

# Ministering In Appalachia

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**National Director,**  
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**Mission Board**

# Ministering In Appalachia

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## **Session 1 – Ministering within the Context of Appalachian Culture**

**Understanding the culture  
will enable you to more  
effectively minister in  
Appalachia.**

# Appalachia

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**“Dorothy,  
you’re not in  
Kansas (or  
wherever you  
are from)  
anymore.”**



# Jesus and Culture

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**A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, “You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent.”**  
*(Matthew 26:73)*

**“Men of Galilee,” the angels said ... (Acts 1:11)**



# Pronouncing the Word

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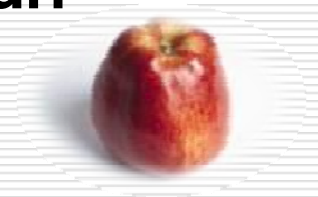
**Late 17th century. Formed from *Apalachee*, the name Native Americans gave to what is now the southeastern United States.**

**Ap·pa·la·chi·an** [àpp láychee n, àpp lách n]  
adjective

**Ap·pal·a·chi·ans** [àpp láychee nz, àpp lách nz]

**Ap·pa·la·chi·a** [àpp láychee , àpp lách] noun

**"I'll throw an apple at ya'."**



# Why Study Appalachia Culture and Values

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**I planted, Apollos  
watered, but God  
gave the growth.**  
*(1 Corinthians 3:6)*



# Our Culture Identifies Us

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**And they were  
astounded and  
amazed, saying,  
“Look, aren’t all  
these who are  
speaking Galileans?  
(*Acts 2:7*)**

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# Our Culture Identifies Us

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- ❑ **Shapes our  
Worldview**
- ❑ **Influences our  
Biblical view**





# Reaching a Culture Requires

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## The Call of God

- A Must
- Will be tested



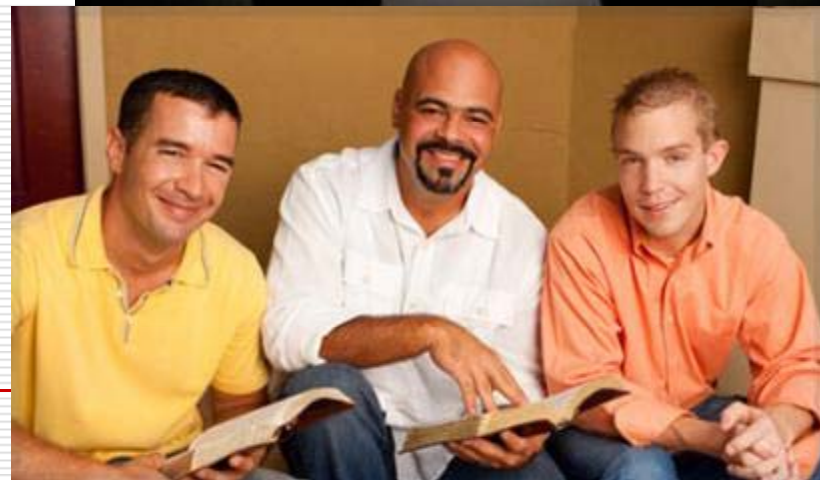
# God's Call

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Ministry</b>
<b>We try to move up the ladder</b>	<b>Serve God however he leads</b>
<b>Focus on our life</b>	<b>We seek to bring true life into other people's lives</b>
<b>Want to be noticed</b>	<b>Want Christ to be noticed</b>
<b>Compare our work and its results with that of other workers</b>	<b>Strive to be faithful and serve with excellence no matter what others are doing</b>

# Reaching a Culture Requires

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- ❑ **Using Common Sense**
- ❑ **Showing Respect**
- ❑ **Building Relationships**
- ❑ **Understanding the Culture**

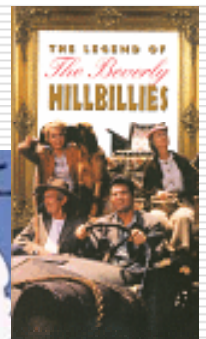


# Appalachian Imagine

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## Image Was Developed By

- 1. Media – to sell books, magazines, and newspapers**
- 2. Government – to sell programs**
- 3. Missionaries – to raise support and funds**



# Appalachian Imagine

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## Various Views

- 1. Popular National Image**
- 2. Official Government Image**
- 3. Industry's Longstanding Image**
- 4. Church's Image**
- 5. Self Image of Appalachian's**

# The Appalachian Region

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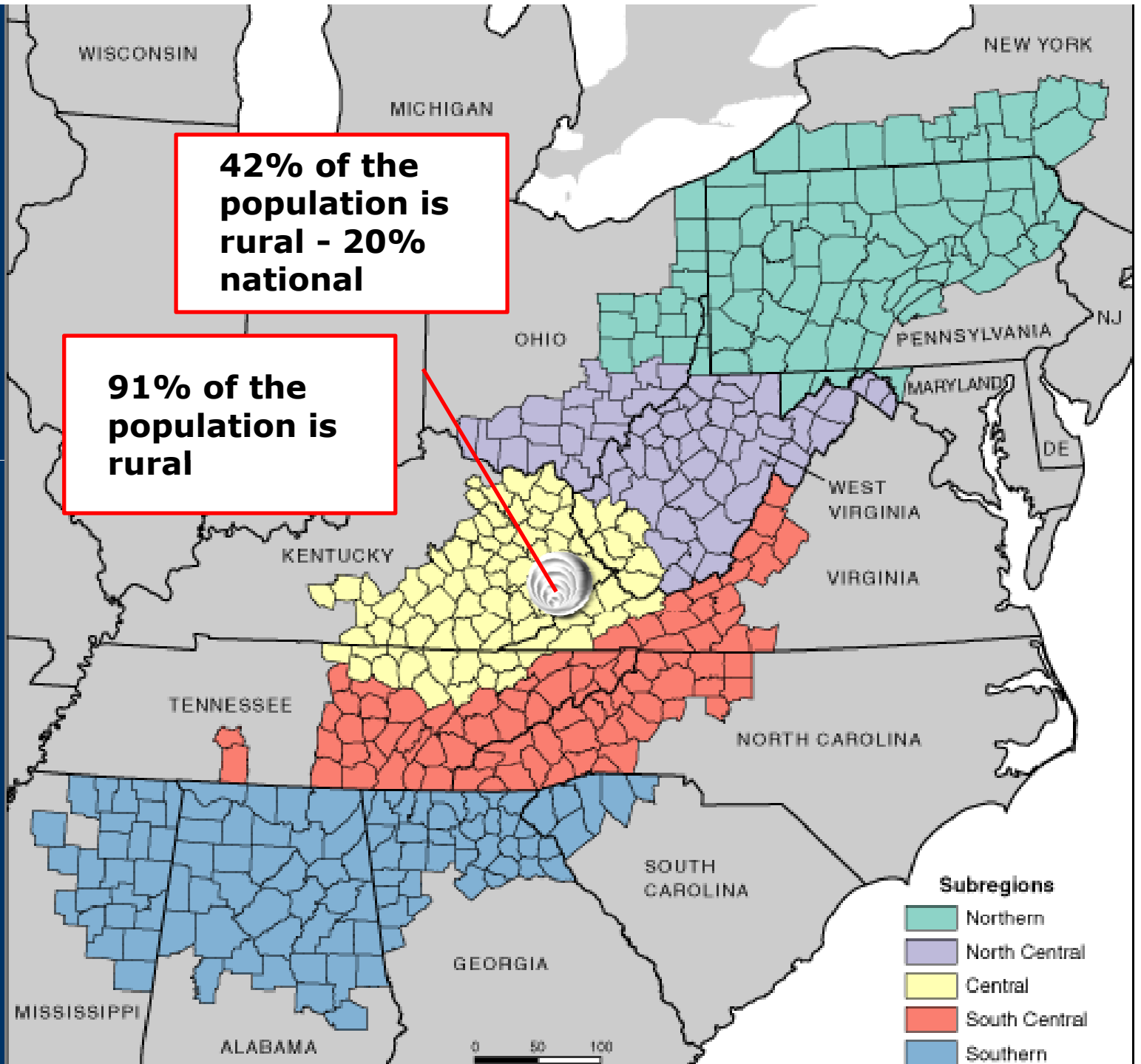
**Appalachia lies along the Appalachian mountains, which extend from Mississippi to Canada.**



# Appalachian Mountain Range



# Appalachian Mountain Range Regions (ARC)

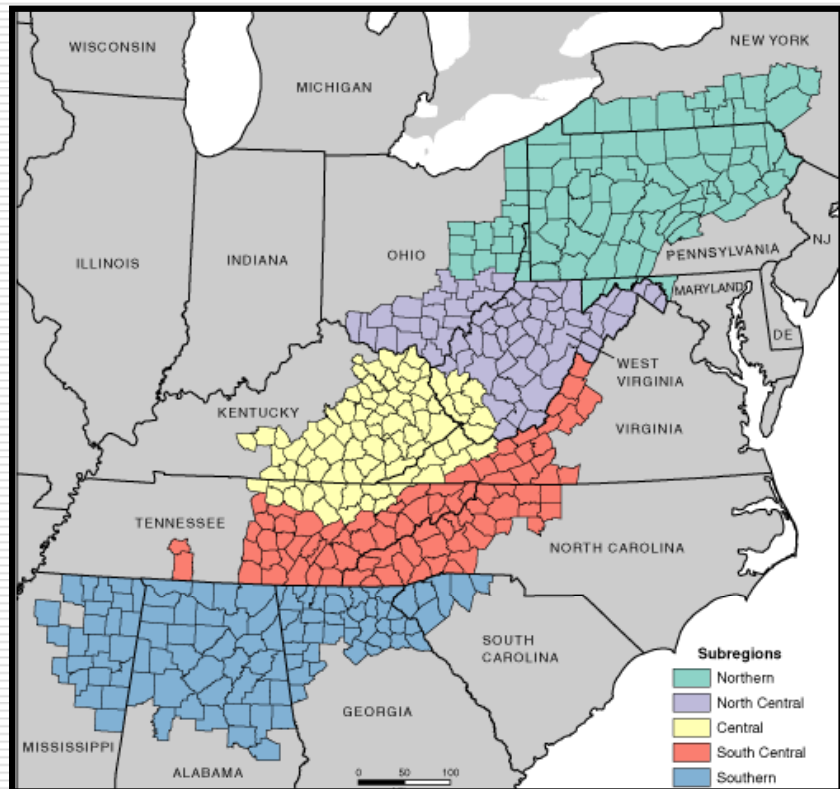




# The Regions within Appalachia

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- Bound together by common values
- Yet, each is distinctly different



# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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**Values you need to know to do effective ministry in Appalachia.**



# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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## **1. Traditionalism or Heritage – a Strong Love of Tradition.**

- love of things as they are. Change comes slowly. There is a need for process time.**

## **2. Strong sense of family or Familism**

- family centered; loyalty runs deep; responsibility may extend beyond immediate family; "blood is thicker than water." Relationships are very important. High value placed on good neighbors.**

# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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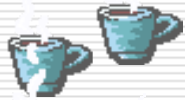
- 3. Neighborliness and Hospitality - help each other out, but suspicious of strangers; spontaneous to invite people for a meal, to spend the night, etc.**
- People are friendly, but not open to strangers.**
  - Trust is important. Tend not to ask your advice until they trust you.**
  - Relationships are important and deep relationships are developed slowly and last a lifetime.**
-

# Four Cups Of Coffee Rule

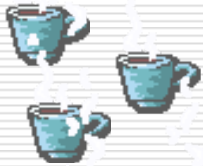
?



**I will share a cup of coffee with you out of obligation.**



**I will share a cup of coffee with you as my guest.**



**I will share a cup of coffee with you as my special guest.**



**I will share a cup of coffee with you as a friend.**

# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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- 4. Love of Place - never forget "back home" and go there as often as possible; it is revitalizing; sometimes stay in places where there is no hope of maintaining decent lives because it is "home."**



# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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- 5. Individualism, Self-Reliance, Pride - most obvious characteristics; look after oneself; solitude; freedom; do things for oneself; not wanting to be beholding to others; make do**
- Strong Work Ethic (not as strong today)**
  - Courage**
  - We consider our way to be the best**
  - If we have to do it your way, then after you leave we will undo it**

# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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- 6. Personalism - relates well to others; go to great lengths to keep from offending others; getting along is more important than letting one's feelings be known; think in terms of persons rather than degrees or professional reputations**





# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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- 7. Modesty and Being Oneself - believe one should not put on airs; be oneself, not a phony; don't pretend to be something you're not or be boastful; don't get above your raising**
- 8. Sense of Beauty - displayed through music, folksongs, poems, arts, crafts, etc., colorful language metaphors ("I'm as nervous as a long-tailed cat in a roomful of rocking chairs.")**

# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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- 9. Sense of Humor - seem dour, but laugh at ourselves; do not appreciate being laughed at; humor sustains people in hard times. Humor is often used to cover up personal pain, disappoint, or distrust. Humor can be filled with sarcasm**
- 10. Strong sense of solidarity - Stick, together, even if you disagree, express yourself but stand together**

# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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- 11. Strong sense of Patriotism - goes back to Civil War times; flag, land, relationships are important; shows up in community celebration and festivals**



# Twelve Values Common to Appalachians

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**12. Strong Religious Beliefs - values and meaning to life spring from religious sources; fatalistic (outside factors control one's life, fate, believe things happen for a reason and will work out for the best); sustains people in hard times**



# The Diversity of Appalachia

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## **1. Native Appalachian's (\*Williams)**

- Metro residents – city, inner city and suburb
- \*Town and city dwellers –urban
- \*Valley Farmers –rural
- \*Branch Water Mountaineers

## **2. Returning Appalachian's**

- Those who return after a few years
- Those who return “after being gone too long”
- Those who return to the “home place” after retirement

## **3. Ethnic People Groups**

## **4. Wannabe's**

# Appalachia Today is:

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## **1. Different**

- a. New class system shaped by new generation of professionals**
  - b. New urban vs. rural differences**
  - c. Ethnic mix**
  - d. Younger generation has higher expectations**
  - e. Numerous religions now in the region**
-

# Appalachia Today is:

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## **2. Old Appalachia – New Appalachia (2 Appalachia's)**

- a. New – shopping centers, malls, fast food chains, Wal-Mart's and golf courses**
  - b. Old – still tied to agriculture, mining, timber, and light manufacturing**
  - c. Poverty – the USA pocket of poverty**
  - d. Population – declining, aging**
-

# Appalachia Today is:

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## **3. Still has lower levels of Educational Attainment**

- a. Higher levels of adult illiteracy**
  - b. Higher high school drop out rate**
  - c. Fewer people with any post secondary training**
  - d. Low levels of education still runs in families**
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# Appalachia Today is:

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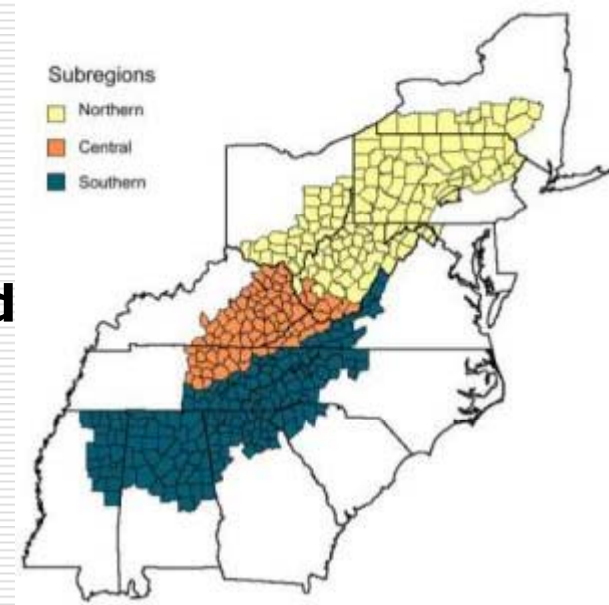
## **4. Poor Infrastructure**

- a. Poor quality of local government services**
  - b. Weak social institutions**
  - c. Weak churches**
  - d. Limited leadership capacity and limited vision for the future**
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# Significant influences to the Appalachian Culture

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- **Northern**
  - Labor Unions
  - Decline of the major industries (steel, chemical)
  - Education
- **Central**
  - Migration
  - Labor Unions
  - Unemployment/Poverty
  - Decline of the coal, timber and manufacturing industry
- **Southern**
  - Tennessee Valley Authority
  - Anti labor union
  - Education
  - Textile industry



# Appalachian Culture and Values

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**Those who are sensitive to and utilized Appalachian Values are more successful than those who are less sensitive or fail to recognize the values.**

**(Conclusion of a study conducted by WVU)**

# Take Time:

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- To learn the history and culture of the people where God calls you to serve.**
  - **To ignore the past is to walk blindly into the future.**
  - **To ignore the past is to repeat it.**
- To build healthy relationships.**
- To keep yourself spiritually fit.**

# Question and Answer Time

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Daily Mail, Charleston, WV

# Ministering In Appalachia

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**Session 2 – Ministering  
in Appalachian Churches  
Understanding the  
Appalachian Church will  
enable you to more  
effectively minister in  
Appalachia**

# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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## 1. Geography/Location

- Up a Hollow or Cove
- Rural or “end of the branch church”
- Small town
- County seat church
- Urban
- City
- Inner City



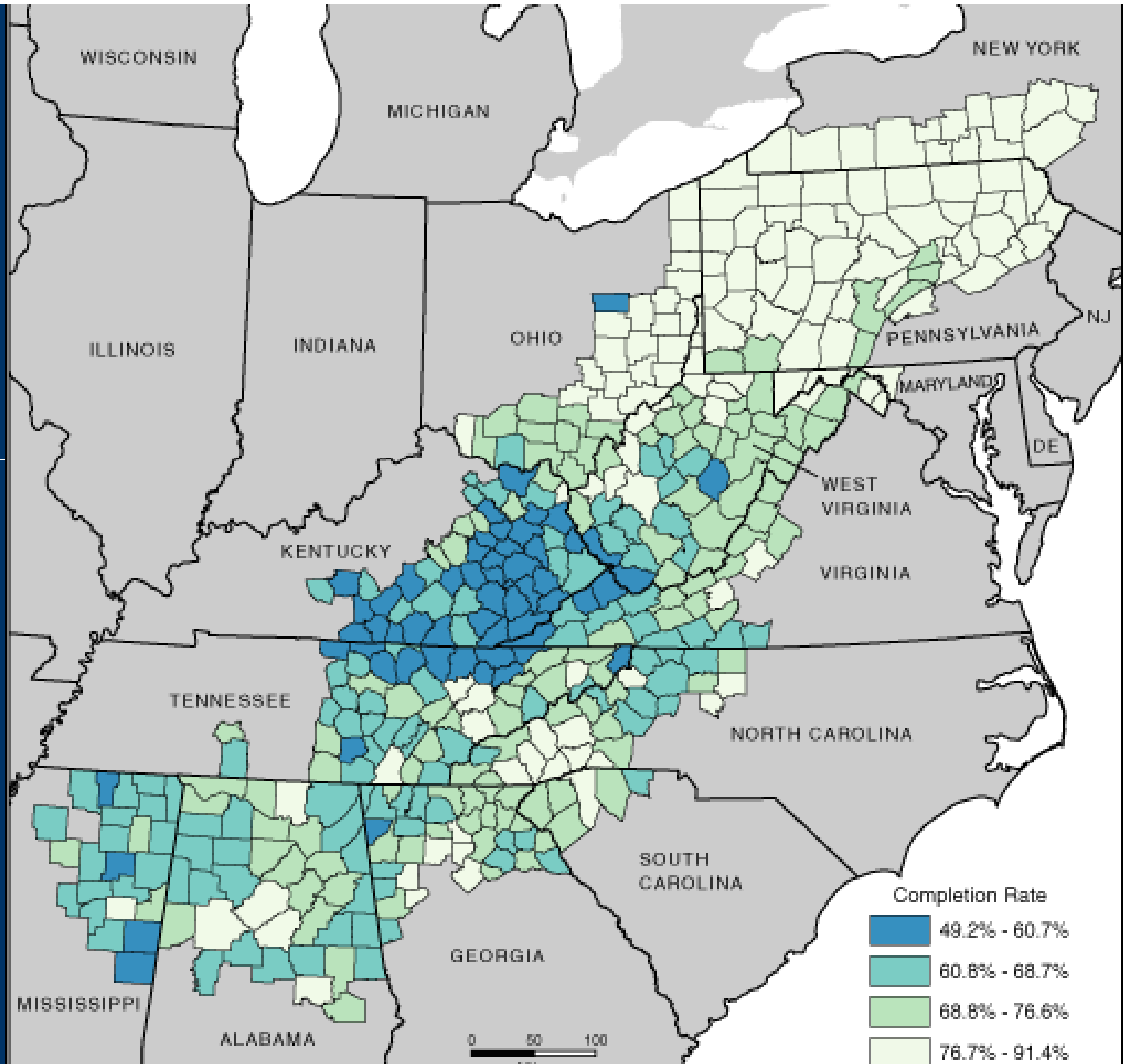
# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- 1. Geographical/Terrain of the region – travel is measured in time not miles. Creates a type of isolation in the remote, rural areas.**
- 2. Literacy – depending on the area between 50 to 80% of the adult population cannot read on an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level (functionally illiterate). +/- 20% below a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level.**



# Appalachian Mountain Range - Literacy



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

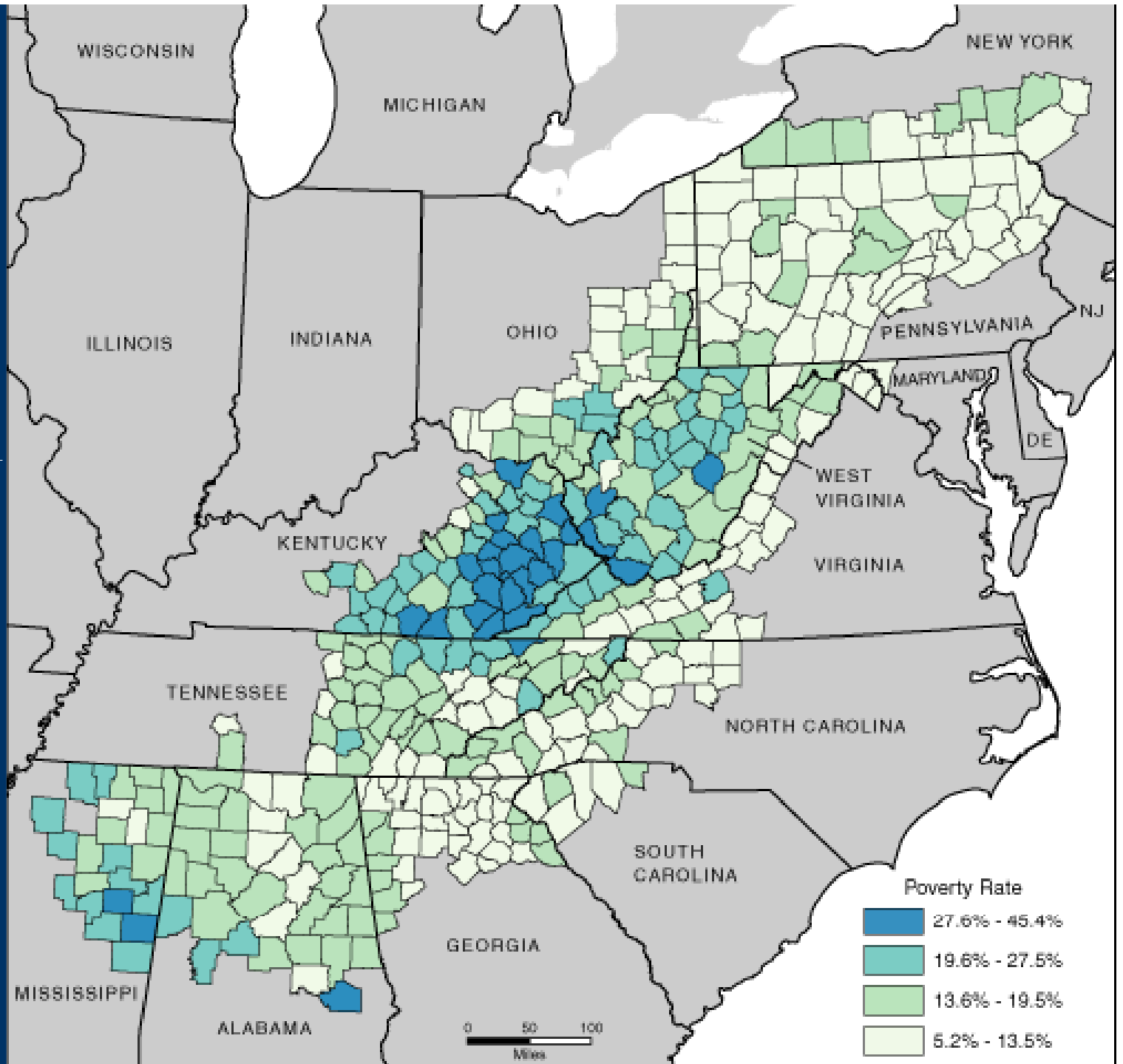
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## 3. Economic issues –

- ❑ Poverty – 37 of the 100 poorest counties in the USA are in Central Appalachia
- ❑ 1 out of 5 children go to bed hungry every night
- ❑ Low income – way below the national average



# Appalachian Mountain Range - Poverty



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- 4. Love of the family atmosphere – churches tend to be smaller than in other areas**
- 5. Strong love for autonomy, for independence**
  - ❑ Distrust of denominations – control matters, denominations tends to believe that one size fits all. Hierarchy and control – real or perceived is resisted and resented. Religious associations historically were formed for the purpose of fellowship.**

# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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## 6. Religious Beliefs and Traditions

- ❑ Key feature: autonomous, regionalized sub-denominations of Christian religions
- ❑ Regional churches tend not to be involved with centralized religions
- ❑ They often follow a literal interpretation of the Bible



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- ❑ **The King James Version is still the translation of choice for the majority**
- ❑ **Most churches place a great importance on religious experience, especially in relation to conversion**
- ❑ **Life is extremely hard - the sense of independence carries over into their religious experience**
  - **Works**
  - **Emotional**
  - **"Spirit lead"**
  - **Lay lead**



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- ❑ **Wesleyan-Armenian/Pentecostal influence - Strong Wesleyan – Arminian – Holiness – Pentecostal influence on one hand and the strong Arminian Baptist (do not believe in eternal security) influence on the other hand**
- ❑ **47 different Baptist groups in Appalachia –70 in the USA**
- ❑ **Roman Catholic influence**
- ❑ **Church of Christ influence (baptism regeneration)**

# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- ❑ **“Baptist” in Appalachia may not mean the same thing that it means in the “Bible Belt” states.**
- ❑ **In parts of Appalachia, many SBC churches are Southern Baptist for *convenience* or *tradition* not out of *conviction*.**
- ❑ **Be careful about talking negative about other faith groups**
- ❑ **In many rural areas Baptecostal would be a good descriptive term**
- ❑ **Landmarkism among Baptists is still strong in many areas – many hold to its teachings but are not familiar with the belief system**



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- ❑ **Love of free worship – music**
- ❑ **Religious tradition often takes place over Scripture and dogma**
- ❑ **One out of three unchurched have been previously churched within the past 5 years.**
- ❑ **Salvation is equated to simply believing in or about Jesus. No life change necessary.**



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- 7. Lack of indigenous pastors**
- 8. Population shifts and declining towns**
  - Migration over the past 50 years has led to a serious decline in many areas.
  - US Census projects flatten growth through 2025 in many part of central and northern Appalachia
- 9. Priority – your priority may not be my priority. I will say yes to you and either not show up or fail to participate.**

# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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**10. Titles/Professionalism in the church are frowned upon**

**11. Aging Population/High level of disability**

- 52% to 58% of the senior adults are primary caregivers for their grandchildren.

■ High level of disability



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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**12. Population is a stew or mosaic not a melting pot – with some exceptions in the remote areas. Be careful what you say about other ethnic groups.**

- German
- Italian
- Coalfields – Scot-Irish, Welsh
- Polish
- European
- African American
- Native American
- Asian
- Hispanic



# Factors that impact pastoring Appalachian churches

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- 13. Event driven/project**
- 14. Stewardship is project/need driven**
- 15. Matriarchal society – above average female pastors across the region.**



# Question and Answer Time

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Daily Mail, Charleston, WV

# Ministering In Appalachia

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## **Session 3 – Preaching and Pastoring in Appalachia**

**How to be more effective as  
you pastor in Appalachia**

# Pastoring the Appalachian Church

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**Understanding the  
Dynamics of  
Ministry in the  
Smaller Membership  
Church**





# Typical Appalachia Church is a Smaller Membership Church

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- ❑ **150 or less in average attendance in Sunday School**
- ❑ **200 or less in average attendance in the main worship service(s)**



# Size and Location

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- It is also a relative term depending on where you are located



# Size and Location

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**A church of 150 in a small town can be considered a mega church in terms of size relative to the population.**



# Pastoring the Appalachian Church

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**Smaller Membership Church**

**PERSONALITY**



# From Eastern Kentucky

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**“My preaching career in area churches during my 16 years at the ministry where I serve has taught me that as a seminary graduate, it’s almost impossible for me to get down as far as I need to go to really communicate with mountain people. It’s a daunting calling.” (Former pastor in EKY)**

# Pastoring in the SMC

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**To often pastors leave the smaller membership church wounded, misunderstood, sometimes feeling abused, having never felt accepted by those they were called to pastor.**

# What SMC Have Going For Them

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- 1. You get to know everybody.**
  - 2. There can be a greater awareness of needs.**
  - 3. The minister can truly shepherd the sheep.**
  - 4. There is a strong sense of tradition.**
  - 5. There is a strong sense of identity.**
  - 6. There is a greater tolerance with those who make an effort.**
-

# Drawbacks to the SMC

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- 1. You get to know everybody.**
- 2. A threat to leave or withdraw support creates a crisis.**
- 3. Excellent leadership is often in short supply.**
- 4. The minister is often the chaplain or the "Preacher" rather than the "pastor" or leader.**
- 5. It is harder for new people to find acceptance.**
- ~~**6. Adequate resources can be challenging.**~~



# Working with the Smaller Membership Church

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## The Small-Medium Church

- ❑ **Single Cell – acts like one big family**
- ❑ **Sense of Family – feel they are part of a family.**
  - *Greatest fear is the lost of their sense of family if the church were to grow.*
- ❑ **Allows for Quicker Involvement**
  - **The feeling of being needed motivates members to become involved.**

# Spirit of the SMC

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## The Small-Medium Church

- Informal Environment**
  - Much loving and caring**
  - Absentees are missed by everyone**
  - Heavy Reliance upon volunteers**
  - Giving is project driven not budget driven**
  - Participation means more than performance**
-

# Spirit of the SMC

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## The Small-Medium Church

- **Limited Entrance Points**
  - Usually limited to pastor and members (relationships)
- **Focuses on One Event at a Time**
  - In the small church, one per quarter
  - Revival
  - Vacation Bible School
  - Homecoming
  - Thanksgiving/Christmas



# Spirit of the SMC

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## The Small-Medium Church

- ❑ **Pastor May or May Not have a Great Impact**
  - Usually have a strong lay leadership
  - Pastor is usually best described as the Chaplain or Preacher.
- ❑ **Lay Leadership**
  - Usually one or two strong lay leaders.
  - Business is usually decided in informal settings outside the business meetings

# Spirit of the SMC

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## The Small-Medium Church Limitations

- Limited Programs
- Inadequate Evangelism – evangelism and discipleship may not be a priority
- Event Driven
- Survival Finances
- Tough Crusted Lay Leadership
- Rapid Pastoral Turnover
- High Demand of Pastor's Time



# Spirit of the SMC

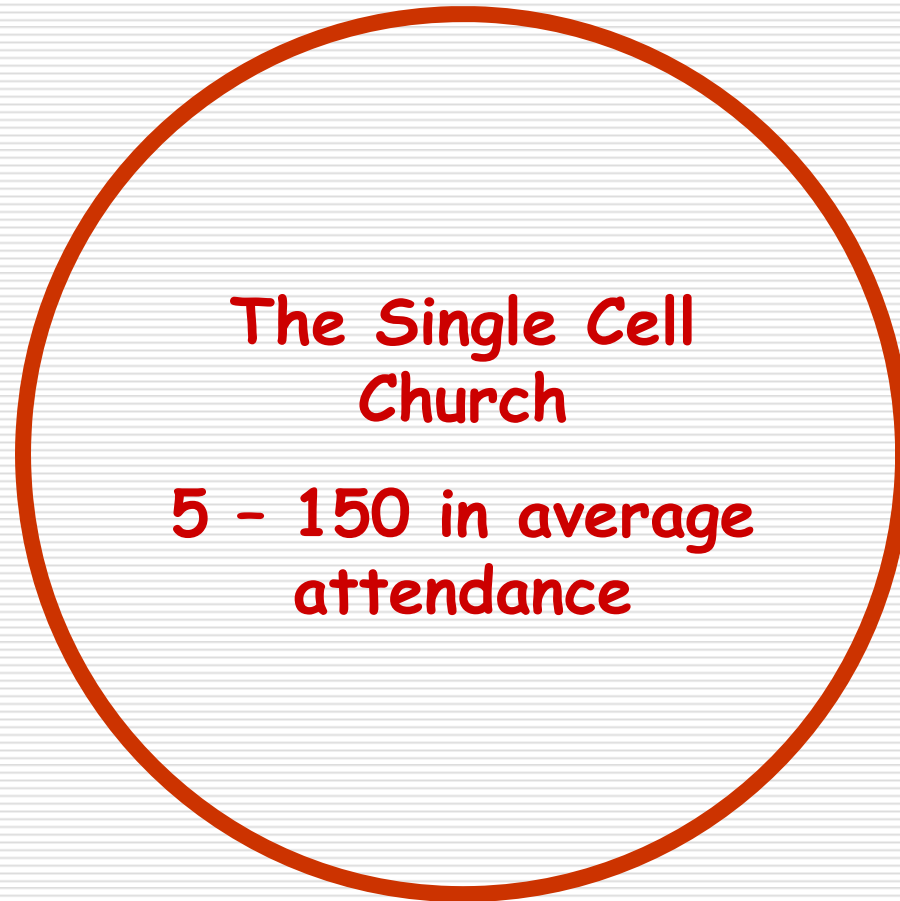
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## The Small-Medium Church Limitations

- ❑ **Inadequate Facilities – space is limited**
  - ❑ **Smallness Breeds Smallness – in a comfort zone. Small Groups Become too Intimate**
  - ❑ **Reputation – strife among the membership will impact their witness**
  - ❑ **Older Membership**
  - ❑ **Many Communities in the Appalachia are not growing**
-

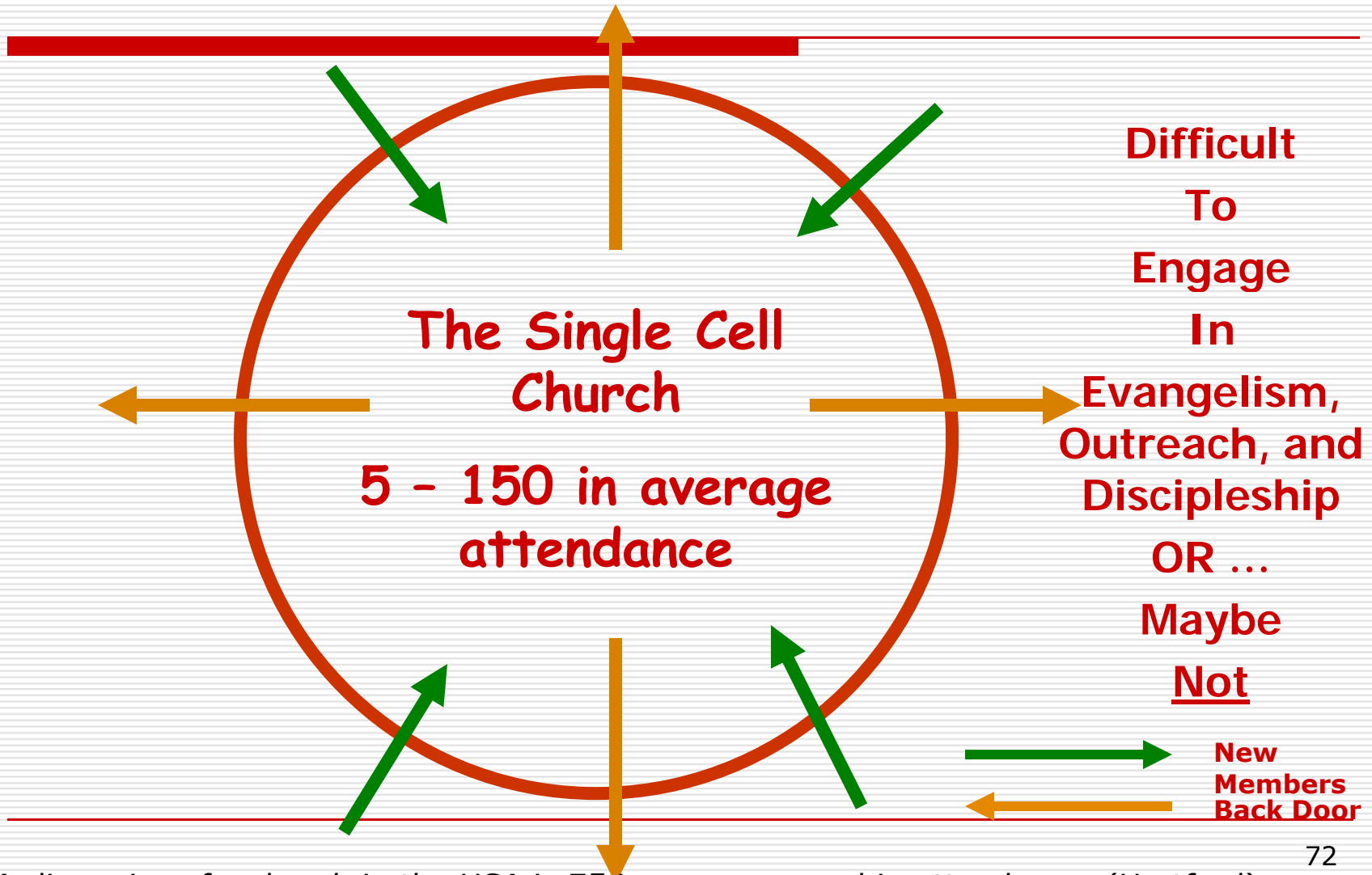
# Working Within The Boundaries or Limitations

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Difficult  
To  
Engage  
In  
Evangelism,  
Outreach, and  
Discipleship  
OR ...  
Maybe  
Not

# Working Within The Boundaries or Limitations



Medium size of a church in the USA is 75 in average worship attendance. (Hartford)



# Common Issues Related To SMC Life

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- Money/Resources
- Finding a Pastor
- Music
- Quality worship
- Guilt about being small
- Endemic conflict



Lyle Schaller

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# Common Issues Related To SMC Life

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- Having a vision
- Assimilation of new folk
- Loving the neighbor
- Appropriate cooperation with others
- Facilities
- Organizing and administrating the church



Lyle Schaller

# Common Issues Related To SMC Life

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- Area/neighborhood niche**
- Identifying tomorrow's constituency**
- Competition with mega/exciting church**
- Select person of the Trinity**
- Event/program driven**
- Scheduling of events**

Lyle Schaller

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# Common Issues Related To SMC Life

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- ❑ Finding leadership
- ❑ Misconduct by leaders
- ❑ How to reach the lost
- ❑ Spiritual apathy



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# Factors That Impact Pastoring The SMC

Barna

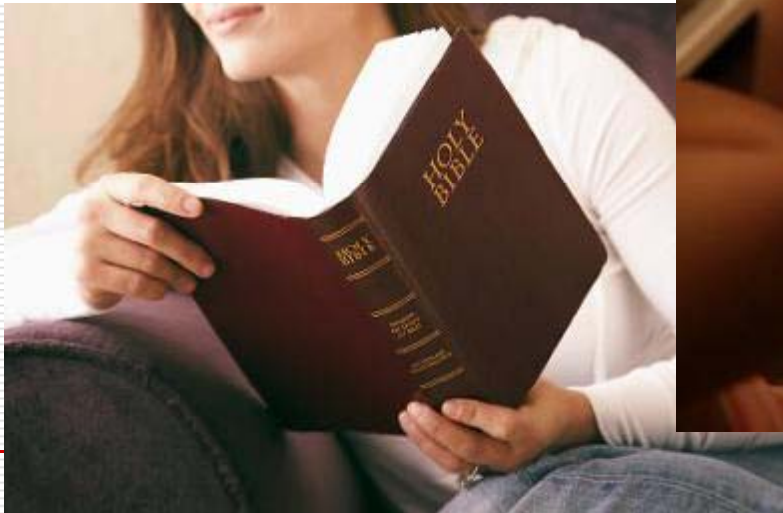
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- **The typical SMC has a lower proportion of attendees who are "spiritually active," which was defined as individuals who attend a church service, read the Bible, and pray to God during a typical week.**

# Factors That Impact Pastoring The SMC

Barna

- ❑ **The SMC attendees are less likely to claim that their religious faith is "very important" in their life.**



# Factors That Impact Pastoring The SMC (Review)

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- Education and literacy levels
  - Poverty level
  - Disability factors
  - Medium age of population
  - Location in the community
  - Local employment market
  - Biblical literacy and understanding
  - Change
- 



# Get to Know Your Church Field

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- The culture**
- The Demographics**
- The past religious history**
- What is the predominate religious influence**
  - Faith group/denomination**
- What is the Biblical understanding or literacy level of your church field**



# If I were to Return to Pastoring

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- ❑ **Your Church Experiencing God Together by Henry and Melvin Blackaby, LifeWay Press, 2003.**
- ❑ **8 Week study on discovering God's plan for His Church.**

<b>God has No Orphans</b>	<b>The Spirit Empowered Body</b>
<b>Koinonia: God's Love Expressed</b>	<b>A World Mission Strategy Center</b>
<b>God's Covenant Relationship</b>	<b>The Church in the Kingdom</b>
<b>The Head of the Church</b>	<b>The Church: God's Perspective</b>

# Pastoring the Appalachian Church

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**Smaller Membership Church**

**APPRECIATE**



# Working with the Smaller Membership Church

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## Humor

- Humor is often used to cover up pain, disappointment, fear ...

## Inter-family Relationships

## Literacy – education (view of)

## Role of women in the church



# Working with the Smaller Membership Church

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- Be patient**
  - Emphasize the Family**
    - **“Will the Circle Be Unbroken”**
  - Work with the existing leadership**
    - **Remember – “Your perception of a lack of leadership may not be theirs.”**
  - Do not impose your ideas of church on them until you have earned the right.**
-

# Working with the Smaller Membership Church

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- Help them discover “core values”**
  - **Biblical**
  - **Baptist**
- Make change slowly**
  - **Work through the existing leadership**
  - **Trust their judgment**
- Allow for process time**



# Working with the Smaller Membership Church

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- Teach them how to deal with conflict
- Allow for “toot” time
- Learn their language/culture
- Accept the fact that you may never know “why”
- “Pay your rent”



# Working with the Smaller Membership Church

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- ❑ **Pay the rent!**
  - **Hospital visits**
  - **Home visits**
  - **Funerals and Weddings**
  - **Meals together**
  - **Longevity**
  - **Building trust**
  - **Relationships**



# Pastoring the Appalachian Church

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**Smaller Membership Church**

**PREACHING**

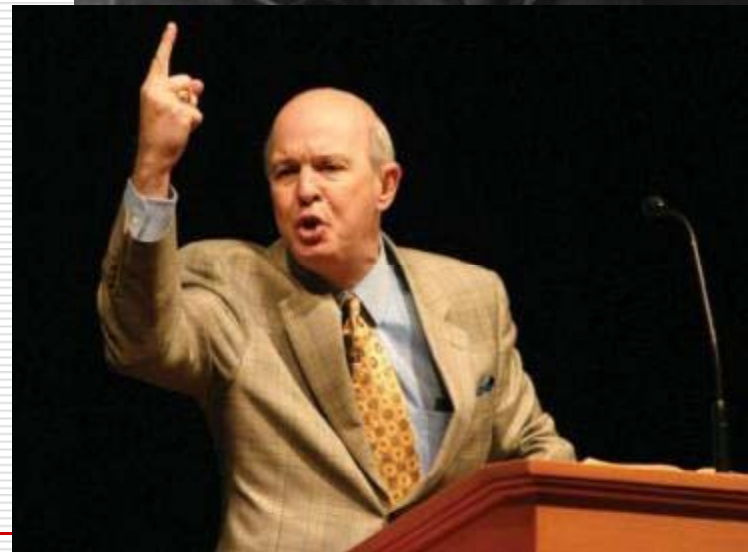




# Preaching in Appalachian Churches

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**Most Appalachians enjoy preaching with some animation (life) in it.**



# Preaching in Appalachian Churches

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**Effective preaching often centers around storytelling, therefore illustrations are important.**

- **Illustrations are windows**
- **Use current illustrations**
- **Use personal illustrations**
- **Use I, we, us ... but never you.**

# Storyline Preaching

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## Peter Walking on Water

### Matthew 14:22-32

- 1. Read the story from Scripture**
  - 2. Tell the story in your own words**
  - 3. Apply the story**
    - Fear
    - Faith
    - Failure
    - Forgiveness
  - 4. Retell the story in a modern setting**
-

# Preaching in Appalachian Churches

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## Leave the Greek and Hebrew in the study and out of the pulpit

- The omission of phrases like “the Greek says,” are best left unsaid.
- Such phrases say to the hearer, “I’m smarter than you.”



# Preaching in Appalachian Churches

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## Topical vs. Expository Preaching

- **Topical preaching has been the mainstay in many rural mountain churches**
- **Few congregations move beyond the pastor's ability to communicate effectively doctrine, Bible knowledge, etc.**
- **Storyline preaching is powerful**

# Preaching in Appalachian Churches

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## However, do not be afraid of Expository Preaching

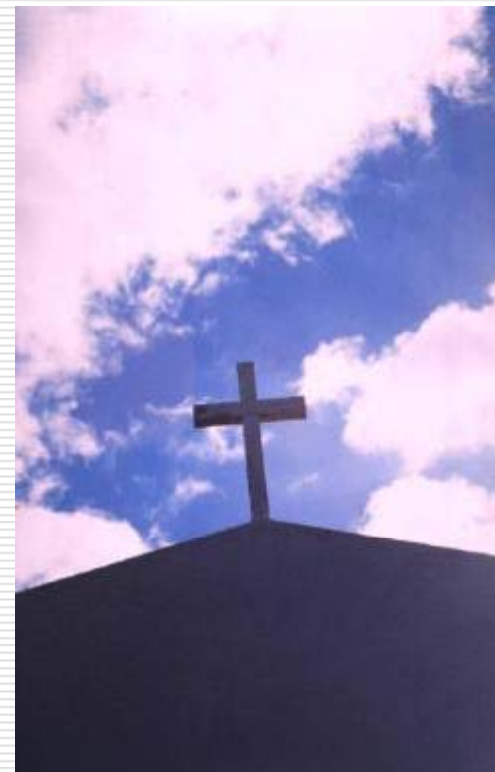
- There are different models
  - John MacArthur – verse by verse
  - Charles Spurgeon – passage
  - Charles Swindoll – mixture of the above build around a topic
- Use in a series of 4 to 8 week cycles

# Preaching in Appalachian Churches

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## Give them Hope Build Upon Christ

**Jesus did not preach a gospel with minimum requirements. Jesus came preaching the Kingdom of God and inviting ordinary people to be apart of it.**



# Preaching in Appalachian Churches

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**Do not underestimate the impact and power of TV Preachers/ Personalities and the Internet**

- **Can be the source of false doctrine**
- **Can raise the bar of expectations for your preaching**
- **Be careful about using the other man's material**



# Preach the Word

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**Don't be afraid to preach the word of God. Be persistent and consistent, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.**

**(2 Timothy 4:2)**



# Preach the Word

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**“Be a man. Get your hands dirty; go hunting; do something with men, build your church on men .... When you use personal illustrations consider using those that cast yourself as the goat not the hero ... Love your people and know they aren't dumb ... When you preach, do it with enthusiasm and emotion.”**

**(Glen Mathews – Evangelist)**

# Remember!

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**People don't care  
how much you  
know until they  
know how much  
you care!**

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# Pastoring the Appalachian Church

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**Smaller Membership Church**

**CHURCH  
GROWTH**



# Did you know!

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- ❑ **75% of USA churches average less than 150 in weekly worship\*.**
- ❑ **200,000 churches in the USA have less than 100 in weekly worship.**



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\*Some researchers place that number at 85%.

# Did you know!

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- ❑ **63% of all Southern Baptist churches have an average attendance of 1-99 persons on Sunday.**
- ❑ **21% average 100-199 folks on Sunday.**



# Did you know!

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**“Without question, the smaller church is vital to the Kingdom! The greatest, most effective pastor who ever lived pastored a church comprised of twelve disciples.”**

**Gary Chapman**

# Did you know!

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- The smaller church has before it some of the greatest days the church in the USA will experience?**
- Is 1,600% more effective in evangelism than the mega church (based on membership)? (TBC website)**
- Produces more preachers, musicians, and missionaries than the larger church?**



# Did you know!

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- Pastoring the smaller church is often tiring, at times challenging or even frustrating, but at the end of the day it is rewarding and a joyous experience?**



# Did you know!

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- ❑ That in spite of cries from the prophets of doom, the smaller church overall has proved to be residual?
- ❑ That God is still using the church – big and small, young and old to advance His kingdom.



# The Small Church

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**If North America is now a mission field, this fact has tremendous implications for small congregations. It can quickly provide fresh opportunities for offering a bold witness. It is in a better position for discovering its mission field and responding to it than is the larger church or denomination. In Scripture, faithfulness seldom comes from, or results in, large numbers or success. God often elects the small for extraordinary missionary service.** (Adapted from a Small Church Redefines Itself)

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# Quotes

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**"When church size is measured by human relationships, the small church is the largest expression of the Christian faith."**

**(Carl Dudley)**

**"Small churches are the norm, primarily because many, many people still find them to be the right size in which to love God and their neighbor. I expect they will continue to be the norm."**

**(David Ray)**

# Church Growth

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- ❑ **Only God can grow a church.**
  - We may set the stage
  - We may pray
  - We may work for growth
  
- ❑ **At the end of the day, God alone grows the church.**



# Church Growth

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## From the human perspective

- Geographical location
- Surrounding population
- Existing buildings
- Present-day congregation
- Personalities/Leadership



**May hinder or enable a church to grow, but in the end, God alone grows the church.**

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# As a Norm ...

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- ❑ **Large and Mega churches are staff driven and built around personalities.**
- ❑ **Medium and Smaller membership churches are congregational driven, pastor lead, and built around people.**



# Mission Field USA

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- ❑ **231 Million Unchurched**
  - ❑ **Less than 10% in church on Sunday**
  - ❑ **Less than 13% committed to a local church/ congregation**
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# Faithfulness Where God Has Placed You

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- “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.”

1 Timothy 1:12 (KJV)

- His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few (the little) things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

Matthew 25:21 (KJV)

# Faithfulness Where God Has Placed You

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# 10 Guiding Principles for Pastoring in the Mountains

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## 1. Remember **KISS**

Keep It Short and Simple

## 2. Always take your people to Jesus

“Sir, we would see Jesus” (John 12:21)

## 3. Be yourself using the gifts and skills God has given you

# 10 Guiding Principles for Pastoring in the Mountains

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## 4. Keep your spiritual life fresh

- Prayer
- Bible Reading
- Bible Study
- Other reading
- Jealously guard your personal time with God



# 10 Guiding Principles for Pastoring in the Mountains

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## 5. Never stop learning

- Continuing education is important
- Use the internet, correspondence, seminars

## 6. Keep your preaching Fresh and Relevant

- However, leave the study in the study

# 10 Guiding Principles for Pastoring in the Mountains

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## 7. Plan your Preaching

- **Christian calendar**
  - Christmas
  - Easter
- **Church calendar**
  - Homecoming
- **Denomination calendar**
  - Missions
  - Evangelism
- **Secular calendar**
  - Mother's Day
  - Father's Day



**Mark sure you allow for the local church and community events that often go unmentioned. Be flexible.**

# 10 Guiding Principles for Pastoring in the Mountains

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## **8. Let the Holidays and Special Events work for you. Involve your people**

- ✓ Christmas
- ✓ New Year's
- ✓ Easter
- ✓ Mother's Day
- ✓ Memorial Day
- ✓ Father's Day
- ✓ 4<sup>th</sup> of July
- ✓ VBS Sunday
- ✓ Homecoming
- ✓ Labor Day
- ✓ Veterans' Day
- ✓ Labor Day

# 10 Guiding Principles for Pastoring in the Mountains

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## 9. Be Evangelistic in your Preaching

- Do not be afraid to share the gospel
- Learn to incorporate the gospel into every message

## 10. Preach to a Point and Make your Invitation Clear

- A good invitation starts during the introduction of the message



# Church Planters

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- ❑ **Make sure you are called**
- ❑ **Indigenous sons work best**
- ❑ **Study the area where you are called**
- ❑ **Learn the culture**
- ❑ **In many areas be prepared to serve bi-vocational**



# Church Planters

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- ❑ **Seek the person of peace**
- ❑ **Become acquainted with the local spiritual leader**
- ❑ **Build relationships**
- ❑ **Get out among the community**
- ❑ **Be a soul-winner**
- ❑ **Use volunteers**

