

Ken Howard

Founder & President at FaithX.net - Resources, Services, Online Network

Germantown, MD, US

Creating Christian Community Beyond Us & Them

Biography

Pastor | Speaker | Church Futurist In the early 1990s, Ken left a successful strategic leadership, change management, and organizational rightsizing consulting practice to become an ordained pastor. His vision: to help faith communities learn how to survive and thrive in times of escalating uncertainty and exponential change. Over the next 20 years at a church he started near Washington, DC, Ken developed the concept of Minimum Viable Belief and the practices of Vision-Guided Experimentation, and over the past 5 years has helped scores of faith-based communities and organizations prepare to meet their undiscovered future by becoming more lean, creative, and experimental.

Availability

Keynote, Moderator, Panelist, Workshop, Host/MC, Author Appearance, Corporate Training

Industry Expertise

Education/Learning, Non-Profit/Charitable, Religious Institutions

Areas of Expertise

Creating Christian Community Beyond Us & Them, Non-Proselytizing Evangelism, Conflict Transformation in Spiritual Communities, Schism-Proof Your Church Through Conflict Transformation, Re-Paradigming Church Systems

Affiliations

The Washington Episcopal Clergy Organization, St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

Sample Talks

Paradoxy Working Conference (2-3 days)

Biblically-grounded, highly-interactive, hands-on working conference provides participants with principles, language, & skills needed to lead congregations in exploring & employing an incarnational way of Christian community that transcends us/them divisions. Understanding & experiencing conflict as holy ground enables leaders to help congregations deal with tough questions without splintering, celebrate & engage diversity, & become better evangelists through non-proselytizing evangelism.

Event Appearances

Boarderlines: Exploring the Fertile Boundaries Between Faith and Business
Lean Startup Conference

Minimum Viable Belief: Experimentation in Faith-Based Organizations
Lean Startup Conference

Stealing from Startups: A Church Goes Lean
Lean for Social Good - Washington DC Summit

Starting Fresh: Envisioning Your Congregation in a Missional Diocese
Episcopal Diocese of Eau Claire First Annual Visioning Conference

Unpacking the Vision: One Diocese, One Mission, To All God's People
Episcopal Diocese of Long Island Annual Clergy Conference

Creating Christian Community Beyond Us & Them
Episcopal Diocese of Missouri Annual Clergy Conference

Emergent Leadership
Leadership Workshop

Beyond Liberal & Conservative: A Third Way of Being Christian
St. John's Annual Spring Community Lecture

Creating Christian Community Beyond Us & Them
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan Annual Clergy Conference

Imagining the 21st Century Church
St. Mark's, Houston, Annual Epiphany Lecture Series

The Death & Resurrection of Christianity: Re-Paradigming the Church
Plant My Church Conference

Education

Cambridge University
Visiting Scholar Ancient & Celtic Christianity

Virginia Commonwealth University
M.Ed. Adult Education & Human Resources Development

Yale University

Symposium with Miroslav Volf Emergent Theology

Virginia Theological Seminary

M.Div. Theology & Church History

Accomplishments

Author - "FaithX: Experimental Faith Communities for an Undiscovered Future" (forthcoming 2016)
Christianity is dis-integrating into new denominations and faith communities faster than new followers can be found to fill them, rendering them unsustainable before the end of the century. FaithX offers practitioner-tested principles and practices to help faith communities survive and thrive in this increasingly chaotic environment by becoming increasingly lean, creative, and experimental, and their leaders more entrepreneurial.

Author - "Paradox: Creating Christian Community Beyond Us & Them"

Christianity is at a crossroads. Paradigms that have defined Christian unity for centuries past are collapsing in ruins. The conservative-liberal conflict that has defined Christian disunity for the past century is coming to a dead-end. Paradox proposes promising principles for a new way being Church that is true to the heart of Christianity: a radical new middle way, that transcends our tragic divisions, transforms our conflicts into diverse Christian community.

1st Successful New Church Start in 40 Years

Lead the first successful new church start in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington in 40 years. Developed a schism-resistant approach to church planting and church growth, and a non-proselytizing approach to evangelism.

Conflict Transformation Dialogue Process

Lead the team which developed an innovative approach to dialogue on human sexuality issues, which led to a significant shift in the emotional climate of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and made it possible for conservative and liberal clergy and congregations to work together with more trust and less animosity.

Groundbreaking research on Jewish Christianity in the Early Church

Published groundbreaking research on the separation of Judaism and Christianity, and how the Church lost its Jewish roots by mistakenly excommunicating Jewish-Christianity as heretical, even though it's theology and ecclesiology was within the bounds of orthodoxy at the time. A cautionary tale for the modern Church.

Testimonials

Amy Moffet

Ken Howard has that rare gift of making very complex matters understandable quite quickly.

The Rev. Andy MacBeth

Ken Howard's new book, "Paradox," really is unique, because it seeks to make theological sense of what is happening in the Church today. It's hard to imagine a book that could have a more profound impact on our understanding of church today. It's an especially rewarding challenge for a church group to tackle, particularly one that includes people from each of the two traditional streams who are struggling to live together faithfully.

Joel Borofsky

Howard's thesis is simple ? all churches need to live in the love of Christ as the center of their community. Everything else is peripheral. Anticipating that both conservatives and liberals would find difficulty in such a way of thinking, he implores Liberals to see that such a shift in thinking is a progressive paradigm while explaining to Conservatives that what they see as "God's Truth" that needs to be defended doesn't in fact need to be defended. That is, if they fear putting Christ as the center of their church community because it would abdicate progressive ideas or conservative apologetics, neither side should be afraid; Christ is progressive and capable of defending His doctrines without our help.

The Rev. Peter Johnston

Ken Howard speaks powerfully to our current intractable positions where folks from either sides of the debate fling verbal (and sometimes worse) hand-grenades from side to side.

Lorraine Jones

Howard phases out the "divide and conquer" mentality with "join and connect." He asks where we are now, how did we get here and where do we go in the future? When we answer these questions, we can better lead congregations in these challenging times.

Mary W. Farkas

Here is a direct method for churches and congregations to begin their discussions about inclusion, defining their evangelical style, calling new clergy, elevating the laity, and bringing out the gifts of the excluded in their communities

The Rev. Canon C. K. Robertson

In an age when the church's membership appears to many to be sharply divided into competing camps of thought on so many issues, parish priest and organizational development consultant Ken Howard addresses this tendency toward polarization while offering an intriguing alternative to the familiar "either/or" dichotomy. Having personally known the author since our days together at Virginia Theological Seminary years ago, I have seen him put into practice the principles he espouses, and to good effect. As an instructor in conflict management, I rejoice that Howard has provided the church with an engaging tool for study and fruitful discussion.

Phyllis Tickle

Howard offers both a sharp-eyed analysis of how the Church has arrived at its present permutation followed by a very accessible and kindly-inclined diagnosis of what Her condition presently is. More importantly, perhaps, Howard gives us one of the clearest and most concise commentaries presently available about where the Church may reasonably be seen as going in this time of paradigmatic shift.

The Rev. John Maher

Ken Howard is an engaging man. The "new middle way" he proposes is equally engaging. He shows a way to go beyond winners and losers to a place where everyone can engage Jesus in community with one another, in worship of God, and service to the community. Ken's hopeful, open way of relating to one another will open doors to the gospel for a culture and society that has grown skeptical of encounters and looks for engagement that is formed by whole-hearted acceptance.

The Rev. Dan R. Dick

Howard is asking the questions that every church should be wrestling with. The church we have been for the past few generations is not the church we need to be for the coming generation. The world we live in has changed significantly. How we merge faith and practice and present a theological integrity that speaks to the modern/post-modern generation is of critical importance. We must learn from our past to create a radically different future.

The Rt. Rev. Todd Ousely

Ken delivered a biblically and theological grounded, highly interactive, hands-on experience and a new language of Church that is already having positive ripple effects across the diocese. As a result of the conference, Clergy are reporting that: Paradox is changing their perspectives in ways that are enabling them to engage tough questions about the future of their congregations. Paradox is helping them and their congregations to imagine a non-proselytizing evangelism and become more confident and effective evangelists. Paradox is transforming the way they and their congregations think about conflict, enabling them to harness God-given diversity through the love of Christ in order to harvest healthy Christian community.

The Rev. Tom Brackett

"Paradox" has a whole lot to offer, especially to those of us concerned with offering fresh forms of ministry or new wineskins for the Spirit's outpouring in our times.

Brian McLaren

Ken offers an intriguing vision, evoking a twist on Robert Frost's famous poem. Where Frost pictures two leaf-strewn pathways diverging in the yellow wood, one of which is "less traveled by," Ken sees two wide and well-traveled roads, but between them, a barely visible path. That's the one he invites us not only to explore, but to widen by our walking it so that others may follow.

Jon Shriver

Ken Howard's "Paradox" . . . gives me hope that we can have meaningful dialogue -- and find friendship -- with those who differ from us.

The Very Rev. Dr. Paul F. M. Zahl

Howard offers a panoramic blueprint for the next future of Christianity . . . an optimistic plan for transcending present (terminal) divisions . . . a way forward that majors on love and calls Christians back to basics.

The Right Reverend Edwin Leidel, Jr.

We are most grateful to you: for writing PARADOXY, for your presence with us last week, and for putting flesh on and love into your words as they apply to us.

The Rev. Canon Jon Betit

Sincere thanks from the heart for companioning our clergy through a rich few days in Glen Cove. You led us to a lovely place that will no doubt continue to bear fruit in our common life. Blessings to you, your parish community, and our friends in D.C.

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