

News

Leader of controversial 'emerging church' coming to Charlotte

By Christopher Shaver
Pilot staff writer

The "emerging church movement" is one of the most controversial movements in religion today. It has been under fire from other religions because it embraces social values as strongly as Biblical ones as part of creating a church for the post-modern era.

The emerging church has attracted many college students and others who have been frustrated with the state of established churches.

McLaren has been shrouded in controversy due to his "inclusive" approach to religion. Through that he invites everyone to a "conversation," so that all can find the hope he found through Jesus' message.

With the release of McLaren's latest book, "Everything Must Change," he shows his readers what the church should look like within the next few years. His book gives insight to social crises, and shows how the message of Jesus can become a 21st century "Revolution of Hope."

McLaren will come to Charlotte Feb. 1-2 for his book tour. For more information you can go to www.deepshift.com.

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How do you define the emerging church?

In one sense, the church has always been emerging. For example, in the book of Acts, the church emerges from mono-cultural Judaism to become a multicultural faith community.

When people talk about the emerging church today, they're usually talking about the church emerging from a modern, Western, colonial mindset into something postmodern, global and post-colonial. That's a complex answer, and it's a complex phenomenon.

The emerging church isn't just one thing: it's not simply a new model or style of "doing church," for example. It's a complex and multifaceted conversation among Christian leaders about what it means to be followers of Jesus in these complex and changing — and exciting — times.

When did we make the transition from being modern into post-modern?

This is a great question, but there's not an easy answer to it. It happens at different paces in different places.

In some families in Africa or Latin America, for example, grandpa and grandma are pre-modern,

mom and dad are modern, and the grandkids are postmodern. Here in the U.S., I'd say that the younger the age and the higher the education, the more likely a person is postmodern in their leanings.

I'd say that Europe is, by and large, farther into postmodernity than the United States, as are Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In many ways, our churches are bastions of modernity as the postmodern world emerges, just as churches were often bastions of the medieval world as the modern world emerged.

What changes do you anticipate within the global church within the next few years?

In my most recent book, "Everything Must Change," I express three of my hopes: that the church will become more concerned with care of the planet; that the church will become more involved in working for peace; and that the church will give itself more fully to help the poor.

Another way of saying this is to say that I believe many sectors of the church will develop a more integral or holistic understanding of mission — seeing that the Christian faith is both/and — both personal and social, interested in both matters of faith and matters of public life and public policy. There are encouraging signs of this.

A few words with Brian McLaren

I also expect that the global church will need to find new ways to engage with members of other religions who do not want to become Christians, especially our Muslim neighbors. We don't have enough practice in learning how to be good neighbors — in line with the teachings of Jesus — to people of other religions. In light of Jesus' call to be peacemakers, this issue is very important.

Internally, I think we are primed for an exciting time of renewal in worship, as what people call ancient-future worship is taken more and more seriously across denominations — rediscovering ancient spiritual practices and integrating them with contemporary forms of worship.

Is there a top social issue that needs to be addressed in America?

In my book "Everything Must Change," I identify four global crises, all of which America is generally on the wrong side of, and sadly, many Christian leaders are often leading the way on the wrong side.

Those issues are: 1) we're destroying the planet rather than caring for it,

2) rather than seeking peaceful reconciliation to conflicts, we're too willing to resort to violence and deceit and isolation

3) we're allowing the poor ma-

majority to fall farther and farther behind the rich minority

4) our religious communities are often making the first three problems worse by failing to give us good news of hope.

In that light, the rediscovery of Jesus' good news of the kingdom of God is perhaps our most urgent social need, because if we "get" it, it will motivate us to constructive and sustained action on the other needs. That's what I hope we can help people see as never before on the upcoming tour.

How does it feel to be one of Time magazine's Top 25 Most Influential Evangelicals?

Well, I think there were so many people who belonged on the list far more than I did. But if I can use whatever small influence I have in ways that will increase the commitment of Evangelicals — and others — to the message and way of Jesus, I'll be thrilled.

Because if we're really captivated by the good news of the kingdom of God, we'll be committed to healing and stewarding the planet, and we'll be agents for peace, and we'll invest our energies on behalf of the poor.

And as a result, more and more of God's will can be done on earth as it is in heaven. That's a dream that inspires me in the deepest way possible.



Jonny Pack and Jeremy Courtright show off their moves on the dance floor Jan. 12 at the 1980s dance on campus. People came dressed in the fun-but-questionable fashions of the decade.

'80s dance turns out to be 100% enjoyable

By Patrice Blackmon
Pilot staff writer

Students from Gardner-Webb University celebrated their return to campus in a new way — with a 1980s-theme dance party Jan. 12. According to event coordinator December Jones, a junior elementary education major, said "This would be a new way to have fun and go back in time with your friends '80s style."

Students at the dance, which was held in Bost gym, agreed.

"I really liked the dance," said Starlet Wilkins, a sophomore majoring in athletic training.

"The dance was very different. I haven't really experienced anything like that.

"Dressing up made it even more fun because you got to do research on '80s clothing. I really enjoyed the different types of music.

"It was a great experience on learning about the different times and what type of clothing they wore and music people in the '80s listened to.

"Yes, I would do it all over again!"

Style was on the mind of Randi Gill-Sandler, a sophomore communications major.

"I thought that all the interpretations of '80s style were awesome," she said. "I personally chose '80s Glam for my outfit, with leggings and large bangles. But my friend went as Spinderella from Salt-N-Pepa. I also saw people dressed B-boys, the Fresh Prince, and Flavor Flav!"

"I think it was a nice

change from the usual dances we have at GWU and would love to see other eras like the '60s or '70s in a dance."

Jonathan Boyd, a junior sports management student, said, "Since so many people are leaving or plan to next year, the party was something to just get your mine off boredom."

Student Activities has other events planned, Jones said.

"The formal dance will be the main event."

That is scheduled for April 26.

Free health screenings a part of wellness fair set for Feb. 5

By Rebecca Clark
Pilot editor

Gardner-Webb University Wellness program is having a Health and Wellness Fair Feb. 5 at Bost Gym between noon and 3 p.m.

Sandy Hammett, assistant director of student activities, said that last year about 300 people participated.

"It's open to the community as well as the Gardner-Webb family," she said.

Healthcare providers from Cleveland County and

surrounding areas offer various screenings that range from vision to spinal and chiropractic.

The Counseling Center will also be at the event to offer mental health screening.

Prize drawings will be a part of the fair, with prizes supplied by the healthcare providers.

"It's a great opportunity for people to take advantage of some great information given by the health providers for free," Hammett said.

SGA Update

By Lanny Newton
Pilot staff writer

The Student Government Association is working on many projects this semester and has several upcoming events planned.

Sign-ups for the Executive Council start in early February and elections will be held in Dimensions on Feb. 26.

Three of the four members of the council are graduating — President Matt Walters, Vice President Bill Mayo and Treasurer James Kernicky. — which means that the election will be more wide open than ever. All students are urged to vote, and to consider holding a position with SGA.

Also, more than half the money allotted to SGA's club fund has yet to be allocated. This money is to be given to clubs that need funds beyond their budget. If these funds

are not allocated by the end of the year they will not roll over to next, so it is in clubs' best interest to utilize this money.

To receive these funds a club must follow the guidelines laid out in the Clubs and Organizations Handbook. This includes preparing a detailed proposal outlining projected costs to the SGA. Extra weight will be given if the club has performed fundraising projects.

All SGA meetings are open to all students, faculty, and staff. The next meeting is Jan. 30. Attendance is encouraged.

Suggestions made prior to and during the meetings will help decide policy. The SGA attempts to represent the opinions of all students while trying to work with the administration for the betterment of Gardner-Webb University.

College students turning to online dating as natural extension of computer usage

By Jessica Li
The Daily Free Press (Boston U.)

(U-WIRE) BOSTON - Traditionally thought of as a last resort for lonely hearts, Internet dating sites are reporting co-ed and frat brothers are also joining the ranks of online daters.

According to a March 2006 report from the Pew Internet & American Life Project, 18 percent of 18- to 29-year-old Internet users have visited an online dating site and 31 percent of American adults know someone who has used a dating Web site.

Gail Laguna, a spokeswoman for Collegeluv.com, a dating site with 500,000 members, said young people use the Internet to search for love because they feel comfortable

"It still has that aura of desperation. It still seems it's for older people who are searching for their soul mate — I'm so young that I'm just not interested in that right now."

Nathalie Medina

in this kind of interaction.

"It's a demographic that has grown up going online to communicate with friends ... and so are more likely to adopt to using an online dating service," Laguna said.

She said most of Collegeluv.com's members are not looking for long-term love when they join the site. Instead, she said, they are just trying to meet new people.

"It's another way to expand your social circle for those people who may not feel like going out,

but still want to socialize and find a relationship," Laguna said.

Los Angeles-based author and dating coach Evan Marc Katz said he attributes the rise in college-aged online daters to the pervasive role technology and the Internet have in young people's lives.

"Younger people grew up with computers," Katz said. "It makes perfect sense to use this medium to find and establish relationships."

He said people who have pictures of themselves on networking

sites such as MySpace and Facebook are probably not concerned with maintaining anonymity and would be more open to establishing Internet relationships.

"It's a matter of fact that computers are not an addition to their life — they are their life," Katz said.

Older generations typically view online dating negatively because they are not used to establishing Internet relationships, he said.

"There will be less of a perceived stigma for a generation of people who have never known anything but computers."

Katz said he did not think most college students have trouble networking and socializing, since they are constantly surrounded by peers.

"It's a little bit surprising that they would need [help finding a

date]."

Boston University sophomore Nathalie Medina said curiosity made her check out Match.com after the company aired commercials depicting younger people using the dating service.

Expecting to find singles in their 30s and 40s looking for serious relationships, she said she was surprised to find people her own age listed on the Web site.

Although students have established a stronger presence on dating Web sites, Medina said she still does not find the idea of finding love online appealing.

"It still has that aura of desperation," she said. "It still seems it's for older people who are searching for their soul mate — I'm so young that I'm just not interested in that right now."