



National Worship Leader Conference



# ASSESSMENT TOOL & RESOURCE: VERSION 0.1 BETA

## THE NWLC 2010 PRE-CONFERENCE: **STEWARDiNG TECHNOLOGY** IN THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP

“NOT SINCE THE GUITAR CAME TO CHURCH IN THE LATE '60S AND '70S, HAS THERE BEEN SUCH A **FUNDAMENTAL AND RADICAL SHIFT IN HOW CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES WORSHIP.** WHAT'S DRIVING THIS CHANGE? **NEW MOBILE MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKS.**”

– Chuck Fromm, publisher of *Worship Leader* magazine



## SiNG a **NEW SONG**



Presented by

**worship leader**  
MAGAZINE  
Nationalworshipleaderconference.com

# STEWARDED TECHNOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP



From NWLC with DJ Chuang



**Church communities increasingly find themselves in a maze of potential technology paths without the training, understanding, or theological framework to choose a course for their congregation or community. Just as there exists a wide variety of community and organizational “orientations,” there is also a variety of Christian community forms with a variety of needs.**

Not one social network platform FITS ALL. And there are a wide variety of tools and functions to thoughtfully sort through for each individual community. Each Church (congregation) has unique needs as a community of practice created around its method of teaching and reading of the text, its manner of being, or distinctive social habits, its history, and leadership.

Because *Worship Leader* magazine is always moving toward maximizing worship, minimizing confusion and offering solutions, we present the following for your consideration:

- ⊙ Each community of practice, faith tradition, and congregation has a different relationship with technology.
- ⊙ Technology tends to shape communities to its needs vs. being a powerful servant to the needs of the community.
- ⊙ Technology can be a source of idolatry in terms of absorption of time, energy, and money, thereby causing a distraction—versus the transparency and immanence that it promises—in the mediation of the presence of God.

A steward of technology or a tech steward team understand(s) practically (practice) and theoretically (principle) their congregation’s culture(s) and therefore can match it with appropriate technologies.

This workbook is designed to give you a framework to discuss and think through the needs of your church and match them with the new media technologies that may be particularly useful in strengthening and serving your congregation.

To filter through some general typologies of church models, we begin with a church profile inventory. There is no perfect fit, but these profiles are mapped to suggest technology tools (found throughout this resource) that your church’s leadership team and tech steward(s) may utilize to steward technology in your community. This filter will help you focus your energy and resources to investigate further and make decisions about what technology options you may wish to employ, eliminate or defer (see “technology tools glossary” at the end of this resource).

**WHAT IS MY CHURCH PROFILE?**

Circle the letter next to the answer that best describes your church. There are no right or wrong answers—these describe how a church builds its community.

<p>1. The most important thing that happens during the week is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Hearing the pastor/leader’s update in sermon, teaching or conversation</li> <li>b. The gatherings and encounters that occur in person or online</li> <li>c. Opportunities to learn</li> <li>d. The Sunday (or other important) service(s) event</li> <li>e. Getting together physically in time and space</li> </ul> <p>2. Source of wisdom comes from Scripture and...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The pastor or leader</li> <li>b. Anyone and everyone, no know-it-alls</li> <li>c. The teacher(s)/leader(s) or faith tradition</li> <li>d. The historical legacy of the church, plus the living body of Christ in conversation with each other</li> <li>e. The charismatic leader and the community</li> </ul> <p>3. The highest value at my church is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Involvement/action</li> <li>b. Relationship/fellowship</li> <li>c. Knowledge</li> <li>d. Communion</li> <li>e. Togetherness/fellowship</li> </ul> <p>4. The relationship of the congregation and leadership at my church is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Leader/follower</li> <li>b. Siblings, brothers and sisters</li> <li>c. Teacher/student</li> <li>d. Shepherd/sheep</li> <li>e. Neighbors and friends</li> </ul> <p>5. The participation model at my church is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Guided, a response to leadership initiatives,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Self-initiated, community generated, somewhat spontaneous</li> <li>c. Teacher/sender to congregation/class/receiver</li> <li>d. Mainly scripted/according to tradition/precedent</li> <li>e. Varies</li> </ul> <p>6. Along with focusing on our faith in God, a lot of the attention at my church centers on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The leader and/or his/her vision</li> <li>b. People, each other, relationship, change</li> <li>c. The content, transfer of truth/information/knowledge, being trained</li> <li>d. Communion, liturgy, traditions</li> <li>e. The local community, staying connected, shared personal history, stability</li> </ul> <p>7. The content at my church is mainly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Leader generated, based on her/his take on Scripture, God and culture</li> <li>b. Shared authorship, takes many forms and comes from many people</li> <li>c. Leader or organizationally/institutionally determined</li> <li>d. Dictated by faith tradition/history (with some wiggle room)</li> <li>e. Comes from the neighborhood’s charismatic leader(s) (interpreters of the Scripture) primarily with some input from others in the community</li> </ul> <p>8. Importance of relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Somewhat important</li> <li>b. Very important, the basis for existence, roles are fluid</li> <li>c. Somewhat important, but roles are defined</li> <li>d. Varies, but there is strong emphasis on relationship symbolized in elements of the meeting</li> <li>e. Very important, although community position impacts position in the body</li> </ul>
--	---



**CHURCH PROFILE INVENTORY QUIZ (Continued)**

<p>9. The impetus for existence at our church is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Replication, implementation and communication of pastor/leader's gospel vision</li> <li>b. Love, relationship, experiencing the gospel, communication</li> <li>c. Teaching and learning</li> <li>d. Worship, prayer, embodying Christ</li> <li>e. Comfort and community</li> </ul> <p>10. Importance of physical meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Somewhat important, but the leader's vision can be encountered through books, DVD, home group materials, and online through streaming video</li> <li>b. Non essential</li> <li>c. Very Important</li> <li>d. Usually very important, incarnational reality of communion stressed</li> <li>e. Essential. Core</li> </ul> <p>11. Open-ended, dangling conversations, unanswered questions, grey areas, disagreements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Uncommon, because congregation is generally in agreement</li> <li>b. Encouraged</li> <li>c. Uncommon because the teachings embraced are clearly defined</li> <li>d. Sometimes happens, but rarely because of historical nature of traditions</li> <li>e. Based on shared values, so not usually</li> </ul>	<p>12. Congregational (person to person) care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Usually comes from staff</li> <li>b. Is shared because of communication model</li> <li>c. Each event has a set and appropriate response</li> <li>d. Often comes from the pastor as well as from members of the church</li> <li>e. Is shared and personal because of proximity and knowledge of members</li> </ul> <p>13. Community Projects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Generated from the leadership, large scale and small, near and far</li> <li>b. Generated and sustained by anyone, only limited by imagination</li> <li>c. Generated by person or persons in local or headquartered leadership</li> <li>d. Part of historical legacy and may be generated by leadership or congregant--both community and wide-net casting</li> <li>e. The church is a community project. Net is cast near</li> </ul> <p>14. Direction of Influence is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Top down and then out</li> <li>b. Person to person, ad infinitum</li> <li>c. Teacher to disciple/student who may become teacher and so on</li> <li>d. Institution to priest/pastor/facilitator, mediated by elders, altar guild, synod, to congregation and out to family and community</li> <li>e. Varies but usually comes from a charismatic person or cluster of persons</li> </ul>
---	--

**🎯 TO FIND YOUR CHURCH PROFILE ➡**

Add up the number you have circled of each letter and write them in the corresponding blanks below.

Number of a's ➡ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of b's ➡ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of c's ➡ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of d's ➡ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of e's ➡ \_\_\_\_\_

Take the two highest scores, and write down the two letters:

Primary profile: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary profile: \_\_\_\_\_

**🎯 These letters will direct you to the corresponding chart on the next page for your church's primary technology matches.**



**A's** ☉ The **Broadcaster** church is pastor-led and the congregation embraces the vision and message of the leader broadcasting it to the church and surrounding community and outside world. Structure is hierarchical.

The **priority functions** for this church are broadcasting, promoting and presenting. The technologies that match these functions include websites, blogs, email newsletters, webinars, Podcasts, social networking, and calendaring

**B's** ☉ The **Networking** church can exist as a brick and mortar building or in virtual reality. It is a collaborative and communal expression of faith. It values sharing of ideas, resources, and faith practices, highly communicative, person to person and flexible.

The **priority functions** for this type of church are collaborating, sharing, curating, discussing, interfacing and conferencing, and the technologies that match these functions include websites, blogs, text messaging, social networks, message boards, video conferencing, video calling, chatrooms, and wiki.

**C's** ☉ The **Classroom** church is focused on teaching/discipling (and evangelizing). Situations and materials for learning take precedence, whether for Sunday meetings, weekly bible studies or conferences hosted by the church or (when applicable) denomination. Usually fairly structured.

The **priority functions** for this church are educating, broadcasting, promoting and presenting and the technologies that match these functions are websites, blogs, email newsletters, webinars, wiki, podcasts, video calling, plus announcing and calendaring

**D's** ☉ The **Liturgical** church is based in tradition and history and gathers around a church calendar and sacramental events: communion, prayer, Advent, Pentecost, Good Friday, Easter, Christmas, etc. Structure is established by tradition.

The **priority functions** are promoting, but broadcasting, curating and presenting are secondary possibilities and the technologies that match these functions are websites (calendaring and announcements) email newsletters, and social networking for community prayer.

**E's** ☉ **Neighborhood** churches are community based, start small and often stay that way, but in some cases may eventually morph into a “Broadcaster” or “Classroom” church. The church usually centers on shared community vision and values and structure may be participatory or hierarchical.

Because people are in close proximity and possibly in close communication, technology use may be limited. It all depends on the makeup and location of the community church, but certainly the **priority functions** of educating, collaborating, promoting, sharing and curating are possibilities. The technologies that match these functions would be a website or blog to keep people up to date with meetings and special events. There are a number of technology choices for curating and archiving the shared history of the community.



**ASSESSMENT TOOL & RESOURCE / STEWARDING TECHNOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP**

CHURCH PROFILE TECH FUNCTIONS USE	A: BROADCASTER	B: NETWORKING	C: CLASSROOM	D: LITURGICAL	E: NEIGHBORHOOD
Educating – to provide instruction with a structured process	POSSIBLY Education process could be useful for vision casting and leadership development	POSSIBLY Education process can equip the decentralized community with <i>communitas</i>	LIKELY Online education can be very useful for extending teaching opportunities	LESS LIKELY Better ways of education may be modeling and practicing	POSSIBLY Systematic training may be useful in addition to in-person training
Collaborating – to work collectively on a project with a group of people	POSSIBLY Staff and leaders may collaborate for developing content and programs	LIKELY The wisdom of the crowd can be multiplied through online collaboration	LESS LIKELY	LESS LIKELY Collaboration is learning from the saints of history as well as those in the present	POSSIBLY As a repository for project-related information
Broadcasting – to distribute on-demand content through distribution channels to reach the public	LIKELY Get content out in an excellent manner that reinforces the vision	POSSIBLY Content that's produced by the entire church could be shared with the public	LIKELY Great teaching could be distributed through online channels cost-effectively	POSSIBLY A worship gathering could be viewed by participants off-site	LESS LIKELY
Promoting – to facilitate the sharing of formal communications	LIKELY Since branding and consistent messaging is very important, new media promote efficiently	POSSIBLY Promotional campaigns may not be necessary since the social network is robust	LIKELY Promotional campaigns can extend the reach of valuable quality teachings	LIKELY Acts of worship have incarnational value that invites all to participate	POSSIBLY To reinforce relevant community announcements and mobilize participation
Sharing – to facilitate the sharing of informal content	LESS LIKELY Resources are better used for consistent communications from the church leadership	LIKELY The networking church grows richer through sharing peer-generated content	LESS LIKELY Resources are prioritized for content and teachings from qualified church leaders	LESS LIKELY	POSSIBLY To enrich relationships by through mediated in addition to the unmediated
Curating – to gather and feature selected content	POSSIBLY Featuring external content may sometimes be useful	LIKELY Find valuable resources to enrich with the church community	POSSIBLY Educational resources may be carefully selected and featured	POSSIBLY Learnings may be useful to collect and share with the church community	POSSIBLY Gathering and sharing the stories of the community
Presenting – to host an online event that's content-centric	LIKELY Great way to multiply vision and message beyond one location	POSSIBLY Voices from the community may be presented and featured occasionally	LIKELY Teaching times can be done effectively online in addition to on-site	POSSIBLY Expounding on the church's history and/or its narrative	LESS LIKELY
Discussing – to facilitate peer conversations	LESS LIKELY Resources are better used for direction from church leadership	LIKELY Online discussions through message boards could facilitate synergy	LESS LIKELY Resources are better used for authoritative teachings	LESS LIKELY Resources are better used for gathered events	LESS LIKELY
Interacting – to enable real-time communications during a physical event	POSSIBLY Moderated interactions can enhance the experience	LIKELY Communications in multiple directions can energize a live event	LESS LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	LESS LIKELY
Conferencing – to facilitate online peer-to-peer communication in real-time	LESS LIKELY	LIKELY Communications in a synchronous manner keeps the peer conversations going	LESS LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	LESS LIKELY



Of course, there are numerous other technology functions, such as:

- 🕒 Surveying – to receive feedback from the church community
- 🕒 Calendaring – to post a schedule of events
- 🕒 Registering – to sign up people for events
- 🕒 Organizing – to coordinate the logistics and execution of projects and events
- 🕒 Announcing – to get timely information

### WHAT TECHNOLOGIES FIT WHAT FUNCTIONS?

The following is a sample list of popular types of software available that match each function mentioned in the table above and following paragraph:

Technology Functions / Types of Software	Website	Blog	Email newsletter	Text messaging	Collaborative documents	Webinar	Web conferencing	Video calling	Wiki	Chat room	Instant Messaging	Podcast	Social bookmarking	Social networking	Message board	Project Management
Educating	+	+	+			+			+			+				
Collaborating	+	+			+		+	+	+	+				+	+	
Broadcasting	+	+	+			+						+		+		
Promoting	+	+	+	+							+			+		
Sharing	+	+			+				+				+	+	+	+
Curating	+	+							+			+	+			
Presenting	+	+				+		+				+				
Discussing	+	+					+	+		+				+	+	
Interacting	+	+		+		+	+	+		+	+				+	
Conferencing		+		+		+	+	+		+				+		
Surveying	+		+											+		
Calendaring	+		+		+									+		+
Organizing					+				+							+
Announcing	+	+	+	+							+			+		

**TECHNOLOGY SOFTWARE OVERVIEW**

TYPE OF SOFTWARE	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE WEBSITES / APPS / SOFTWARES
Church Community App	Church Community Apps are designed to be a comprehensive solution that covers a wide range of functions specific to church life. Detailed evaluation would be needed to see if it fits your church context.	360hubs.com, cobblestonecn.com, OnTheCity.com, TheCommons.org
Website	A website is the virtual front door to your church. It serves as the center of communication. A basic website could be like an online brochure. An active website will have timely content that's updated weekly or more frequently.	self-hosted: Drupal, Joomla, WordPress; commercial: cloversites.com, e-zekiel.com, siteorganic.com, faithhighway, Ekklesia 360
Blog	A blog is a website with posted articles that are displayed in reverse chronological order, so the newest one is shown on the top of the page.	WordPress, Blogger, TypePad
Email newsletter	This software can manage a large list of email addresses so you're able to send an email blast to a large group of people at once. This can be very effective for announcements and featuring valuable content.	MailChimp, Vertical Response, Constant Contact, PizazzMail
Texting	Texting from a mobile device or smartphone can add interactivity during a live event; texting can also be used for special announcements.	twitter, tatango, jarbyco
Collaborative Documents	Online collaboration allows a group of people to work on documents from one place to avoid mismatched versions that can occur when relying email attachments.	Google Docs, Zoho
Webinar	A webinar is an online app that allows presenter(s) to give a seminar to a group of people who are logged in from other locations. Basic webinars have live audio and presentation slides. Additional features like chat room or video may be available.	GotoWebinar, Webex
Web Conferencing	A web conference allows a group of people signed in from multiple locations to participate in a live event with peers. Typically all participants would be able to talk, to hear others, to share a whiteboard, share a desktop, to type in a chat room, and to do a presentation. Some have video capability too.	Yugma, Dimdim
Video calling	A video call is like a phone call with video, so you can hear and talk with one another. Skype is most popular for one-on-one video calling. Group video calling is becoming more available, sort of like Brady Bunch.	Skype, Tokbox, Tinychat
Wiki	A wiki is a like a website that allows multiple editors. Wikipedia is the most popular wiki site. Wiki is most useful for as a reference website that wouldn't necessarily be updated frequently.	wetpaint, pbworks, wikispaces
Podcast	A podcast is a list of audios and/or videos that can be automatically downloaded by subscribers. Excellent for distributing regularly produced content.	Youtube, Vimeo, Blip.tv,
Chat Room	A chat room allows a group of participants to type on a screen together. This can facilitate multiple discussion threads going on at the same time.	Babelwith.me, neatchat.com, TodaysMeet.com
Instant Messaging	Instant message (IM) allows you to send a short text message to others who are logged into the same IM system. This is like a web-version of a text message between cell phones.	Meebo, AIM, Yahoo, Gtalk, Google Wave
Social Bookmarking	Social bookmarking allow people to share website bookmarks with others. This is useful for collecting and managing a resource list of web links.	delicious, reddit, stumbleupon, diigo
Social Networking	Millions of people are sharing content (text, images, audio, video) through social networks. The decentralized nature allows information to flow freely in an unstructured manner.	Facebook, MySpace, Twitter
Message Board	A website with messages from multiple people can make for lively discussions. Message boards can be a place where everyone is heard and everyone has a voice.	BuddyPress, vBulletin, phpBB <comparison chart at <a href="http://www.forum-software.org/">http://www.forum-software.org/</a> >
Project Management	Project management is essential to planning organized activities.	PlanningCenterOnline.com
Surveying		SurveyMonkey, PollDaddy, Zoomerang



## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

The following are other aspects of church profile that may affect your technology choices, and should be factors in your planning:

- ① Church Size
- ① Church Demographics
- ① Church Life Cycle
  - Just forming (basic tools to connect)
  - Self-designing, early stages of formation, but strong identity (Need appropriate tools to match the vision.
  - Growing and restless (Need to re-evaluate, add new technology to the palette to meet the new demands and growing expectations, get creative and adventurous).
  - Stable and adapting (Need some minimal updating).
- ① Church model: inner/sustaining or outward/growing oriented

## **DEVELOPING A STRATEGY AND A PLAN**

Each church has its own approach for decision making and making plans. There are 4 broad areas that your church's stewarding of technology will cover:

### **1 Where is your church now?**

- Make a technology audit and chart out what new media technologies are currently in use by your congregation.
- What resources are being utilized: people, time, and budget?

### **2 Where does your church want to go?**

- Review and evaluate your current technologies and new options.
- What's working and what can be improved?
- Which should be phased out?
- Which ones should be changed?
- Which underutilized resources could be implemented?
- Which new ones should be introduced?
- What resources will be needed: people, time, and budget?

### **3 How will your church get there?**

- Develop a time line for how you will implement changes, and who will coordinate the people and the technologies involved.
- What potential resources do you have that are readily accessible?

### **4 What will your church do to steward its technologies?**

- How often will your tech steward(s) evaluate the church's technology usage and make adjustments?
- Who will provide training?
- How will you stay informed on new technology developments?



**TECHNOLOGY TOOLS GLOSSARY**

NAME	WEBSITE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	COSTS
360Hubs	360hubs.com	Church Community App	360Hubs is an affinity hub technology with social networking, collaboration, and website functions	\$\$\$?
AOL Instant Messenger	AIM.com	Instant messaging	a very popular instant messaging for one-on-one chats	0
Babelwith.me	Babelwith.me	Chat room	An instant setup chat room that can translate between languages during a chat	0
Blip.tv	Blip.tv	Video podcasting	Syndicate episodes of videos as if you were running a television network	0 - \$
Blogger	Blogger.com	Bloggng	Free web-based blogging platform, now owned by Google	0
BuddyPress	BuddyPress.org	Message board and more	Social networking and message board that you would host on your own web server	0
Clover Sites	cloversites.com	Website builder	Website builder with emphasis on design beauty and content management functions using Adobe Flash	\$\$
CMS Matrix	cmsmatrix.org	Comparison chart for website builders	Compare features from hundreds of content management systems (CMS) for building website and managing content	0
Cobblestone Community Network	cobblestonecn.com	Church Community App	Web app that connects people for church groups, relationships, events, prayers, and more	\$\$\$?
Constant Contact	ConstantContact.com	Email newsletter	A popular email newsletter web app with fill-in templates and one-click unsubscribe	\$ - \$\$\$
Delicious	delicious.com	Social bookmarking	Share bookmarks to websites with ease, (owned by Yahoo)	0
Diigo	diigo.com	Social bookmarking	Share bookmarks with a social network of other people, with notes function that adds comments on web pages	0
Dimdim	Dimdim.com	webinar	Host live meetings and webinars for collaboration, desktop sharing, and/or presentations	0 - \$\$
Drupal	Drupal.org	Website builder / CMS	Open source content management system with custom modules and themes for a variety of website applications	0
Ekklesia 360	ekkleisia360.com	Website builder	A church website system described as a "total church web solution" providing website content management as well as modules for events, members, contacts, and social networking	\$\$\$?
E-zekiel	e-zekiel.com	Website builder	A church website builder that lets you choose from design templates or custom design, select from different pricing plans for different capacities and functions	\$ - \$\$
Facebook	Facebook.com	Social network	The most popular social networking website, which connects people through "friending" and sharing text, images, videos, and apps	0
faithHighway	faithhighway.com	Website builder	Church website builder with professional solutions for design, marketing, media centers, commercials, and church relationship management (CRM)	\$\$\$?
Forum Software Reviews	forum-software.org	Comparison chart	Provides comparison of message board and discussion forum softwares	0
Google Docs	docs.google.com	Collaborative documents	Post and share files like Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, and PowerPoint slides, to be viewed and edited by a team of collaborators	0
Google Wave	wave.google.com	Collaborating tool	Enables a team of people to draft a document, brainstorm, and track discussions in real-time or over a period of time	0



**ASSESSMENT TOOL & RESOURCE / STEWARDING TECHNOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP**

NAME	WEBSITE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	COSTS
GotoWebinar	GotoWebinar.com	Webinar	Make web-based presentations using slides and audio to a group of attendees in remote locations; can be packaged with GotoMeeting and/or GotoTraining for more collaborative and participatory functions	\$\$
Jarbyco	jarbyco.com	Text messaging service	Text messaging services for marketing announcements and promotions, as well as services for live event interaction through polling the audience or getting questions texted in	\$\$\$??
Joomla	Joomla.org	Website builder / CMS	Another popular open source content management system (CMS) with extensions and templates for customized functions	0
MailChimp	MailChimp.com	Email newsletter	A web-based app for managing email newsletter campaigns and tracking response	0 - \$\$\$
Meebo	Meebo.com	Instant messaging	Web app that enables instant messaging and sharing on all major networks like AIM, Yahoo!, Windows Live Messenger, Google Talk, ICQ, Jabber	0
MySpace	MySpace.com	Social network	A social network that was primarily popular for rock bands and their fans that allows individuality to show through custom design on user profile pages	0
NeatChat	neatchat.com	Chat room	A simple web app focused on providing an instant chat room for an online team conversation	0
PBworks	pbworks.com	Wiki	Wiki with team collaboration and project management for robust functionality for a team or community	\$\$
phpBB	phpBB.com	Message board	An open source message board / discussion forum software	0
Planning Center	PlanningCenterOnline.com	Collaboration tools	Online tools specifically designed for planning a worship service with scheduling, communicating, and media sharing functions	\$\$
PollDaddy	PollDaddy.com	Surveying	Web service for taking surveys, polls, and ratings	0 - \$\$
Reddit	Reddit.com	Social bookmarking	Another popular social bookmarking service, with many bookmarks on the topic of pop culture news	0
Site Organic	siteorganic.com	Website builder	A church website solution describing itself as combining content management tools with design and personal service	\$\$\$
Skype	Skype.com	Calling by audio or video	A software that enables low-cost and free phone calls and video calls domestically and internationally	0 or \$
Stumbleupon	Stumbleupon.com	Social bookmarking	A more interactive approach to social bookmarking that allows users to browse random websites based on personal preferences	0
SurveyMonkey	SurveyMonkey.com	Surveying	Web app for online surveys	0 - \$\$
Tatango	Tatango.com	Text messaging service	Service to provide group text messaging and SMS	\$\$ - \$\$\$
The City	OnTheCity.org	Church Community App	Community-based social networking described as a church movement software that enhances communication, connects people and tracks their participation	\$\$\$??
The Common	TheCommon.org	Church Community App	Web app to connect people with needs	\$\$ - \$\$\$
Tinychat	Tinychat.com	Chat room	Multi-user video chat and text chat rooms	0
Today'sMeet.com	Today'sMeet.com	Chat room	Setup an instant chat room for team conversations	0
Tokbox	Tokbox.com	Multi-user video chat	Multi-user video chat with premium features	0 - \$
Twitter	Twitter.com	Micro-blogging	Very popular micro-blogging that uses text-message length updates to serve as resource sharing and conversations	0
TypePad	TypePad.com	Blogging	A popular blogging service with various levels of features	\$ - \$\$
TYPO	typo3.org	Website builder/ CMS	An open source content management system that's been enhanced for community functions specific to churches; also see www.webempoweredchurch.org for details and for hosted solutions	0



**ASSESSMENT TOOL & RESOURCE / STEWARDING TECHNOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP**

NAME	WEBSITE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	COSTS
vBulletin	vBulletin.com	Message board	Originally just a message board software, now has become a community software with functions for blogging and website content management and more	\$\$
Vertical Response	VerticalResponse.com	Email newsletter	Web app for email newsletter design, creation, and management, with special non-profit discount pricing	0 - \$\$
Vimeo	Vimeo.com	Video	Video hosting service with a cleaner group-centric user interface	0 - \$
Webex	Webex.com	Webinar	A popular webinar service for online presentations	\$
Wetpaint	Wetpaint.com	Wiki	Popular wiki service with community sharing functions	0 - \$\$
WikiMatrix	wikimatrix.org	Comparison chart	Big comparison website for you to selectively choose wiki services to compare features and functions side-by-side	0
Wikispaces	Wikispaces.com	Wiki	Another wiki service designed with an organizational focus	\$ - \$\$
WordPress	WordPress.org and WordPress.com	Blog and Website	Very popular open source software that originally started as a blogging platform and has grown to also serve as a website content management system; the .com provides hosted-solution while the .org provides self-hosted software for more customization	0
Yahoo	Yahoo.com	Web portal	Web services that run the gamut of email, news, information, instant messaging, and much more	0
YouTube	Youtube.com	Video	The most popular video hosting service with social networking functions; entirely ad-supported	0
Yugma	Yugma.com	Webinar	Web conferencing and collaboration software for team meetings, presentations, and training, with integration for other audio and video apps like Skype	0 - \$\$
Zoho	Zoho.com	Collaborative documents	Another web-based collaboration service, for document editing, web meetings, and other team-oriented services	0 - \$\$\$
Zoomerang	Zoomerang.com	Surveying	Online survey software with reporting and analysis functions	0 - \$\$\$

**COSTS KEY:**

- 0      ➡ free
- \$      ➡ under \$120/year
- \$\$     ➡ \$120-\$1200/year
- \$\$\$    ➡ over \$1200/year
- \$\$\$?? ➡ unpublished / unknown

☉ We invite your feedback on how this pre-conference resource can be more useful to you.

☉ **PAGES THAT FOLLOW FEATURE REPRINTS FROM WORSHIP LEADER MAGAZINES 2009 JUNE ISSUE AND JULY/AUGUST ISSUE**



# [THE]



# [WORSHIP]



# [2.0]



# [WELL]



By Dr. Chuck Fromm

**W**orship wars have been with us from the beginning, as Dr. Ron Allen has reminded us many times.<sup>1</sup> The conflict over acceptable worship is associated with the first murder: Cain slew Abel (Gen 4:8). However, another conflict is referenced at the “worship well” of John 4: the dispute between the Jews and Samaritans over the proper location of worship—Jerusalem or Samaria. In this somewhat coy conversation, the Samaritan woman had no idea that she was discussing the worship location controversy with the incarnate God, Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth. Jesus explains that the question of location is now (or soon will be) moot. Why? Future worshipers will not need to be concerned with geographical space in encountering God. There is a new mobile/missional temple,

and the how of worship trumps the where.

**SAMARITAN WOMAN:** “I don’t know about that. I do know that the Messiah is coming. When He arrives, we’ll get the whole story.”

**JESUS:** “I am He...You don’t have to wait any longer or look any further” (John 4:25-26 The Message).

In searching the New Testament in an exegesis of *Worship and Spirit*, N.T. Wright has declared “The Church from Acts 2 onwards is the Spirit-led Church, with worship as an integral part of its proper life. ...[T]he Spirit has taken the place of the Shekinah.”<sup>2</sup> This shift of the Shekinah from Temple to believers is what we are calling Worship 2.0. It is worship that knows no special mountain or building or tradition or ritual or space higher than Christ’s regulative principle of worship, “spirit and truth.” Thus it distinguishes

form from function, but does not eliminate either.<sup>3</sup> It is a worship (which, although remediated through cultural forms, ultimately transcends them through the mediation of Christ) allowing a mobile missional church to reach out to the gentiles and go, as Dr. Luke tells us, to the ends of the earth. Worship 2.0 must be clearly distinguished from the cultural/communicational shifts dubbed Web 2.0. Since the Incarnation, Worship 2.0 remains the same, yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8); but Web 2.0 is clearly changing, and may soon be Web 3.0, perpetually being replaced with a new and “required” upgrade.<sup>4</sup> Such is the inevitable process of innovation and obsolescence that characterizes all communication technologies. From the invention of the alphabet to the digital era, from the book to the iPod, we see a plethora of media changes. How-

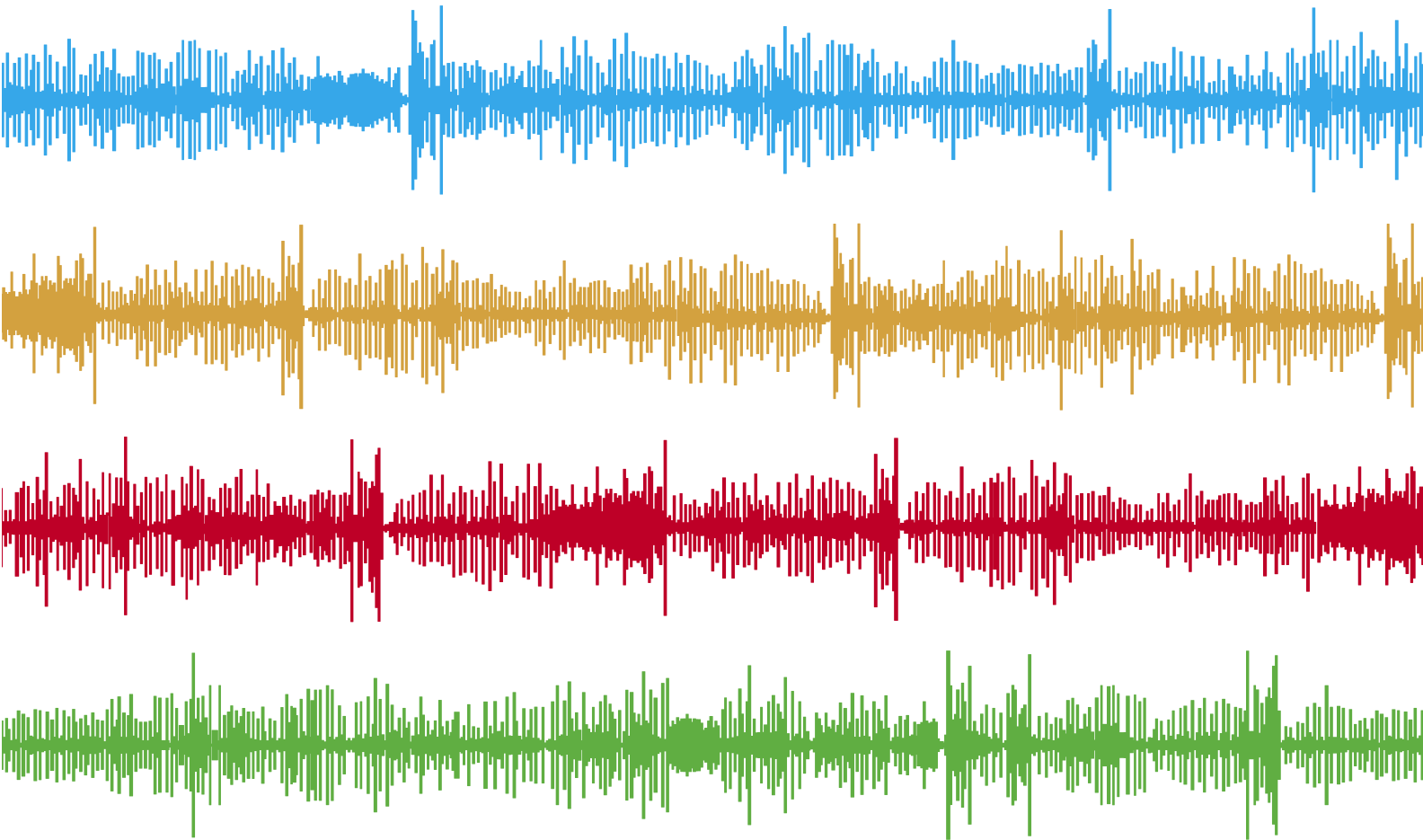
1. Dr. Ronald B. Allen is Senior Prof of Bible Exposition at Dallas Theological seminary and co-authored (with Gordon Borror) the classic *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel*.

2. “Worship and the Spirit in the New Testament” delivered at the Yale Conference on *Worship and the Spirit*: February 2008.

3. Wright emphasized that this is not to favor “free-form, non-liturgical worship as genuine Spirit-led” over “liturgical or set forms.”

4. Most experts agree that the next shift is several years away and may indeed involve the ability of the machine to summarize large patches of information via AI (artificial intelligence)

5. For Further reading, see Dr. Dyrness’ *A Primer on Christian Worship*, Eerdmans, 2009.



ever, the content of the Christian message does not change. In his instructive “primer on worship,” Dr. William Dyrness lists the elements of worship in the stories of Creation, Israel, Life of Christ, Ascension, Pentecost, Mission, and Parousia (or the second coming).<sup>5</sup> Taken together, these stories amount to one great story, “the greatest story ever told,” informing and shaping the content of our worship, which is a collective act of praise and thanksgiving for God’s power and grace as demonstrated in salvation history. Like any great story, the history of salvation is inexhaustible: it can be told, retold, and remediated in a thousand forms and tongues.

### **The Participating Church**

But what are we to make of the seismic shifts in communication and culture and the

**Oh, so you’re a prophet! Well, tell me this:  
Our ancestors worshiped God at this mountain,  
but you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only  
place for worship, right?  
John 4: 19-20, *The Message***

resulting challenges we face today? New innovations in technology create networked publics, which can level hierarchical control. Institutions in society maintain control, and so their “flattening” may be both harmful and beneficial. So the forces of chaotic creativity and the institutional state of hierarchal control are always in tension. Hierarchies maintain control by access (or restricting access), while the network allows open access to all, or “many to many” communications. This is the new participatory culture of Web 2.0. How does this new participatory culture change the ways that we think about worship and evangelization? Is the story of salvation being told in ways that are faithful to tradition, but appropriate for contemporary audi-

ences habituated to instantaneous digital gratification?

In chronological terms, we are probably in Communicational Shift 5.0, the latest phase of transformation in which communica-

tion forms evolve from basic oral/aural, to manuscript writing, to printing, to broadcasting, and now to digital. The forms of digital communication are multiple and confusing, so that keeping up with technological change is more and more difficult. Do you surf the Web? Do you blog? Do you twitter? Do you text? Do you IM? Do you exchange MP3 files? Should you? And why should you? But as we have already hinted, it is not merely a change in electronic gadgetry that underlies the present blizzard of technologies. There is a seismic shift in the foundational logics of communication which impacts and shapes our message and hope of salvation. We will discuss those logics shortly.

*continued on page 24*

## Selah: WORSHIP 2.0

As a pastor or worship leader, you may be inside or outside the Online Networked Church Movement, which is expanding globally by the second. What are the theological, spiritual, financial and conceptual implications for you personally, for your church, and for the global Christian community? In tough economic times, some business enterprises circle the wagons and take a defensive stance, while some become proactive and reinvent themselves. Similarly, when facing the impact of technology on our worship, some churches refuse to move, and others move too quickly.

Whatever our current posture, whether we are resisting the wave of change or trying to anticipate and move ahead of it, we need to pause and consider how we can continue on the path of renewing worship. While our heads may be spinning with the rapid pace of change, our hearts will be in the right place so long as we listen to the voice of the One Who tells us that, "...where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Mtt 18:20). There is no doubt that in the online world today, not just two or three, but thousands, are gathering in His name in many virtual avenues. How will we meet and worship Jesus online? What must we do to minister effectively to the many who seek Him there? And how does the online campus of the networked church relate to our offline worship communities?

### Your Thoughts?

In this first of a three-part series on the networked church, we begin by defining terms, reviewing history, and establishing some biblical, historical, and cultural compass points. In our second installment, we will look more closely at what's going on and who is doing it. We're going to share with you what works and what doesn't, and look for exemplars in managing time, finances, and content. Some churches on the cutting-edge have spent millions; we will gather up their learning so you can benefit. We'll finish by exploring what the technological future has in store for those of us called to serve in worship, and summarizing your input as we also hear from you. We invite you to join the micro-community we've formed to further explore and discuss the issues of the networked Church

(Go to [worshipleader.com](http://worshipleader.com)), where you can weigh in by responding to the questions we pose—and by posing your own.

Worship 2.0 is simply remembering that in the midst of these rapidly evolving communication forms, our worship is truly led by the Holy Spirit, not by cultural innovation and form. In fact, most of the forms and changes covered in this series are becoming so common and everyday that they will hardly be noticed in future months and years. Such is the nature of communication technology. As long as there is a plentiful supply of electricity, and the technology is in good working order, its role in remediation is almost transparent. The 16th-century Council of Trent is an example of the invisibility new technology can achieve. It was



convened by the Catholic Church as a counter to the Reformation. It should be noted that in the deliberations of this ecclesiastical council, not one mention was made of the printing press! Yet it was the press, and the widespread popularity achieved through cheap printing of the writings of one man, Martin Luther, which created the first mass media movement and changed how Christians engage with their faith. We now see

the Word as a book, and most sermons are written before they are preached.

### Cutting Edge

Before the printing press, Christians developed other communication innovations such as the codex book. At the dawn of the second millennium, literacy movements were spawned by so-called "heretics." Notable among these preachers was the early 13th century leader Valdesius, who was deemed heretical, along with his followers, because they lacked licenses to preach from the Catholic hierarchy, which controlled the most powerful communication form of the gospel since Peter at Pentecost: preaching. Two hundred and fifty years prior to the reformation, Valdesius (Waldo) led a movement (the Waldensians, estimated by some to have numbered in the hundreds of thousands, still exist today) based on teaching the Bible in the vernacular of the people. Fast forward to American History from the colonial era to the twentieth century, and we discover that evangelicals led the way in establishing communication industries, from printing to radio and television broadcasting.

Communication strategies and technologies have always been at the heart of the evangelical movement, whether in the recreation of the Scriptures in the vernacular, or employing new tools to bring the message to mass audiences. The first amendment guaranteed that the government would not set up a religion or hierarchical structure; not freedom "from" religion, but freedom "of" religion. Benjamin Franklin supported the first Great Awakening led by George Whitefield by printing Isaac Watts' hymns. The first large printing presses in America were purchased by the American Bible Society. The Harper Brothers, two Methodist brothers, started their publishing business by printing Bibles. Today Harper/Zondervan continues that tradition by publishing the NIV. In the 20th Century, with the growing development of sound technologies, the Jesus Movement

**"Is the story of salvation being told in ways that are faithful to tradition, but appropriate for contemporary audiences habituated to instantaneous digital gratification?"**

leaders—both preachers and musicians—extended their voice through the new technology of the cassette tape duplicator. This technology came of age in the late '60s and early '70s, just as Larry Norman and Love Song were singing “I Wish We’d All Been Ready” and “Welcome Back.” Thousands of new churches were birthed through remediated preaching and music, spawning what sociologist termed “the megachurch.” And now as we face the “digital divide,” it is no wonder that the unchanging message is once again being remediated by pastors and worship leaders. Repurposing the gospel through the latest form of new media is in our DNA.

### **New Ears to Hear**

The digital age is being carried into the front door of the church via one of the signature devices of new media, the cell phone and is shaping the way we worship in its everyday, nearly unnoticeable manner. Oh yes, every now and then we hear the familiar sound of a ringtone as we solemnly sit in a pew. Someone forgot to heed the warning of the overhead screen to turn off their cell phone, and we are reminded that we are all in touch. I usually set my phone to “vibrate.” A few weeks back, while in a worship service, a text message buzzed on my phone. It was my oldest son, asking for help to fix a flat tire across town. The circumstances were urgent, and I’m thankful I could respond with help. Undoubtedly, many congregants with their heads in a bowed posture, which used to represent submission (or rest), may now be text-messaging or even taking electronic notes of the sermon. We are a networked congregation, and this has serious implications for public worship. Soon the message on the overhead screens in the sanctuary will read: “Don’t forget to turn your cell phone on.”

What has become an everyday technology for us can also be used as a powerful tool. Revolutionaries and terrorists have used text messaging to topple governments and organize raids and suicide missions. On the other side, the Online Networked Church Movement is using it, and a host of online and mobile media tools, to build communities and pastor flocks. Understanding the transition from old to new media is crucial in deciding how, when, or if you want to ride the wave. The list that follows presents many of the foundational logics behind the cultural revolution that is giving birth to the forms the networked church takes.

### **INNOVATIVE**

In the old media environment, tradition was the sure remedy for uncertainty, and novelty was a threat. But innovation is now the rule. The innovative aspect of cyber-culture means much more than the invention and adoption of new devices. It’s true that the way we shop, eat, dress, learn, talk, and enjoy music and films has been profoundly affected by inventions such as personal computers, cell phones, iPods, and Web-in-hand tools like the Blackberry and iPhone. But more importantly, the rapid development and use of such devices has permanently diminished our expectations of a relatively stable cultural environment shaped by businesses and institutions dependent on particular forms of mediation. Newspapers around the country are going out of business, or moving entirely onto the Web. We have become used to the idea that our music, video, film, and book collections may evolve and migrate across platforms, from printed magazines onto Kindle and from CDs to MP3. And we see that this evolution often sounds a death knell for the old platforms and the companies and institutions that relied on and profited from them.

**How will the availability and portability of such new media inventions affect the conduct of worship on a church campus? Can such technologies be used to build and extend communities rather than simply distracting them from their purposes?**

### **CONVERGENT**

Old media were segmented from each other: we put down our book and turned on the television. But in cyber-culture, all media form a multifaceted whole. New media technologies encourage the simultaneous development and distribution of content across multiple channels. Books may still be popular, but novelists now write stories with an eye to their cinematic possibilities. Filmmakers post their work onto the Internet; musicians post their band’s latest effort onto MySpace pages; television shows may be watched anywhere, not just in the home, on hand-held devices like the iPod. The same audiences that watch sporting events in the stadium on their iPods can be expected to bring these devices to church with them along with their cell phones, equipped for text messages and Web browsing.

**How will this trend affect staples of traditional worship such as the hymnal and other forms of print? What should worship leaders do when faced with decisions about which platforms or technologies to invest in?**

### **NETWORKED**

Old media communication was unidirectional, and it was always clear “who’s the boss.” New media communication is characterized by multiple producers and receivers of messages, and lines of authority are often unclear. Traditional media whether print or broadcast, were hierarchical, top-down, forms of communication, designed for one sender to reach many receivers. New technologies are predominantly characterized by interconnected distributed networks, which replace unidirectional, top-down hierarchies with many-to-many communication where there are multiple nodes acting as creators, transmitters, and receivers of messages. While this may not eliminate the need for centers of authority, it does require pastors and worship leaders to make room for audience input to an unprecedented degree, and to get used to the fact that the networked congregations are inherently more anarchic and less subject to pastoral control.

**How will the networking of our congregations influence the way that they perceive and respond to pastoral authority?**

### **GLOBAL**

In the old model, the local church was a physical plant (or campus) serving the needs of worshipers in a particular town, city, or geographic territory. But new media transcend locality and encourage the formation of global identities. The churches of the near future will

*continued on page 26*

not abandon the physical plant or the local community, but will find that its membership and its reach will expand across state and national borders and boundaries. In the new global economy, individual members of the congregation will move and be transferred to distant locales; with new media such as Internet, podcasting, and video chat, geographic distance no longer requires that church members leave their communities behind.

**To what extent is our church's identity based on our physical location? How will our church respond to the globalizing effects of technology, and how can we use technology to expand our outreach and our sense of who we are in the worldwide Christian community?**

### **GENERATIONAL**

In the old world, age conferred authority and commanded respect. In the new world, the young may have more wisdom than the old about what's appropriate in a given situation. Divisions between young and old—prefigured by the “worship wars,” which pitted those who preferred rock bands against those who liked pipe organs—may grow up around new technologies which are unfamiliar and difficult for older congregation members but taken for granted by the young. Decisions on use of church resources for Web ministries must take age demographics of each individual congregation into account, and yet failure to position one's church community properly may result in obsolescence as one generation is succeeded by the next. Yet if properly integrated into the church's worship life and community-building, new media technologies may also break down divisions and increase dialogue and learning between old and young.

**Will technology increase generational divisions in our church? Does it have potential to break down divisions between age groups? What assistance or tutorials do older members of our congregation require to become part of Worship 2.0 (assuming they are willing)?**

### **EVERYDAY**

In the old world, there was a day and time reserved for worship, and we returned to the world for the rest of the week. In the new world, worship, like going to the movies, isn't something that is separated from the everyday. Church used to be a place we went on Sunday morning, with the occasional prayer group or Bible study on Wednesday night. But today's multimedia user can participate in an event by listening to it or watching it after it has happened and at times of their own choosing, and they can engage in discussion, prayer, and Bible study in an “asynchronous” fashion that does not depend on either physical presence or simultaneous participation.

**How can new technologies help us to integrate worship into our everyday lives?**

**We have already posed several questions raised by our exploration of the new media landscape. The following is a summation of those questions which we will address in our next issue of WL and Worship 2.0. Take some time to ponder these questions for yourself and your ministry and join to conversation by going to [worshipleader.com](http://worshipleader.com).**

- 1. What does a fully networked church look like? How is it different from the church as we have known it in the past? In what ways is it similar?**
- 2. Different technologies are owned and utilized by different generations. Will this create a new generational divide, another worship war within the church? Alternatively, is it possible to imagine ways that technology could be used to bridge generational gaps?**
- 3. Are there individuals/key figures and/or churches/institutions to whom or to which you look for leadership in the Online Networked Church Movement? What can other churches learn from their experiments with new technology?**
- 4. What new spiritual practices are emerging from the networked churches? What traditional practices are being renewed or transformed? What are the new rules and the old rules for spiritual practices?**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Whatever your source book(s) for “common prayer” or “liturgy” or “service of worship” may be, it is almost certain that you are appropriating portions of what you create in worship from the Web. This can include fulfilling CCLI requirements for reporting song use, downloading of creative visual or musical resources, blogging with other worship leaders, and now connecting with your congregation via one of several social networks. In our next issue, we will be talking with several early adopters of these new technologies, in order to gather up their insights for the common understanding and benefit of us all.

To think about what we are doing in this technological age is a challenge. Some have argued that the culture of print produced a new kind of idolatry, not based on the worship of images or statues but nevertheless reducing the message of Christ, the Living Word, to a material object: the book. As Scottish poet Edwin Muir has written: “[The] Word made flesh is made word again”—and thus the blood of Christ is drained from the message. And just as worshipers can mistake the form of mediation for the message by fetishizing the book, so too we can make new technologies into idols. If we are not careful, the torrent of living water can be limited to a few volts of electric current, and God's voice will be smothered or choked through inappropriate veneration of the remediated forms of God's Word. The disciples were wary of this: “The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life,” they said (2 Cor 3:6). They had felt the hammer of worship that was not Spirit-led. This in no way lessens our reverence for the Bible, the inspired Word of God, but we do not worship paper and ink. It is the Living Word who fills its pages with His Story and truth.

Symbolic tools which only point to themselves (whether they are statues, books or websites) are idols and must be broken. But the worship well gives us a different challenge and a new standard of worship. It is a story that moves from questioning to personal revelation, a story that witnesses to Jesus as God, and to worship not linked to place, or driven by technology, but led by the Holy Spirit. Jesus also says: “My sheep know My voice. I know My sheep and they recognize My voice. But if you cannot hear Me you are not part of My flock” (Marshall McLuhan paraphrase of John 10:27). W

---

Dr. Chuck Fromm is the Publisher and Editor in Chief of *Worship Leader* magazine.

## DRAWING FROM THE WORSHIP [2.0] WELL

I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. Prov 8:12 (KJV)

June's issue dipped into the Worship [2.0] Well giving a brief history and a frame of reference for the state of technology and worship. Although, some of us may feel like we are experiencing a cultural Tsunami with all of the new Web-based approaches to ministry, the reality of church on the Web has been with us for almost three decades.

### HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON?

The first organized religious online venue, net.religion, launched in 1983. In the mid to late '90s, Churches' presence on the Web escalated exponentially and has progressively moved from simple listings, much like a Yellow Pages ad, to calendar and event posting, uploadable or write-in prayer requests, to downloadable sermons, to live streaming video with a real-time audience that spans the globe, chat rooms, podcasts and an interactive socially networked community that pushes information both ways. In this issue we have gathered a list of websites, resources, and defining principles of Worship 2.0. Plus some of the shapers, leaders, and observers of the Online Networked Church have joined us to reflect on only a few of the myriad facets of the constantly morphing movement. For these and more community movers and thought shapers, go to [worshipleader.com](http://worshipleader.com) to read, respond, and engage. Join with us in an ongoing dialogue online exploring the theology, history, everyday practice, scriptural foundations, and music surrounding worship 2.0.

### CONVERSATIONS WITH PACESETTERS OF THE ONLINE NETWORKED CHURCH

#### DR. DAVID BOURGEOIS

● Associate Professor of Information Systems at Biola University in the Crowell School of Business, currently teaching a course on Internet Ministry there. Dave researches and speaks on issues surrounding the use of the Internet by ministries.

Blog: [lessonsfrombabel.com](http://lessonsfrombabel.com)

[twitter.com/DaveBourgeois](https://twitter.com/DaveBourgeois)



#### WILL DIGITAL CHURCHES EVER TAKE OVER PHYSICAL ONES?

...In my opinion, participating in a church service through these mediums can be stimulating, powerful, and possibly even life-changing. But in the end, it is still not the full experience that God wants for us. For some, "doing church" online may be their only choice due to an inability to get to a physical service. For others, online church is a less intimidating way to

see what Christianity is all about. But if these mediated services portray themselves as authentic church services and do not have as their long-term aim the drawing of believers to a local body, as commanded in Scripture, then they are shortchanging the participants of the full Christian experience.  
(more online)

**NATHAN CLARK**

● Director of Digital Innovation, Media Design at Northland in Orlando, Florida. Northland has multi-sites and an Internet community that reaches around the globe.  
[twitter.com/wondermade](http://twitter.com/wondermade)



**CAN WORSHIP TAKE PLACE VIA THE INTERNET?**

The fundamental premise that people can gather to worship God facilitated through technology is working. We have people that are professing a new faith in Christ and are experiencing Him facilitated through this technology. We are having people worship and experience His forgiveness and grace and His challenge to their lives in profound ways on a weekly basis, deep and substantial connections are being made. But as far as “what’s working?” that’s hard to say. I prefer the question of “Who’s working?” And to me it’s very clear that this is a tool God is using to do great things for His kingdom.  
(more online)

**GREG ATKINSON**

● In late 2003, Greg launched MultisensoryWorship.com, a website geared to encourage, network, resource, and equip Christian pastors, media ministers, artists and worship leaders—after having served the previous 11 years as a worship pastor himself, he helped create, develop, and lead WorshipHouse Media.  
[Blog: gregatkinson.com](http://blog.gregatkinson.com)  
[twitter.com/gregatkinson](http://twitter.com/gregatkinson)



**IS THIS MOVEMENT ONLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE MEGACHURCHES?**

The size of most churches in America is 200 and less, and out of that, the

majority are 75 or less. So a lot of churches are late adopters, and it’ll be a while before they get onboard. But, the beautiful thing about web 2.0 tools is that many of them are free, and so they’re highly accessible. You can blog for free, and you can do podcasts for free, you can create a Facebook account for free, you can Twitter for free.

I’m [also] very passionate about the music side of worship. The thing that I see happening with the home church, small group, and church planting movement is the opportunity for more and more people to step up and lead worship. And, it may not be up on the big stage in front of a thousand people, but more and more people are able to express themselves as musicians in small churches, and it is a wonderful and beautiful thing. With these online tools a lot of people in various countries are grabbing a guitar or a keyboard and leading worship in an apartment or in a home.  
(more online)

**HEIDI CAMPBELL**

● Assistant Professor of Communication at Texas A&M University where she teaches in the areas of New Media, Popular Culture, and Religion. She has a Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh in Computer-Mediated Communication and Practical Theology. Since 1997 she has studied religion online and the influence of new media on religious communities and has written on a variety of topics from new media ethics to religion and cell phones.  
[Blog: religionmeetsnewmedia.blogspot.com](http://blog.religionmeetsnewmedia.blogspot.com)



**CAN TRUE COMMUNITY OCCUR IN A VIRTUAL CHURCH?**

I’ve been interviewed so many times by different religious leaders, and they’re saying, “What you have online can’t be authentic because it’s disembodied.” Well, how can you tell that in the embodied context—people showing up in the same pew together—they’re having an authentic experience with God? It could be highly individualized because they may have no connection with the people on either side of them. Just because it’s off-line doesn’t mean that’s it more authentic than online.

It’s easy to see how much time kids are spending on their cell phones or on Facebook and recognize that people want to have these kinds of places for self-presentation to experiment with their religious identities. They want places where they can have 24-hour feeding or connection or encouragement. And so, we’ve got to now start to rethink how we provide that. Maybe it starts with getting their pastors or youth pastors specially trained in digital technology and not so much as how they do a four-part Bible study.  
(more online)

**PASTOR DAN LACICH**

● Serves as pastor of distributed sites at Northland, in Longwood, Florida, helping the distributed church worship and serve together for the glory and honor of Christ. Dan has a bachelor’s degree from Franciscan University, with a double major in Theology and Psychology, a Master of Divinity from Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry and a Doctor of Ministry from Reformed Theological Seminary.  
[Blog: proactivechristian.wordpress.com](http://blog.proactivechristian.wordpress.com)



**WHAT SHOULD SOMEONE BE AWARE OF IF THEY ARE PLANNING ON STARTING AN ONLINE MINISTRY?**

From a personnel standpoint, it takes way more time than you think it’s going to take. And because you’re opening up a whole new area of ministry of dealing with people, they’re going to have needs that you’re going to be made aware of, that you would have never learned about otherwise. I think one of the things that you shouldn’t have as your justification is that somehow because we’re going to have this more interactive Internet thing, we’re going to really build up our congregation from the evangelism standpoint. It’s not an automatic, that just because you have a fancier website that’s more interactive, it doesn’t mean people are going to come to Jesus. I think that’s one of the mistakes that we make a lot of times as Christians. There’s a lot more work involved than just having that available.  
(more online)

continued on page 40

**D.J CHUANG**

● Director of Digital Initiatives at Leadership Network. He guides churches who are experimenting with alternative venues such as digital church, extension sites, video-café congregations, multiple campuses, satellite ministries or other variations that go beyond your main worship area or main campus.

**Blog:** [djchuang.com](http://djchuang.com) | [twitter.com/djchuang](https://twitter.com/djchuang)



**DOES CHURCH HAVE TO HAPPEN IN A SPECIFIC (TRADITIONAL) TIME AND PLACE?**

As more Web apps get launched on the Internet and mature over time, it's undoubtedly shaping how we "do church." While it's often taught that church is the people and not the building or the worship service, most of us revert to thinking of church as a physical gathering on a Sunday morning. I think the online world of social media and Web apps are showing that relationships are not limited to space and set times. People are able to start relationships and grow friendships with one another online even though they're not in the same physical space. For the next generation, the online world and in-person offline worlds are practically seamless. This means people can really fellowship and worship online.  
(more online)

**BOBBY GRUENEWALD**

● Oversees the LifeChurch.tv Open, Network, and United operations. Prior to joining the LifeChurch.tv team in 2001, he started and sold two technology companies, consulted with start-ups on venture capital funds, and even traveled and performed with a Christian rap group.

**Blog:** [swerve.lifechurch.tv](http://swerve.lifechurch.tv) | [twitter.com/bobbygwald](https://twitter.com/bobbygwald)



**FOR A CHURCH OR WORSHIP LEADER CONSIDERING TAKING THE NEXT STEP TOWARDS A MORE INTENSIVE ONLINE**

**MINISTRY, WHAT SHOULD THEY KEEP IN MIND?**

Start small—smaller than you think. The temptation is to assume that more equals better—that adding layers

of complexity will create a richer experience. Go with a simple approach in the beginning, and bring your best effort to those few elements you determine are crucial. It's more sustainable, and will give you the margin to adapt and evaluate over time.

Upgrade audio quality before video quality. Web video tends to be more forgiving, but with poor audio, you run the risk of sounding like an amateur home video. Invest in quality equipment and mic your communicator appropriately.

It's about connection, not cool. Don't miss the importance of community within online ministry. We're there to connect people to Christ and each other within a loving, supportive, and active community.

**ZACK HUBERT**

● Spent 8 years with Amazon.com, has an MAT from Fuller Theological Seminary and is a technology pastor and a key developer of "The City," a community internet platform originally designed for Mars Hill in Seattle.

**Blog:** [onthecity.org/blog](http://onthecity.org/blog) | [twitter.com/pastorzack](https://twitter.com/pastorzack)



**ARE THERE WARNINGS FOR US TO THINK ABOUT WITH THE NETWORKED CHURCH?**

I'd like to share a really quick story. I walk past this coffee shop near my house and a couple times a week I go in there for coffee, it's a great place. The vast majority of people have their headphones on, totally disconnected with everyone that's physically around them. And they're fiddling with Facebook. It's actually a game I play to try and count how many people are using an online social networking tool, and not talking to each other. And I think that is not the direction that we want to go with the church. We don't want to have the primary engagement being in this virtual meta-layer, we want to have the primary engagement being location-based. You know, you are in a community, that's a physical community that has gatherings, meetings, and different things that you do together.

## Quentin Schultze

### Where Angels Fear to Tread

As told to Dr. Chuck Fromm

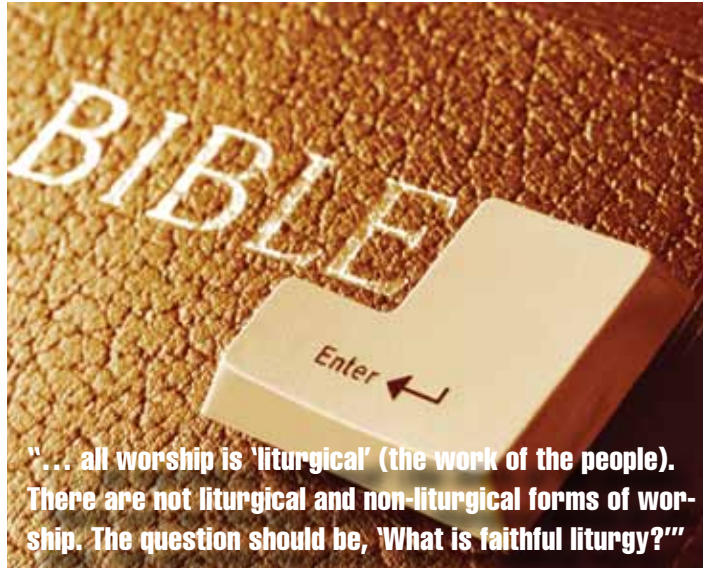
A conversation between the publisher of *Worship Leader Magazine* Chuck Fromm and communications expert Quentin Schultze about the state of Worship 2.0 and what you should know before rushing in to join the latest trends.

**FROMM:** What does a fully networked church look like?

**SCHULTZE:** Human beings are inherently multimedia creatures. So “networking” takes many forms across all media, including in-person, print, electronic, and digital media. A full network employs all of the fitting or appropriate means of communication for the purposes of congregational life, from worship to education and fellowship. The notion of “fitting” use of technology in this networking is crucially important. To be fully networked is not just to be busy, but to be fittingly involved with one another. We constantly have to be asking ourselves not if we are networked *per se*, but if we are networked appropriately, in tune with the purposes of the Church.

**FROMM:** Do you anticipate Web technology taking over every aspect of a church’s operating platform? If not, what operational aspects will avoid the change?

**SCHULTZE:** Web technology will not “take over” any aspects of church operations but will instead be integrated into operations in different ways and to various extents by each congregation. There will not be a one-size-fits-all approach, although some software and hardware companies will tout this. We’ll see major differences among churches and denominations depending on everything from location (e.g., urban, rural suburban) to congregational life, demographics, and theological and ecclesiastical traditions. The most promising Web 2.0 developments will be organic, not organizational.



“... all worship is ‘liturgical’ (the work of the people). There are not liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship. The question should be, ‘What is faithful liturgy?’”

**FROMM:** How is the movement from mass media to massively participatory media reflected in the creation of Christian worship?

**SCHULTZE:** Participation varies enormously among people. Some like to participate only as consumers, not producers. Still, a sizeable percentage of people who participate in worship also like contributing to the ways that worship is planned, executed, evaluated, and renewed. Worship is going in all kinds of directions with tremendous creativity and vibrancy as well as silliness and misguided practices. The question behind the technological explosion is how to educate the “masses” about the history and purposes of worship so they have enough context to participate wisely in worship and in worship renewal—beyond being just consumers.

**FROMM:** What new spiritual practices are emerging from the networked churches? What traditional practices are being renewed or transformed? What are the new rules and the old rules for spiritual practices?

**SCHULTZE:** Churches can be networked within and without (intra and inter). The intra-networking is beginning to take off among the so-called emerging churches, creating ongoing communications about activities and events. New software is also gaining ground in the larger, community churches for the sharing of gifts, talents, and other resources for the sake of the common good rather than just the sake of the individual member. Some worship planning is also occurring. On the inter-church front, multimedia products, particularly sermon recordings, are being distributed, primarily via congregational leaders with platforms beyond their local churches.

**FROMM:** To what extent do you see the networked congregation having an impact on traditional audiences, church hierarchies and authority structures?

**SCHULTZE:**  
**a) Governance**

Church governance is already becoming quite a mess as the new social networks create groundswells of innovation, dialogue, and novel practices. Somehow church leadership is going to have to learn how to listen to the existing conversations both online and within congregations in order to discern what to do to foster new but wise leadership.

**b) Pastoral/Biblical Interpretation**

Issues of pastoral interpretation of Scripture and interpretation of the meaning of “church” are popping up throughout contemporary churches. This is being spurred by books and websites that are asking tough questions, especially about faddish

and narrowly literalistic interpretations. One way to understand the new developments in interpretation is that they represent a kind of Augustinian (4th-century) revival of doctrinal interpretation on many levels at once. It's becoming increasingly clear to younger members in renewal-oriented churches that Scripture, creation, and culture are all texts that need to be "read" through the lenses of basic Christian belief and doctrine. As a result, much preaching is regaining its extemporaneous style, personal engagement, cultural criticism, spiritual heart, authentic sensibilities, and deep hermeneutical thrust that combine affective and logical insights. In a way, preaching is becoming more like theological conversation or a doctrinally informed "chat."

Wise preachers are listening more closely to their congregations, through many media outlets, to determine how their proclamation and conversations are being interpreted and received. Preachers are wondering if their congregations really "get" the basics of the faith—even if their members grew up in Christian churches. I believe that this is essentially why someone like Rob Bell, pastor of Mars Hill church here in West Michigan, is so popular; he is gifted at discerning ancient truth and communicating it in inspiring and relevant ways (in a very low-tech environment, by the way). Bell's high-tech ventures (such as the Nooma DVD series) are extensions of his basic, highly doctrinal preaching (that some would call a "teaching" rather than a sermon). This is not simply audience adaptation but often a movement toward a kind of dialogical approach to preaching in which preacher and congregations keep the preaching-nurtured conversations going all week and all year long.

### c) Worship

It appears that social networking is becoming the primary means for those interested in worship renewal to discourse about the subject, share ideas, ask questions, pass along resources, and report on their own experiences. These developing networks are linked to conferences and "published" resources as well. I see this as a sub-community of church members across Christian traditions who are interested in the same issues. Unfortunately, there are also highly faddish trends driven by overly technological views of worship as "audience effect." So these networks of discourse need some wise

voices as organic leadership to avoid going in unbiblical directions that are uninformed by both Scripture and tradition. Perhaps the greatest concern, in my view, is the lack of recognition in populist worship renewal that all worship is "liturgical" (the work of the people). There are not liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship. The question should be, "What is faithful liturgy?"

### d) Leadership/Gender Issues

Technological social movements invariably attract more males than females. This has a subtle but profound impact on the ways that technologies are perceived and employed. While social networking undercuts some traditional ecclesiastical authority, it also re-energizes a kind of paternalistic view of worship as a male-driven, instrumental, effects-oriented, controlling practice. This is partly why in-person discourse is so important; it provides greater "bandwidth" for multimedia, multi-sensory interaction and is more respectful of gender differences (whether they are social or genetic differences).

**FROMM:** What will be the roll of private and/or non-profit "producers of the sacred" in the networked community movement?

**SCHULTZE:** The only "producer" of the sacred is God. That truth has to be the starting point for faith-oriented social networking and related cultural production. So we begin with a sobering truth, namely, that Christian spirituality is not about what human beings do but about what God does. As I tell my students, we need to keep in mind that Christian spirituality is all about attending to what God has done, is doing, and has promised to do. In other words, God is already at work. Our "job" (really, our calling) is to attend to the Spirit's movement here, and there and everywhere, often where we least expect to see God at work. We can't move ahead faithfully in a Web 2.0 world by pretending to play God. ■■



Dr. Quentin Schultze is a nationally known communications expert whose many books include *High-Tech Worship?* and *Habits of the High-Tech Heart*. To read more of this interview, go to [worshipleader.com](http://worshipleader.com).