

# 20 Changes in Rural Baptist Churches Since 1945

As observed by Gary Farley of the Center for Rural Church Leadership

1. Better housed
2. Better equipped
3. More and better-prepared worship services
4. More, greater variety of programs, events and projects
5. Laity better trained/more informed
6. The members are more cosmopolitan/secular
7. New and more diverse rhythms of life characterize the congregation
8. Increased community diversity
9. The old community is now only a neighborhood in a larger ill-bonded community
10. Many congregations have moved toward "family chapel" status
11. "We are only a small church" syndrome
12. Continued focus on annual events and projects
13. Growth of grassroots ecumenism
14. Fallen into maintenance mode
15. From extended family to corporate mode for decision making and management
16. More closely identified with denominational agencies/national denomination--accompanied by some lessening of allegiance to association and state convention
17. Moved up the class ladder. Got money
18. Renewal may be appearing in its life
19. Shift from rural to small town congregations
20. Less isolated.

What would you add?