

8 Positive Signs I've Seen in Churches in 2019

It's easy to "beat up" the North American church, and I confess that I sometimes fall into that rut.

For that reason, I want to move toward the end of 2019 by focusing on these positive signs I've seen in churches over the past year:

1. **Leaders are increasingly committed to genuinely making disciples—not just converts.** They've recognized that too many generations have failed in discipleship, and they're striving to fix that problem.
2. **More churches are burdened about reaching people groups around the world.** We still need thousands more to make that commitment, but every church that refocuses here is a step in the right direction.
3. **Congregations are addressing the issues of abuse.** It's tragic that we first had to recognize and admit the problem, but many churches are taking right steps to protect people from harm.
4. **Churches are wrestling with the costs and usage of buildings.** It's not that they're choosing never to build; it's that they're considering multiple options before they choose to spend millions of dollars. Buildings that sit empty for most of the week make little sense to them.
5. **More churches are raising up the next generation of pastors, missionaries and leaders.** This commitment is forcing seminaries to re-think how we offer credit, but this renewed emphasis on the local church as the center of training is a positive step.
6. **Leaders are longing to see churches that reflect their community.** They're not always figuring out the best missiological ways to reach people unlike them, but they

do have a burden to reach the community around them.

7. **Stronger churches are increasingly committed to helping weaker churches.** Some might question some of the varied methods for helping struggling congregations—but churches are at least recognizing that they can't keep their blessings, their expertise and their resources to themselves.
8. **Communities like Church Answers are offering support for church leaders.** I admit my bias here as a member of this community, but I'm grateful for such opportunities for church leaders to walk together and share one another's burdens. I'm convinced these kinds of networks will continue to grow in years to come.

What positive signs have you seen? {eo}

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