

THE LEADING EDGE
Leaders Worth Following
March 2005

Earl Creps' Monthly Leadership Newsletter
ecreps@agts.edu

Director of the AGTS D.Min. Program in Pentecostal Leadership
<http://www.agts.edu/dmin/index.html>

Leading Edge blog edition
<http://www.xanga.com/LeadingEdge>

Encounter Journal
<http://www.encounterjournal.com/current.html>

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Front-Edge Seminars @ General Council

AGTS is hosting three excellent seminars in Denver on the Monday and Tuesday (August 1st and 2nd) just prior to General Council. Topics include:

- *Women's Talk Show—Embracing the Gifts of Power, Love, and a Sound Mind*, with Dr. Linda Mintle
- *Cross-Cultural Communication*, with missiologists Drs. Judith and Sherwood Lingenfelter
- *Models of Multi-Site Ministry*, with Larry Osborn, Pastor of North Coast Church, one of nation's pioneers in multi-venue congregational life

Each of the seminars may be taken for 2 or 3 graduate credits through the AGTS Continuing Education office. For more information and online registration, check out the seminars at:

https://www.agts.edu/conferences/2005general_council/index.html

FasTrak: From MA to D.Min. Eligibility in Half the Time

Thinking about a D.Min., but not sure how to get there? Our new pre-doctoral program can take a qualified MA holder in full-time ministry to academic eligibility for the D.Min. (M.Div. Equivalency) in half the time using a specially designed course format available in dozens of courses taught in a number of locations around the country. <http://www.agts.edu/fastrak/index.html>

New D.Min. Cohort Begins June 20-24, 2005 @ AGTS

- Leadership focus
 - Pentecostal perspective
 - In-service convenience
 - Cohort experience
 - Customizable program
 - Contact: lodea@aGts.edu
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Impact Player: Faye Tidwell

As a member of Cohort 3, Faye Tidwell also serves with AGWM's Caring Connection and as a counselor at Central Bible College. Recently, Faye has partnered with the National Women's

Ministries Department to produce *Snuff Out Cancer: A Prayer Ministry for Cancer Patients*. The purpose of the ministry is stated this way: "Even if you have not faced a frightening diagnosis yourself, it is likely you know someone who has. We can help snuff out the fear felt by cancer patients by uniting with them in prayer and friendship." Find out more about this wonderful ministry at: <http://www.womensministries.ag.org/snuffoutcancer/> Way to go, Faye!

Internet Resources : Tools for Talks

<http://www.damaris.org/talkstogo/index.html>

"Tools for talks enables speakers to teach the message of the Bible in the language of contemporary popular culture," say the authors of this website. The resources here are designed to engage the "front edge" of culture by reverse engineering presentations out of Scripture and context simultaneously. You will not like everything on this subscription site, but you need to know about it. Also, it affords a window on how some presenters are attempting to use culture as a vehicle for the Christian message.

Statistics: E-mail

"18.7% of legitimate emails are being blocked according to a recent survey by Return Path covering the second half of 2003 (a 3.7% increase over the same period in 2002). So there's a 1 in 5 chance you may not get this newsletter!"

--The Web Today

Read This Book: *Growth by Accident, Death by Planning*

Bob Whitesel's book focuses on the "back story" of church growth: how not to kill it when it starts to happen! Challenge yourself and your leaders with this one.

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0687083257/qid=1109869312/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/103-1620781-9555033?v=glance&s=books

Quotable: Zero Correlation

"There's no correlation between how good your idea is and how likely your organization will be to embrace it."

--Seth Godin

LeaderLife: Communication Studies, Part 1

I have a Ph.D. in Communication Studies from Northwestern. At one time in my life, I felt that this degree indicated that I actually knew some things about how to get ideas across. But then the world changed.

Today, my emphasis is much more on the word "Studies" printed on my diploma. As I travel the US representing AGTS, it feels like I'm back in school learning communication all over again. While this is extremely challenging for a mid-life parachurch professional, it is also a great joy. I am so grateful to God that He has given me a chance to re-learn my craft by way of the school of experience. Here are a few of my recent learnings:

- *Communication occurs in the mind of the hearer, so I don't have to do all the talking.* Aristotle taught that the best form of persuasion is self-persuasion. So the key feature of communication is not just the issue of what to say, but the question of what will be heard. In practical terms, I learned this by shifting about of my presentation time at ministers' retreats from monologue to open-mike Q&A. Two things happened: (1) I found that I was actually better in response to questions than in set-piece talks, and (2) audiences were more dialed into the sessions because they owned them.
- *If I make friends with their cell phones first, I make friends with the audience.* With a very young group recently, I asked that each person with a phone send a text message at least once during my talk. My only request was that the message pertain to our subject. Obviously, this depends on a specific sort of audience, but I took the risk for two reasons:

(1) most of them are text messaging anyway, and (2) younger hearers are natural multi-taskers, texting is not a substitute for listening, it is *how* they listen.

- *The Internet is there anyway, so why not use it.* Increasingly, I find myself in venues with wireless Internet access. Anyone with a laptop open during a talk is quite likely to be checking email as I present my points. In a workshop with younger leaders last month, I opened *my laptop*, connected wirelessly to the Internet, and typed their responses to our discussion into my blog in real time, publishing their comments to the planet. I felt there were two results: (1) raising the stakes of our time together, provoking one of the best group discussions I have seen in years, and (2) connecting us to a global culture that these young leaders regard as their native context.

These learnings may or may not apply to you. Obviously, they assume a certain context (mostly younger leaders), and a certain kind of setting (conferences perhaps) where there is at least an implied permission to experiment. (I also find myself in contexts where none of these elements are present, so I see that side of it as well.)

The key here is not the methods, but the commitment to *learn*. Whether I am in a setting that is very conservative or very experimental, I owe it to my hearers (and my community) to develop the communication craft as fully as possible. This will look very different for all of us. But it must look like something.

Be a leader worth following,

Earl

ecreps@agts.edu

D.Min. program mission: transforming leaders to transform their organizations

D.Min. program vision: leaders worth following

D.Min. program values:

- **the extra mile**—others before ourselves
- **the personal touch**—everyone counts
- **the cutting edge**—we get there first
- **the real deal**—authenticity in everything
- **the better way**—listen to improve
- **the positive word**—choose to encourage
- **the unique person**—enjoy diversity
- **the X factor**—synergy through trust and truth

D.Min. Team:

<http://www.agts.edu/dmin/index.html>

Earl Creps—Program Director

ecreps@agts.edu

Tracy Harrington—Office Assistant

tharrington@agts.edu

Stephen Lim—Project Coordinator

slim@agts.edu

Lori O'Dea—Program Coordinator

lodea@agts.edu

Cheryl Taylor—Program Advisor

ctaylor@agts.edu

Leading Edge Blog Edition:

<http://www.xanga.com/LeadingEdge>

Leading Edge Archive:

Past issues are archived at: http://agts.edu/dmin/leading_edge/index.html

Talk to us:

Phone: 1-800-467-AGTS

Fax: (417) 268-1047

Mail: aGts, 1435 N. Glenstone Ave., Springfield, MO 65802 USA

Web: <http://www.agts.edu/dmin/index.html>