

The background is a deep blue gradient with a subtle pattern of white dots. Overlaid on the left side is a large, semi-transparent circular graphic. It features a degree scale from 40 to 260 in increments of 10. Several concentric circles are drawn, some with arrows indicating a clockwise direction. The overall aesthetic is modern and technical.

CREATING AN ETHNICALLY DIVERSE LEADERSHIP TEAM IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

NORTH PACIFIC BAPTIST CONVENTION 2020

PRESENTER: REV. DR. LESLIE D. BRAXTON

QUOTE FROM SIGMUND FREUD

“In the process of natural selection, the fittest species is not necessarily the strongest or the smartest. Rather, it is the species that is the most adaptable.”

QUOTE: RICK WARREN (PURPOSE DRIVEN CHURCH)

- “Effective ministry is learning to ride waves: demographical waves, technological waves, cultural waves, etc.”

THE CHALLENGES TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

- Are we ***willing*** to adapt “the way we do church” to the waves that are moving throughout our society today?
- *If* so, ***how*** do we adapt “the way we do church?”

RELEVANT FACTS: NATIONAL CONGREGATIONS STUDY (NCS)

- Median church in US has 75 regular participants in worship
- The *average* church attendance in US is 186 participants (larger than median due to influence of very large churches)
- 50 percent of church goers attend the largest 10% Congregations (350 weekly worship participants and up).

RELEVANT FACTS (CON'T)

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>#of Churches</u>	<u>Weekly Worshippers</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1-99	177,000	9,000,000	59%
100-499	105,000	25,000,000	35%
500-999	12,000	9,000,000	4%
1,000-1,999	6,000	8,000,000	2%
2,000-9,999	1,170	4,000,000	.4%
10,000-plus	40	700,000	.01%

ECONOMICS OF THE AVERAGE CHURCH

- If the **median church** is 80 worshippers per week and the **average per capita** giving is \$100 per month, then your **average monthly income is \$8,000**. If you pay a pastor, its \$3,000 - \$,4000 per month (36k-48k annually = 45%-55% of the churches income). That is about the **average salary for churches** that can afford a full time pastor.
- 60% of Pastors in the Median Church are bi-vocational
- Median size churches can only afford 1 full-time salary (if that).

AVERAGE SALARIES FOR PASTORS (VANDERBLOEMEN AND LIFEWAY)

of weekly worshippers

- Up to 150
- 150 – 300
- 300 – 500
- 501 - 1,200

Sr. Pastor Annual Compensation

\$48,000

\$58,367-139,000

\$68,591-156,217

\$84,270 - \$184,025

LEADERSHIP TEAM VS STAFF

- Due to the economic realities of churches worshipping 500 persons weekly or less the subject of diversity has to be aimed at the church's broader Leadership Team vs the Church Staff.
- The Church's Leadership Team includes Ministers, worship leaders, music staff, ministry leaders, BOD or trustees, Deacons, and paid staff.

BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

1. Broadened appeal to Prospective members

- No one wants to feel like an outsider, least of all in a place as intimate as church can be. If someone who'd never visited your church were to check out your website or read a church brochure, who would they see? If they visited your worship service would all of the worship leaders be from the same racial background? When persons from racial backgrounds different from the predominant group in your church visit and see diversity in the leadership team it suggests that the church is making serious investment in cultural diversity.

CONT'D

- Diversity in the Church's projected image greatly enhances the likelihood of getting an initial visit from a an individual outside of the predominant ethnic group within your church or from a family unit with some family members who are outside of the predominant ethnic group within your church (**80% of people who visit a church on Sunday morning have first viewed that Church's website**)

CONT'D

- The presence of **actual diversity** in the execution of the Sunday morning worship service greatly increases the likelihood of a second visit from an individual or family that visits your church (85% of new memberships come from persons who have made 2 or more visits). I call this, *“priming the pump”*.

CONT'D

2. Expanding the Church's Perspective and Sensitivities.

Planting diversity within the Church's leadership team forces a broader dialogue throughout the Church regarding all aspects of the life of the Church and its ministry. How we see the world depends in part on who's in our world. Diversity lessens the "bubble effect" and can lead to organic, relevant, if but incremental change in how we do church.

CONT'D

3. Diversity in the Leadership Team makes the Church a laboratory for Racial Reconciliation

Diversifying a church isn't easy. As religious institutions engage in racial reconciliation, racial tensions inevitably surface. Some racial groups may feel that they're not being represented enough by a Church while other racial groups may feel that they are being attacked for having too much power (ref., *Second Chance*, by Chris Rice and Spencer Perkins) This experience of learning to manage racial tension within the body of Christ makes the Church an authentic voice on racial reconciliation to the broader society.

CHALLENGES TO BUILDING DIVERSITY

1. White Racism

White racism creates a permanent undeclared boycott of white people toward membership in a predominantly Black Church that is led by a Black Pastor. That boycott manifests itself in two primary ways.

WHITE RACISM (CONT'D)

A. White people avoid “minority” status in institutional settings.

Most white Americans have no lived experience of being in an institutional setting where they were in the minority (school, work, neighborhood, political organization, church, etc). Thus, they quickly find themselves “*uncomfortable*” in predominantly minority churches, even when all aspects of the Church (besides race) are consistent with their spoken criterion for a church home.

WHITE RACISM (CONT'D)

B. The Justice Factor

All Christians do lip service to the notion of *being “one in Christ”* with all other Christians. However, whenever the sermon strays from the narrow concern for individual salvation and private moral conduct, and begins to address systemic evil and social injustices, suddenly deep divisions between Christians of different races rise to the surface.

WHITE RACISM (CONT'D)

C. Exceptions to the Rule

There are some notable exceptions to the behavior of white people in points A & B. Based upon my own experience as a Black Pastor of a predominately Black church in the Pacific Northwest, white people who are willing to attend a predominantly Black church that is under Black pastoral leadership tend to fall into three categories:

WHITE RACISM (CONT'D)

1. Individuals who are involved (currently or in the past) in inter-racial relationships and/or have custody of minority or bi-racial children.

WHITE RACISM (CONT'D)

2. Individuals who have previously had compelling interaction with minorities, such that they feel “*at home*” among them. Many of these individuals express having felt in some ways alienated from their own community prior to attending a minority church.

WHITE RACISM (CONT'D)

3. Individuals who are passionate about justice advocacy and are therefore drawn to the prophetic witness of the Black Preacher and the Black Church.

WHITE RACISM (CONT'D)

When taken as a whole the preceding three categories of white individuals/families are more exceptional than they are typical of the white experience and thereby reinforce my general point that minorities are more likely to attend a white church than are whites to attend a minority church. In reality, minority churches are drawing from a much smaller potential market. While white churches draw broadly from all communities, minority churches tend to draw primarily from their own community, joined by “*unique*” persons from the majority community.

CHALLENGES TO BUILDING DIVERSITY

2. Finding quality leadership material from a very small pool of “non-black” members.

Finding quality leadership and leadership potential (trainable individuals) is difficult under any circumstances. It is a foreboding task within the Black church when aspiring to develop fruitful leaders among a very small pool of applicants to begin with. Even after going the extra-mile to fish out these persons if they are present at all within the congregation one can only hope and pray that they remain with the congregation after having been trained.



WHY TRY?

1.The integrity of the Christian Witness.

2.The future of the Black Church

3.The Refuge for the 21st Century Family.

4.Lead by Example