

## Testing Fresh Expressions: Identity and Transformation (Ashgate Contemporary Ecclesiology)

John Walker



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Testing Fresh Expressions investigates whether fresh expressions of church really do what is claimed for them by the fresh expressions movement and, in particular, whether their unique approach helps to reverse trends of decline experienced by traditional churches. Part 1 examines those claims and untangles their sociological and theological assumptions. From a careful study of factors underlying attendance decline and growth, Part 2 argues that long-term decline can be resisted only if churches are better able to attract children, the non-churched or both. Part 3 tests the comparative ability of a group of growing parish churches and a group of fresh expressions to resist trends of decline and discovers some intriguing social dynamics common to both groups. Part 4 argues that fresh expressions do not fulfil the unique role often claimed for them but that they do have the capacity to help reinvigorate the whole church.

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