

Our ten most popular blog posts in 2010

December 30, 2010



1. [Is youth ministry killing the church?](#) by Kate Murphy (February 4)

I've always met young Christians through youth programs. I've been hired by churches that expect regular events created exclusively to minister to young people. But I wonder now if we're ministering them right out of the church.

2. [Facebook rules for pastors,](#) by Adam J. Copeland (October 5)

Pastoral ministry is a public calling, and in our social-media age this calling extends to online identities and relationships. Since becoming a pastor, I've adopted some different Facebook practices.

3. [Hate groups hate being called hate groups,](#) by Steve Thorngate (December 16)

In response to being listed as a hate group, the Family Research Council accused the "radical Left" of "trying to shut down informed discussion of policy issues." It's not

worth quibbling over a word-bomb like "radical." The bigger problem is with most of the other words in the quote.

4. [The other Duke list](#), by Amy Laura Hall (October 12)

Once again, Duke University is in the news, and once again, the story swirls around sex and sports. Meanwhile, a different scandal is brewing, over another set of numbers that usually circulate semiprivately among men.

5. [Glee's very special episode on faith](#), by Steve Thorngate (October 7)

Once again, pop culture gives us more-or-less-evangelical faith meeting the secular other in the gauzy common ground of vaguely spiritual friendship. Couldn't the episode have offered something richer than dissolving the tension between those who talk to their personal friend Jesus and those who think that's kind of stupid?

6. [God even in Christmas](#), by Julie Clawson (December 10)

I'm a sucker for Christmas songs. They might be overdone and cheesy, but there is something visceral about the collective emotion that they tap into. Something is stirring even in all the schmaltz and sentimentality, something that goes beyond the consumeristic trappings. God shows up in the midst of all that cheese.

7. [Why I go to church](#), by Richard A. Kauffman (November 11)

I go to church to be part of something bigger than myself, to join my storyline with one that started long before I made my appearance in this life and will continue beyond my earthly existence. I also go for the music.

8. [How do you make Sundays go smoothly?](#) by Adam J. Copeland (October 14)

A couple weeks ago, Sunday morning didn't quite go as planned. Is this a fact of life in a small church--from time to time the announcements will go long, and the communion preparer will forget, and typos will hide until Sunday, and your mind will be on ten distracting details? Or am I just a bad pastor?

9. [Clergy gathering rituals](#), by Lillian Daniel (January 21)

When the UCC held a national gathering with the Disciples of Christ, we were amazed at each other's dress code. The Disciples clearly hadn't gotten our memo about what to wear: Birkenstock sandals with socks, Guatemalan vests, rainbow pins on hats, tee shirts with impassioned slogans.

10. [What do you believe?](#) by David Heim (June 22)

A liturgical dialogue by Kathy Schuen reminded me that the creed is voiced amid competing creeds: when we recite the creed we are not simply repeating the faith of the church for ourselves and one another, but affirming it in the face of other things that could be believed about God and Jesus and about how one should live.