



IMAGINE

IMAGINE THE CHURCH OF TOMORROW

USING THE AI APPROACH

AGENDA

- **Monday Afternoon:**

- Theory of AI (hang with me)
- Practice in small groups
- Engage in dialogue
- Think about how you can apply AI at your church

- **Tuesday Morning:**

- Real-life AI application
- Q&A
- Wrap Up

LOGISTICS

- If possible, find 3 – 4 folks who are from your church, your district, or churches similar to yours
- When we have “talk” time, try to have everybody talk
- Step to the microphone to be heard when we report out

TIME TO RE-THINK CHURCH

- The world is a smaller place
- "Church" is viewed differently
- Church membership declining
- Greater "awareness" and "tolerance" of various religious beliefs
- Expectations of the worship experience is changing
- We are connected and at the same time "disconnected"
- Technology and social media impact how we connect



What does it mean for the church to be relevant in today's world?

WHY USE THE AI APPROACH?

- A new tool in your tool box
- An opportunity to make impactful change
- A chance to shape the vision of the church

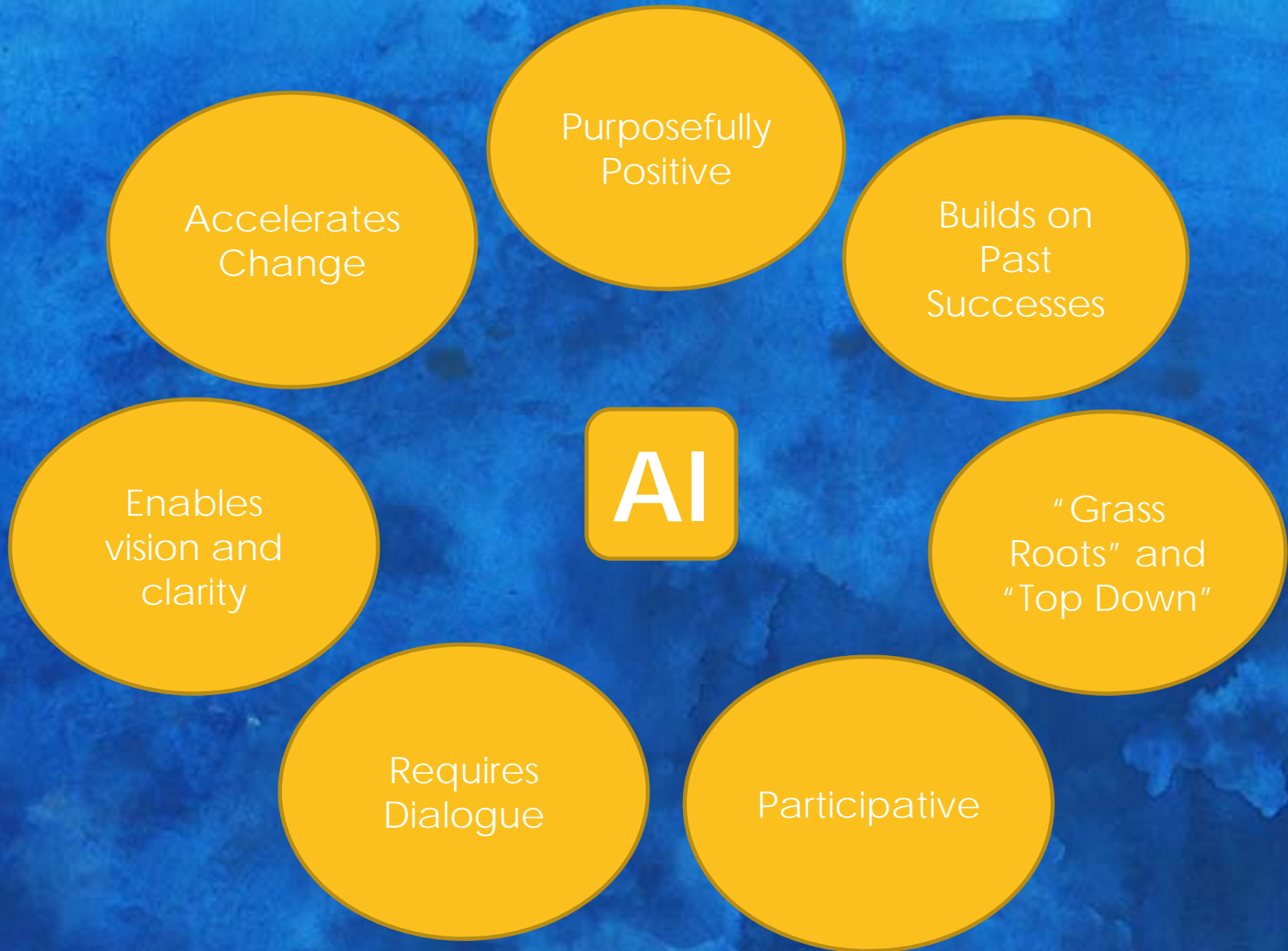
WHAT IS APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY?

- "Ap-pre'-ci-ate, v."

" . . . to value or admire highly; to judge with heightened understanding; to recognize with gratitude."

- "In-quire' , v."

" . . . to search into, investigate; to seek for information by questioning."



Appreciative Inquiry is the study of what works well

*“No problem can be solved from
the same level of consciousness
that created it. We must learn to
see the world anew.”*

– Albert Einstein

***“DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO
THIS WORLD, BUT BE
TRANSFORMED BY THE
RENEWING OF YOUR MIND,
THAT MAY PROVE WHAT THE
WILL OF GOD IS, THAT WHICH
IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE
AND PERFECT”***

THE APOSTLE PAUL - ROMANS 12: 2

HOW CHANGE EFFORTS USUALLY HAPPENS ...

4 Approaches:

- ❖ Top Down Strategies
- ❖ Bottom Up Strategies
- ❖ Representative Cross-Section Strategies
- ❖ Pilot Strategies

Metaphor: Organizations are problems to be solved

Most schools, companies, families and organizations function on an unwritten rule...
"Let's fix what's wrong and let the strengths take care of themselves"

WHAT IF YOU FOCUSED ON YOUR STRENGTHS?

- Could strength connected to *strength create change*?
- What would it mean to base an entire change theory around strengths?
- We tend to think that our strengths enable us to perform, but what if they can enable us to do more than perform? What if, in the process of performing we use our strengths to transform

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwGNZ63hj5k>

THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF "AI"

DR. DAVID COOPERRIDER, CASE-WESTERN UNIVERSITY

- 1. Constructionist Principle:** The way we know is fateful
- 2. Principle of Simultaneity:** Change begins at the moment you ask the question because you open yourself to looking at something differently
- 3. Open Book "Poetic Principle":** Organizations are an open book - they have strengths, weaknesses, hopes, dreams, etc.

THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF "AI"

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4. Anticipatory Principle: Deep change = change in active images of the future (think Dairy Queen, Mom's Deviled Eggs)

5. Positive Principle: The more positive the question, the greater and longer-lasting the change (we are drawn to positivity)

6. Principle of Wholeness: The whole system can have a voice in the future (with AI, everyone in the system can participate)

ANALYTIC CHANGE VS. APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Problem solving
(deficit based change)

"Felt Need"
Identify problem



Conduct root cause analysis



Analyze Possible Solutions



Develop action plan (Treatment)

Basic assumption:
"organizations are problem-to-be
solved"

Appreciative inquiry
(strength based innovation)

"Valuing the best of what is"
Appreciate



Imagine (What might be)



Dialogue and design
(What should be)



Create / Innovate what will be

Basic assumption: organizations
are a "mystery to be embraced"

Basic Assumptions

What we focus on
becomes our reality

Reality is created in
the moment, and
there are multiple
realities

In every ongoing
team/group/
organization . . .
Some-thing(s) work

People have
more confidence
to journey into the future
(the unknown) when they
carry forward parts of the
past (the known)

The mode and language
of inquiry effects the
organization- buzz
generates excitement

Appreciative Inquiry Approach – “4D Cycle”



GROUP EXERCISE:

**What are components
of The UMC's "positive core"?**

REPORT OUTS:

- What did you hear?
- Were there any surprises?
- How did this impact you?

Appreciative Inquiry Approach – “4D Cycle”



DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

- When was a time that your church really was at its best ?
- What were the conditions that contributed to that extraordinary moment?
- What are the things you value most about your church; about being a Methodist?
- What are the core strengths of your church?
- What three things would heighten vitality and health of your church?

STEP 1: DISCOVERY - THE BEST OF WHAT IS

Personal Reflections:

- What attracted you to your church or to the Methodist Church?
- I feel the most energized and vital in the church when"

REPORT OUTS:

- What did you hear?
- Were there any surprises?
- How did this impact you?

Appreciative Inquiry Approach – “4D Cycle”



STEP 2: DREAM - IMAGES OF THE FUTURE (THE CHURCH IN 2020)

- ❖ It is the year 2020...what do you see that is new, different, changed, better in the local UMC?
- ❖ I will be most proud of the UMC or my church in 2020 when...?
- ❖ The "headline news" in the local paper about our church will read...?

REPORT OUTS:

- What did you hear?
- Were there any surprises?
- How did this impact you?

Appreciative Inquiry Approach – “4D Cycle”



STEP 3: DESIGN

DETERMINING “WHAT SHOULD BE”

- Given the elements of what is “ideal”, what do we need to do differently in regards to:
 - Structure
 - Resources
 - Processes
 - Approach
- How will we engage others in this vision?

REPORT OUTS:

- What did you hear?
- Were there any surprises?
- How did this impact you?

Appreciative Inquiry Approach – “4D Cycle”



STEP 4: DESTINY HOW TO EMPOWER, LEARN AND ADJUST/IMPROVISE - SUSTAINING

- Given the elements of what is “ideal”, what do we need to do differently in regards to:
 - Structure
 - Resources
 - Processes
 - Approach
- How will we engage others in this vision?

REPORT OUTS:

- What did you hear?
- Were there any surprises?
- How did this impact you?

GROUP EXERCISE

- Personal reflection:
 - “What could it mean for my church if we went through the AI approach?”
 - “What could it mean for the community we are in?”
 - “How could this enable us to build the Kingdom by building disciples?”

WHY AI WORKS

- ◆ “Whole System” in the room
- ◆ Task is clear... we are creating the vision
- ◆ Future vision is based on the best of today
- ◆ Its self-managed
- ◆ People have to engage in dialogue
- ◆ Narrative rich – story telling takes place

WHY AI WORKS

- ◆ Its inter-generational
- ◆ Moves to inspired action
- ◆ Is an “event” that can involve thousands
- ◆ Results are uncommon action/follow through
- ◆ The people involved are invested because they helped to create the vision

*“There are two ways to live your life.
One is as though nothing is a
miracle. The other is as though
everything is a miracle.”*

– Albert Einstein



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