

I started ministry by pastoring three very small, declining churches with average attendances of 6, 14 and 23 (not making this up). Needless to say, they weren't exactly overflowing with leaders. And none of the churches had grown in literally a generation.

I've also been in the scramble of a start-up church, launching locations and rapid growth. That's another

kind of pressure entirely, but again, you can easily get to a point where you feel like you don't have enough leaders and you also need more leaders who can take you to the next level. But you just don't see any. While it can feel like all is lost in situations like that, it's not.

Wherever you find yourself (and I'm guessing most of you lead churches or organizations larger than 6 people), you can find the future from where you are in the present. You have to. It's the only way forward.

Great leaders don't randomly assemble.

The reason your people aren't like the people of the churches you admire is that you haven't led them there.

Get on your knees, look in the mirror and start leading or find someone who can. When you lead with all diligence, you call something out in people that God planted within them. People who have lived 'ordinarily' can begin to live 'extraordinarily' under the right leadership.

So how do you do it?

Here are 7 keys.

1 START WHERE YOU ARE

As difficult as this may feel, you need to start where you are, not where you want to be.

Starting where you are means starting with who you currently have. I know, that's difficult.

But too many leaders get lost in a

world where they think they can't do anything with their current situation. They focus on what they can't control, which is terribly unwise.

Smart leaders focus on what they can control, not on what they can't.

Building a team starts with who you have, not with who you don't have. So look around and honestly assess who you have.

Resist the temptation to live in the imaginary land where you have different people, a different church and even a different you.

If you start where you are, you have a much better chance of getting where you want to be.

2 LOOK FOR THE BEST LEADERS YOU CAN FIND

Believe it or not, you have leaders in your church. Maybe not Fortune 100 leaders or start-up entrepreneurs who are going to light the world on fire. Maybe not (yet) the kind of people that can lead great movements.

But you have leaders. I promise you, you do.

You know how you can tell who the leaders are? They're leading something. Maybe they're not leading at your church, but they're leading somewhere.

Or there's a 21-year-old working a minimum wage job who keeps winning employee of the month at a big box store.

Bottom line...look for the people who are leading something—who are leading anything. ◀

This whole article can be found at: https://careynieuwhof.com/7-ways-to-build-teams-of-great-leaders-when-you-feel-like-you-have-no-awesome-people/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=How+to+build+a+better+team+when+you+don+t+have+great+leaders+right+now&utm_campaign=6%2F25+7ways+to+build+great+teams

8 Signs Your Church is Actually Reaching Unchurched People

USED BY PERMISSION

So are you really reaching unchurched people at your church? How would you know...for real?

Just because a church is growing doesn't mean it's filling up with unchurched people.

Hoping to reach unchurched people is one thing. Reaching the unchurched is quite another.

When unchurched people actually start connecting with your church, things change deeply.

So how can you tell you're really making inroads with the unchurched?

When you see these 8 signs pop up in your church, you will know that you are really making inroads with the unchurched.

1 YOUR DATA TELLS YOU IT'S HAPPENING

At the most obvious level, you should find out from the guests themselves whether they have a church background.

Too many church leaders never bother to ask people about their church background. As a result, too many leaders **guess** they're reaching the unchurched, or **think** they're reaching their community, or they hope they're reaching their community.

But thinking, hoping or guessing isn't the same as doing.

But the best thing you can do is specifically ask people about their background. Then you know. So start by surveying new guests and ask them about their attendance patterns.

How do you do that discreetly and appropriately? Where I serve, we invite new people to fill out a connection card (name, address, next steps etc.). Amidst the information we collect on the

connection card, we ask them how often they attend church by selecting one of these four options:

- **I don't attend church.**
- **Once or twice a year.**
- **Once a month.**
- **Almost every week.**

If they check one of the first two options, we consider them unchurched. If the check either of the last two options, we consider them church.

That gives us baseline data we can use from year to year and helps us gauge how effective we are in accomplishing our mission, which is to create churches unchurched people love.

Our data tells us that almost 50% of our new guests self-identify as being unchurched. (By the way, that number is probably a little artificially low simply because a church person is far more likely to fill out a welcome card than an unchurched person.)

But of course, there's a greater shift that just numbers can't tell you. You can really tell that you're reaching unchurched people when the dynamic in your church starts to change.

Your church will simply not be the same anymore. Which leads us to seven other things you'll notice.

2 PEOPLE AREN'T SINGING MUCH DURING THE SERVICE

If you think about it, this shouldn't surprise you. Christians are about the only people left in our culture who sing corporately on a weekly basis. Unchurched people may like your music, but they won't necessarily sing it. Be okay with that. We've learned to be.

Even though we're moving into an era where more expressive worship is back (and attractational church as we've known it has likely peaked), unchurched people won't immediately gravitate toward singing out loud during the service.

Church people visit our church all the time and remark that not everyone sings (even though we have an exceptional band).

I've just decided I don't care. The goal is not to get unchurched people to sing...it's to lead them into a growing relationship with Jesus. Think of it this way: Christians get to sing. Unchurched people appreciate the band, the atmosphere, and the way Christians engage with their faith.

And through it all, people's lives get changed.

3 LONG-TIME CHURCH PEOPLE GET UNSETTLED

When unchurched people show up, not all long-time church people will be upset, but some will be.

They'll be concerned that people who don't look like them, behave like them, or share their moral value system are now sitting beside them on Sundays or in a group with them mid-week.

This is a good sign. Some of those church people will leave, but you will also have a group of people that have waited for this day all their lives.

They will have unchurched friends who are coming and they'll be thrilled that the church is (finally) accomplishing its mission. Run with them.

Think about it: If everyone in your church looks like you, acts like you, votes like you, believes

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like you and thinks like you, you're probably not the Church anyway.

4 IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE IS REGULAR

This unsettles pastors. Normally, if a church person is away for a month, it's a 'sign' of something.

Often that's not the case with unchurched people. In the same way that if you don't make it to the gym in a week you don't panic, unchurched people will come when they can.

Remember: this is the most they've attended church ever.

Sure, you want to encourage them to get connected and to prioritize the time they invest in their faith, but regular attendance isn't automatic.

5 YOUR TIDY CATEGORIES ARE FALLING APART

As you engage more and more unchurched people, you'll realize that your neat and tidy theological

and sociological categories for people will erode and collapse and you realize we're all just people in need of a Savior.

LGBTQ+ will stop being a term and start becoming people. Rich and poor will become names and faces.

That doesn't mean your theology changes, but it probably means your compassion does. And it likely means that your easy answers instead become involved conversations. ◀

This whole article can be found at: https://careynieuwhof.com/8-signs-your-church-is-actually-reaching-unchurched-people/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=8+signs+you+re+actually+reaching+unchurched+people&utm_campaign=6%2F5+Post+and+CPW+content=How+to+build+a+better+team+when+you+don+t+have+great+leaders+right+now&utm_campaign=6%2F25+7ways+to+build+great+teams



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PRAYING FOR CHURCH PLANTING

CURRENT PROJECTS:

CHURCHES AND CHURCH PLANTS

- Ephrata, PA . . . Christ House Church (Tim King)
- Ephrata, PA . . . House of Blessings (Abe Montanez)
- Lehigh Valley, PA . . . Horizon (Bud Daneker)
- Pottstown area, PA . . . Journey53 (Rick Christman)
- Slatington, PA . . . Trinity (Brian Kern)
- Willow Street, PA . . . Virtual Church (Addison Roberts)
- York, PA . . . Iglesia Cristiana (Carlos Kelly)
- York, PA . . . The Next Step (Carlos Kelly)

PARTNERSHIPS

- Lancaster, PA . . . Iglesia De Dios Ven A El (Luis Ramirez)
- Mohnton, PA . . . Dinner Church (Robert Shuey)
- Palmerton, PA . . . Gaming Grotto (Chris Bronico)
- Sinking Spring, PA . . . Fresh Expression Launches
- Slatington, PA . . . Dinner Church (Brian Kern)

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Health, safety, and a sense of well-being for our planters, their families, and congregations as they navigate daily life and ministry
- Ability to know when “enough is enough” and to take a break as our planters and their families tackle the busyness of ministry
- Creative ideas for our planters and ministry team leaders as they develop outreach and relational ministries
- Discernment to recognize the needs and concerns of the people they meet who are hungry for what they can't yet name . . . Jesus
- Spiritual insight and boldness to share Jesus in the right moments with the right words