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Four things will drive the church. The first is the recovery of the history and spiritual power of the Christian movement; and then the much needed intervention of the church in the twenty-first century as the community of the faithful. I have a keen sense that the future of United Methodism will be linked more closely to relationships than ideas; to authenticity in piety and practice; and to hope in the face of violence and futility here and abroad. I suspect our persistent emphasis upon membership will soon give way to a host of "connections" within which and through which the gospel will be shared. Counting heads will yield to the building of relationships far too deep to quantify easily.

If the life and ministry of the church were captured within "movements," I would describe them simply as:

[1] Worship/Preaching/and the Arts—a focus on the declaration of the gospel of Christ with clarity and hope—capitalizing on the music, art forms, and technology so readily available in a variety of ways and settings but not to the detriment of traditional forms that maintain a great degree of mystery and invitation. Proclamation must be considered essential to the work of United Methodism with a sense of expectancy that there will be a response, a joyful overflowing presence of God in the lives of those devoted to Christ.

[2] A focus on catechesis, nurturing persons toward Christian maturity and the reclaiming of the purpose and power of Christian initiation and a mature course toward servanthood. This will manifest itself intentionally in thousands of small groups—even the recovery of the societies, classes, and bands associated with early Methodism. An emphasis upon accountability will inherently be a part of the emerging church with each seeker finding faith and fruitfulness within and outside of dynamic, Christo-centric communities.

[3] An urgency to create and sustain the healing/redemptive community. Given the nature of the culture and the inherent power of Christian community, I believe teaching and leading others toward a strong commitment to health, healing relationships, and the pursuit of the holy is an imperative, not an option;

[4] The impact ministries of the gospel in the next decades will continue to focus upon evangelization, mission, and the pursuit of justice. The impact of the church, personally and corporately will be associated with risk-taking and sacrificial living. The church is no longer supported by the culture, so the church will by its very nature become a counter-culture movement of mercy, goodness, peace, and justice.