

## **Abstract Dissertation Fresh Expressions of Church, Sabrina Müller**

### *Zum Buch*

Ist Kirche noch zeitgemäss? Fresh expressions of Church sind kontextsensible Kirchen in England, die kirchliche Einheitsmodelle in Frage stellen. Sie nehmen den gesellschaftlichen Wandel vielfältig, innovativ und flexibel auf. Menschen, die sonst nur schwer oder gar keinen Zugang zur Kirche finden, werden von diesen kontextuellen Kirchen angesprochen.

Im ersten Teil des Buchs stellt Sabrina Müller fünf konkrete Beispiele von fresh expressions of Church vor und widmet sich der Definition und Entstehung dieser Gruppierungen. Im zweiten Teil folgt eine detaillierte Analyse der theologischen und ekklesiologischen Motive anhand von Experteninterviews (u. a. mit Rowan Williams und Steven Croft). Im letzten Teil werden konkret Möglichkeiten und Probleme des Transfers erörtert. Die Auseinandersetzung mit der Fresh-Expressions-Bewegung bietet neue Impulse – auch für die vielen Fragen, die sich den Kirchen in Westeuropa stellen.

### *About the Book*

Is church still up to date? The term «Fresh expressions of Church» has been used since 2004 in the Church of England, to refer to small contextual churches that start alongside, but aim to be different to parish churches. There may be around 2000 of them in the Church of England, both urban and rural. During the past 11 years, the self-understanding of this traditional state church with its parish structure has changed. The mother church of the Anglican World Communion claims since 2008 to be a mixed economy church; one that supports and recognises fxC as church, as well as the parish churches. Lay people lead more than 50% of these young contextual churches. The Church of England came to the point, where it recognised that a changed and pluralistic society calls for a variety of churches too. What is characteristic of a Fresh Expression of Church is not its newness, but its ability to pass on and contextualise inherited theology, ecclesiology, tradition and spiritual experience. Furthermore, they are shaped by a missional attitude, creedal based, and writing on the subject shows a profound orientation to the theological basis found in the Trinity. Fresh Expressions are churches that constantly try to be in a dialogue with the context, the Christian tradition, the wider church, people in the community and the Trinity. Since the value of participation is so high, people of various ages are encouraged to develop their religious literacy. The ecclesiology of fxC can be summarised as a dialogical-relational ecclesiology that is focused on a theological centre.

The formation of the movement, the definition of the concept of a fresh expression of Church and five concrete examples are presented in the first part of the book. The second part contains a detailed analysis of expert interviews concerning the theology and ecclesiology of fresh expressions of Church (amongst others Archbishops Rowan Williams and Bishop Steven Croft haven been interviewed). The last part of the book discusses possibilities and problems of transfer. The engagement with the Fresh-Expressions-Movement offers some new impulses especially, for the struggling churches in West Europe.