

CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER

Conversations that Matter are Online Gatherings of Bay Area Leaders of Faith + Nationally Recognized Thought Leaders Designed to Spark Dialogue Around the Big Questions that Impact Spiritual Life in the Bay Area.

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Shaping the Post- Pandemic Church.

This resource is a companion to the Conversation that Matters:
Shaping the post-pandemic church.

Panelists:

[Ed Stetzer, Ph.D.](#), professor and dean at Wheaton College

[Kevin Neuner](#), co-founding pastor of [Spark Church](#), Palo Alto

[Jay Kim](#), Lead pastor, Westgate Church, San Jose

“We’re in a cultural convulsion. These kinds of cultural convulsions seem to last 4 – 6 years. We’re going to need reservoirs of resilience that we didn’t expect coming into this.” -Ed Stetzer

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH HERE IN THE BAY AREA?

Every 60 years America seems to go through a moral convulsion, the last one being in the 1960's. 2020 is the marker for the current moral convulsion which has seeped into the church in ways it hasn't in most of our lifetimes.

“The cultural convulsion isn’t slowing down, and it’s caught up our people.” - Ed Stetzer

During this Conversation that Matters on the post-pandemic church, Ed assesses our current cultural moment by listing these post-covid realities:

1. We’re in the midst of a cultural convulsion and a cultural acceleration simultaneously that are having an impact on the church unlike anything we’ve seen in our lifetime.
2. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic the church is experiencing the Great Sort. **“If people are being disciplined by their cable news and spiritually shaped by their social media, they appear to be sorting themselves ideologically rather than theologically out of churches.”**
3. There’s a new level of engagement and disengagement in the church. **“The front third of churches -- those who sit in the front of the church -- has gotten more involved – giving more and serving more, while the middle group is just hanging on and waiting, not sure what their future holds. The back third is disconnected, potentially permanently which has significant ramifications for attendance, evangelism opportunities, and more.”**

Stetzer concludes that this is a great time of shaking. While some are looking forward to returning to the pre-pandemic normal, others see this as an opportunity to rethink everything.

“When intense concentrated cultural events happen we sometimes feel like we need to reach for the same tools of theology and doctrinal fidelity, but how do we actually move people through the conversation?” - Kevin Nuener

THEORY OF CHANGE EXERCISE

[Theory of Change](#) provides the basis for identifying what type of activity or intervention will lead to the outcomes you and your team identify as the conditions needed to achieve a long-term goal.

TOC maps out your initiative through 6 stages:

1. Identifying long-term goals
2. Backwards mapping and connecting the preconditions or requirements necessary to achieve that goal and explaining why these preconditions are necessary and sufficient.
3. Identifying your basic assumptions about the context.
4. Identifying the interventions that your initiative will perform to create your desired change.
5. Developing indicators to measure your outcomes to assess the performance of your initiative.
6. Writing a narrative to explain the logic of your initiative.

[Theoryofchange.org](#) offers tools and resources to enable your team to walk through the process of formulating how you might shape your church in the post-pandemic world.

Download a free ToC template [here](#).

RESOURCES: (articles Ed Stetzer refers to in this Conversation that Matters.)

David Brooks article: "[America's having a Moral Convulsion.](#)"

Ross Douthat article: "[Waking up in 2030](#)"