



Adaptive Change during a Crisis – Kairos Time!

1. **TRIAGE** - assessing the immediate damage and danger. For the church, in the middle of Lent, this was simply, "How to get everybody through Easter!" or, as we like to joke, suddenly every pastor we know has become a Televangelist! Who would have thought!!
2. **FRAGILITY** - Where are the cracks? We see this through the lens of earthquakes (we live in CA). Immediately after initial triage, they start looking for cracks in the bridges, the overpasses, the buildings, power grids, systems, etc. For us in the church, we see this as checking in on the financial, mental, physical and spiritual 'cracks' - This is the stage we are in now. Helping our churches, preschools, food ministries, etc. apply for SBA/PPP loans, and other denomination-based fund and services. Our pastors are checking in on their flock - how are they coping during SIP? Maybe have some zoom coffee hours, zoom prayer groups and Bible studies. Especially check in on our non-wifi and shut-ins. Deacon phone trees, grocery shopping, meal deliveries, etc. At the judicatory level, we need to be checking on our pastors- most of whom are exhausted, over-functioning, and feeling isolated. Clergy zoom gatherings can offer a safe space, as long as we are sensitive to the real issue of Zoom Fatigue!
3. **NEW NORMAL** - Normal can be the nemesis at this stage! For the church, this third stage will be about re-entry, gathering again for in-person worship, etc. How will we do things differently? This phase will have technical and adaptive issues - Technically, how do we do worship together safely - the offering plate, communion, baptism, passing the peace, a printed bulletin, seating, sanitizing, singing, coffee hour, online giving, etc. (the WI Council of Churches re-entry document is the best we've seen). The main point here is that some old Normal needs to fall away - bless it and bury it! Acknowledge with our folks that we may miss it. This is decidedly NOT about RESTORATION! The temple may be in rubble- let's not necessarily rebuild it as it was!
4. **SORTING** - This is a time of deep discernment. Think of Phyllis Tickle's notion of the Rummage Sale that Christianity goes through every 500 years. What is essential and what is fleeting? This is most importantly about asking the WHO, the WHAT and the WHY - but not the HOW. The HOW gets us stuck in technical fixes for adaptive problems. This is a time to experiment and fail - try new things, see what from our SIP time we may keep, like continuing with certain committee meetings on zoom, like a weekday noon, zoom lunch with prayer, bible study or just fellowship. This can be a time of pulling out some real lay talent that has been dormant. Experiment, celebrate successes and failures, discern the voice of the Holy Spirit! This is KAIROS TIME!