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Student information

Student name (First, Middle, Last): Jason Todd Deuman

Graduate Program: Doctor of Ministry

Dissertation information

Title of dissertation: USING COMEDY TO BUILD COMMUNITY IN LOCAL CHURCHES: HOW LAUGHING TOGETHER CAN BRING PEOPLE

Advisor: Dr. Philip Cranes

Graduate program: Doctor of Ministry Semiotics and Future Studies

Date of Dissertation Approval by Graduate Program: February 11, 2019

Copy and paste your 300-word Dissertation Abstract below:

Comedy is present in some form in every culture. Understanding humor theories and the effects of comedy on individuals and groups can help local churches foster community in their congregation as well as build bridges for non-congregants to join the community. Developing healthy community through comedy is one of the ways that church leaders can counter the isolation and disconnection occurring in American culture. This project examines humor in the Bible in order to help pastors teach on the value of humor. Church leaders have embraced and rejected humor throughout history. Understanding the various ways comedy has been used in the church throughout history can spark fresh ideas for comedy in the church in the twenty first century. Comedy is something that is shared between people. Examining, humor theories and the effects of comedy on individuals and groups can help leaders better understand why people laugh at different kinds of jokes. One of the modern challenges with contemporary comedy is being able to work cross culturally. The church, as a missionary movement, can learn by examining modern comedians and observing how they discuss sensitive issues and cultural particularities. How comedians interact with people from different cultural backgrounds can also help church leaders foster community. Comedy is often presented before a live audience. Technology is helping comedians expand their connection with their audience and churches can take some lessons from different technological innovations. There are many ways that church leaders can bring comedy and playfulness into the life of their congregation. Intentionally employing comedy and leading with a comic perspective can help bring people together.
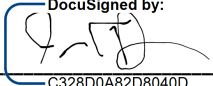
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stand-up, humor, story-telling, leadership, pastor, communication, networking, preaching
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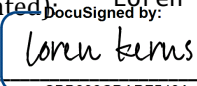
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