

The most-read Tribal Church posts

December 26, 2013

Here are the 13 Tribal Church posts people read the most this year:

1) [A bivocational minister warns against bivocational ministry.](#) “What will we do in the next ten years, if we have choked out all of the available pastors in this clergy bottleneck and the shortage comes upon us? Even if we simply plan for 70 percent of our positions to go away as 70 percent of our pastors retire, we will still need the 30 percent who are left.”

2) [It's not all about me.](#) “Right now, there are a lot of pastors who ought to be looking in the mirror and chanting, 'It's not all about me.'”

3) [Questions for Rick Warren.](#) “I am a woman of faith who longs for the reduction of poverty, the empowerment of women, and an *individual's* right to practice religion—and an individual right to practice religion ought to be protected from corporate personhood's religious whims.”

4) [What do you do when you find out the theologian you respected is kind of slimy?](#) “It happens all the time: I'm reading a beautiful piece of theology, and while the thinker is waxing on elegantly about God and man, he barrels in on the subject of women or Jewish people, and suddenly I'm hit by a barrage of nastiness. ”

5) [Why I refuse to use "mainline" any longer.](#) “I am tired of pretending that we want to hang out at the country club and eat cucumber sandwiches in fancy hats. We are not some sort of upper-crust elite society. Now, it's time to discard that tired label that ties us too closely with a particular race and class. It's time to call forth another name.”

6) [Zombie church.](#) “Closing a church is like eating the last slice of bread—somehow if you eat the last slice, you're responsible for consuming it all (never mind that someone else ate the last 27 slices). A church can be declining for

40 years, but if a pastor comes in and starts to talk about closing a congregation, then she *closed the church*. Many people don't want to be that pastor."

7) The hospice pastor with a church on life support. "I feel like a Hospice nurse,' I sighed as I set down my bags. I had so many funerals in my small congregation that I had little time for anything other than caring for the dying. "

8) Why doesn't anyone care about Generation X? "Many in Gen X are annoyed that we've spent a lifetime living under the looming Boomer shadow, and now we're getting swallowed up by Millennials."

9) Excruciating evangelism. "I saw the stranger across the crowded room. My eyes were drawn to him like a dog to a raw steak. He looked lonely. I could tell that he needed a friend. I smiled broadly at him. He smiled back, and that was my cue."

10) The formation of a domestic goddess. "It was a tiny control issue that happened in one corner of a fellowship hall. But now, in your mind, multiply this minor discomfort by a thousand."

11) How to avoid tokenism. "Wanting to avoid tokenism is important. But it's a terrible excuse for our indolent inability to see beyond our own thought bubbles."

12) In memory of Richard Twiss. "Richard Twiss and I spent time meditating and praying together, particularly discerning the question, 'Who is God calling us to be?'"

12) Empowered women in the religious right. "It would be easy for those of us who lean to the left of the political spectrum to dismiss the right by saying that they are waging a war on women, but that would deny the whole picture. What about Sarah Palin? What about Michelle Bachmann? And what about the other Grizzly Mamas who are being plucked, groomed and prepared as we speak?"