

Making Extraordinary People out of Ordinary People

Resources to Help Move Members into Ministry



A PASTOR'S RESOURCE PACKET
From Stewardship Ministries and
Evangelism Ministries • US/Canada Mission Evangelism

Making Extraordinary People out of Ordinary People

Resources to Help Move Members into Ministry

Pastors often struggle with motivating those who attend their church to participate in active church ministry. While attendance is good, it is important to help people move deeper into their relationship with Christ and into a place of ministry. We understand that God has given each of us gifts to use in ministry, but how do we get people to understand and use those gifts?

The following sermons are an excellent place to start that process. The two sermons by Pastor Wes Humble of Newark, Ohio, First Church of the Nazarene provide an excellent starting point in helping your people see the importance of finding their place in the church. With a strong focus on discipleship and understanding your church's mission and vision, Pastor Humble offers a tool to get your people moving toward active ministry. In addition, he has provided an outline of "A Follower's Life," the 12-week membership class offered at Newark First Church. This class takes the new member from the point of new life in Christ to service and ministry in the church.

While these materials provide a good starting point, you will want to be prepared to help your people discover and use their spiritual gifts. There are many good resources on the market, but we recommend a resource developed by Nazarene Publishing House. *The Complete Spiritual Gifts Kit* is an excellent tool to help members discover their gifts and how best to use them. This product can be ordered from NPH at www.nph.com or by calling 1-800-877-0700.

The materials in this packet were used as a basis for Pastor Humble's chapter in the new book, *Best Practices in Discipleship: Renewing Our Missional Heritage*. This book, published by Evangelism Ministries in the USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism Department is available at www.NazEvangelism.org or by calling 1-800-306-8294.

These resources are provided as a part of the Comprehensive Annual Stewardship Emphasis (CASE) program from Nazarene Stewardship Ministries. While we recommend a focus on spiritual gifts in the month of June, these resources can be used at any time that is appropriate for you and your church. Feel free to adapt these sermons and resources to your local situation as you see fit. For more information about CASE resources, please check out our website: www.stewardship.nazarene.org.

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SERMON ONE:

Leaving it ALL Behind

There was a man going to work one morning, when he was pulled over by a state trooper. The trooper walked up to the man's car and said, "Sir did you not see the stop sign?" The man replied, "I have been traveling this highway for 20 years, and have never stopped at that sign." The trooper said, "Well you will now," and handed him his ticket. The very next morning the same trooper was called to investigate a wreck at the same stop sign. Much to his amazement, when he got to the first car, it was the very man he had ticketed the morning before for not stopping at the stop sign. The trooper asked what had happened. He said, "Don't ask me, ask the man that hit me from behind." The trooper walked back to the second car, and inquired of the second man what had happened. The man exclaimed, "It's not my fault I hit him. I have been following him for 20 years, and he has never stopped here before."

We all have our ways don't we? We often live out our lives in ruts of complacency and pathways of sameness. Rare is the person who steps back and evaluates his or her life, especially in the area of our spiritual journey. We "got saved" and that is that. Or is it?

To serve God in order to gain heaven is not the teaching of Christianity. Satisfaction cannot be found in gain, but only in a personal relationship to God. The presentation made by false evangelism is that Jesus Christ taught a man must have his own soul saved, be delivered from hell and get a pass for heaven, and when one is taken and the other left, he must look out that he is the one taken. Could anything be more diametrically opposed to what Jesus Christ did teach, or more unlike the revelation of God given in the Bible? A man is not to serve God for His sake of gain, but to get to the place where the whole of his life is seen as a personal relationship to God. (Oswald Chambers)

The only ultimate disaster that can befall us, I have come to realize, is to feel ourselves at home here on earth. (Malcolm Muggeridge)

Today we are going to try to crack open the secret to authentic Christ following. What does it mean to follow Christ or be His disciple? What does it mean to me personally? How little or how much does my discipleship touch my life? Am I a Sunday only Christian? In other words, have I compartmentalized my life to the point that Christianity and faith are good for Sunday and Sunday only? Do you live by two sets of rules? One set for Sunday and another set of ethics and standards for the rest of the week?

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You might be tempted to think that this sermon is not about you or for you but it is. It is for all of us in this room. I can't think of anyone including myself that doesn't need to hear it.

An old lady, long a member of her community and church, shook hands with the minister after the service one Sunday morning. "That was a wonderful sermon," she told him, "Just wonderful. Everything you said applies to someone I know." (*Bits & Pieces*, November, 1989, p. 19.)

If you choose to continue to be a part of this fellowship or church you will be called to examine your life in alignment with the Word of God. We are going to do our best in every venue, Bible study, small group, outreach, and celebration service to hold up the mirror of God's Word against our motives, will, and choices we make in the administration of our lives on a daily basis.

Let's begin today with a look at the teaching of Christ about discipleship. In Luke 14, we read these words:

A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, "If you want to be my disciple, you must hate everyone else by comparison—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple."

"But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. They would say, 'There's the person who started that building and couldn't afford to finish it!'" (Luke 14:25-30 NLT).

What is a disciple or discipleship?

The Greek definition for "disciple" is "an individual that is a learner or a pupil." We would use the term "student" today. That definition is good news to every believer because:

- First, we do not need to know everything to be a disciple,
- Second, we do not need to perform perfectly to be a disciple, and
- Third, discipleship costs us everything.

There is a second, and I think more important question we need to answer today and that is:

How does one become a disciple?

“After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him” (Luke 5:27 NASB).

The Greek word “follow” comes from the word “roadway.” As I read that definition, I thought about how different roadways present different possibilities. Jesus is asking Matthew to take a different roadway in life.

God has a way of doing that when He calls you to a life of discipleship. I hesitate to use my own story as an example because I wound up in full time ministry. In reality, God calls every one of us to surrender every area of our life so that we might do His will and not what we think is important.

I had planned to go into business with a family that had taken me in as one of their own in many ways. They had secured an apartment for me and promised that I could go into management in their company.

This was four years into my surrender to Jesus Christ and commitment to follow Him. He asked me to take a different road for my life. Christ asks us to follow Him in many different ways, and at different stages of our lives.

- He may ask you to make a change in a career.
- He may ask you to walk away from a relationship that you know is wrong and harmful (or it may just be wrong for you).
- He may ask you to humble yourself and seek reconciliation with someone. You may even be called on to seek forgiveness.
- He may be asking you today to stop a habit that you know is destructive to your body. The bottom line with these kinds of habits is that the Bible clearly teaches that our bodies are a temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in. Doing our own thing with our bodies is the same as saying, I am not surrendered, nor am I going to surrender every area of my life. It is my body and I will do what I want with it.

Whatever it is and whenever it comes, when Jesus calls us, we must set everything aside and follow Him.

You know why we struggle so much today? Most of us in this room are from generations that are some of the most self-serving, self-focused and self-centered in recent history: Baby boomers.

We have been raised to think that life is all about us. Tom Wolfe labeled the 70’s as the “Me Decade.” While the boomers laid the ground work, the generations that have followed are stuck with a world saturated with “Me Theology.” Generation X, Generation Y, and the Millennials have all followed in the footsteps of the “I” driven concept.

For those kids born in the 80s, Whitney Houston was singing the fact that the greatest

love of all was loving yourself. (Wonder how that worked out for her.)

According to Dr. Jean Twenge in her book, *Generation Me*, education has played a hand in furthering the it's-all-about-me concept. "Teacher training courses often emphasize that a child's self-esteem must be preserved above all else. A sign on the wall of one university's education department says, 'We Choose to Feel Special and Worthwhile No Matter What.'" Perhaps as a result, 60 percent of teachers and 69 percent of school counselors agree that self esteem should be raised by "providing more unconditional validation of students based on who they are rather than how they perform or behave." (p. 57)

The bottom line is that we live in a selfish-centered, feel-good society. Even those of us in leadership have been conditioned to never make anyone feel guilty or bad for unacceptable behavior. Where does it all stop? Where do we ever take time to get real and quit playing feel-good games, especially in the area of our spiritual lives?

While I don't discount their benefit, I can think of a couple of books, even in Christian pop writing, that flirted with this whole me-centered teaching. I like to think that they were both unintentional in their writing, but they were sure picked up by society as life-changing books. They are: *The Prayer of Jabez* and *The Purpose Driven Life*. Both of them have merit as being legitimate books based on scripture, but the content and popularity of both were centered on self-blessing and self-centered thinking. Please don't run out of here and think that I am against these books. I think there is some merit in them but they both played squarely into the popular self-promoting, self-loving propaganda of our day. A couple of years ago, someone wrote a Christian book entitled, *The Pressure's Off*. Truer words were probably never spoken.

Dallas Willard, professor at the University of Southern California's School of Philosophy, offers this observation about the church: "By the middle of this [twentieth] century, [the church] had lost any recognized, reasonable, theologically and psychologically sound approach to spiritual growth, to really becoming like Christ."

Some of you may remember comedian Yakov Smirnoff. He said when he first came to the United States from Russia he wasn't prepared for the incredible variety of instant products available in American grocery stores. He says, "On my first shopping trip, I saw powdered milk—you just add water, and you get milk. Then I saw powdered orange juice—you just add water, and you get orange juice. And then I saw baby powder, and I thought to myself. What a country!" (James Emery White, *Rethinking the Church*, Baker, 1997, p. 55-57.)

Discipleship is neither easy nor instant. You don't just add water. Let's look a little closer at Christ teaching on the matter.

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Three applicants for discipleship

A First Interview

“As they were walking along, someone said to Jesus, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ But Jesus replied, ‘Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head’ (Luke 9:57-58 NIV).

We are not told whether this disciple followed Jesus or not because that was not important. The emphasis here is Jesus wanting those who follow Him to know that the things of this world are no longer important. Just follow Jesus and He will take care of the necessities of life.

It is also important to notice that Jesus did not call this man. We cannot just decide we are going to be disciples on our own. We will soon turn back when faced with the cold reality of discipleship. But when God calls us we know that nothing else in life matters. We follow no matter what because we believe in Him.

Remember Matthew? He left everything immediately and followed Jesus without a thought for the things of this world, even though he was a wealthy man and his source of income changed. It caused him no concern; in fact he celebrates with friends because he cares about one thing now—following Jesus at any cost.

A Second Interview

“He said to another person, ‘Come, follow me.’ The man agreed, but he said, ‘Lord, first let me return home and bury my father.’ But Jesus told him, ‘Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead! Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God!’” (Luke 9: 59-60 NIV).

This disciple was concerned about legal matters. Jesus wants him to know that He is the law and the man just needs to follow Jesus.

Go back for a moment to Matthew, the tax collector. Can you imagine the legal procedure that one had to go through to leave his tax booth? Somehow, I think just getting up and walking away was not the proper procedure. I think there would have been Roman soldiers involved in looking for someone who did that. Matthew just got up and walked away. He clearly had a throw-caution-to-the-wind-attitude about following Christ.

A Third Interview

"Another said, 'Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family.' But Jesus told him, 'Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God'" (Luke 9: 59-60).

This man wanted things on his own terms, his own schedule. Jesus is clearly teaching that we are to move forward in following Him. Going backward is clearly not to be a part of Christ following.

Dale Hays tells of a Haitian pastor who told his congregation this gruesome parable:

A certain man wanted to sell his house for \$2,000. Another man wanted very badly to buy it, but because he was poor, he couldn't afford the full price. After much bargaining, the owner agreed to sell the house for half the original price with just one stipulation: he would retain ownership of one small nail protruding from just over the door.

After several years, the original owner wanted the house back, but the new owner was unwilling to sell. So first the owner went out found the carcass of a dead animal, and hung it from the nail he still owned. Soon the house became unlivable and the family was forced to sell the house to the owner of the nail.

The Haitian pastor's conclusion: "If we leave the Devil with even one small peg in our life, he will return to hang his rotting garbage on it, making it unfit for Christ's habitation." (Dale A. Hays, "Leadership," Vol. 4, no. 2).

A little boy constantly fell out of bed. No matter what his parents did, the boy couldn't sleep without rolling out of bed. An uncle came to visit and in the middle of the night the usual thump and cry was heard. In the morning the uncle teased the boy and asked him why he fell out so often. The little fellow thought for a moment and then said, "I don't know, unless it's because I stay too close to the place where I get in."

The Rich Young Ruler

"A ruler questioned Him, saying, 'Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' And Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments, 'Do not commit adultery, Do not commit murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother' " (Luke 18:18 NASB).

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Jesus tells the rich man, he doesn't need the advice of a good teacher, he needs to obey God. Note that these commandments all deal with the man's relationship with his fellow man.

"And he said, 'All these things I have kept from my youth.' When Jesus heard this, He said to him, 'One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me'" (Luke 18:21-22 NASB).

Now Jesus talks to him about his relationship with God. Jesus asks this man to do what Matthew had done, leave it all and follow me. Why did He make this drastic demand? Jesus knew this man kept the letter of the law but not the spirit of the law. To keep the letter of the law is to be a good man but to keep the spirit of the law is to be a spiritual man.

"But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich" (Luke 18:23 NASB).

This man is asked to follow as Matthew was asked. What a sharp contrast: one man leaves everything and follows Jesus, one man walks away with great sorrow. What was the difference between them?

There are three things that you must believe to be like Matthew and leave everything and follow Jesus:

1. Jesus will take care of your needs,
2. Jesus will take care of the commandments in your life, and
3. Jesus will take care of the terms of your life, your life schedule.

Our question, "How does one become a disciple, as revealed in scripture?" It is very simple. We are to follow Jesus. A disciple is one who has set every agenda aside, every priority, every interest, and by the pull of the Holy Spirit has decided to follow Jesus, and to be His student.

A disciple is one who makes other disciples. Jesus said this was the mission of the church. We are to go and make disciples of all nations. We are to teach them to obey everything He commands us to do.

**A disciple
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disciples.**

Whose job is that? Yours, Mine, or Ours?

I want to suggest to you that while this sermon is not on making disciples, it is a sign of our personal discipleship. It may happen at work, at home, or at school but it will be a natural product of our life when we are following Christ the way we should.

Let me give some kudos and props this morning to the many people who make this church happen. Every job—no matter how obscure—is critical to the process of disciple making. I thank you for your time and talent and also the resources you give to make it happen.

There's an old story about St. Augustine. Early on in his Christian life, he was intensely absorbed in the writings of Cicero. Around this time, he had a dream that he had died, and now he was standing at the pearly gates. And the keeper of the gate said, "Who are you?"

He said, "I'm Augustine." Then the keeper said, "What are you?" Augustine said, "I'm a Christian." The gatekeeper said, "No, you're not a Christian. You're a Ciceronian!"

Augustine said, "What are you talking about? I'm a Christian!"

And the gatekeeper said this: "All souls on earth are judged by what dominated their interests. In you, Augustine, it was not the Christ of the Gospel. It was the Cicero of Roman literature. You are not a Christian. You cannot enter here!"

Augustine was so startled that when he woke up, he resolved then and there to be fully committed to Jesus Christ for the rest of his life and to live for Him.

"Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

A church member went to his pastor, Phillips Brooks, to tell him he was going to the Holy Land. He said that it was his intention to visit Mount Sinai. "In fact," the man told the minister, "I plan to climb to the top of that mountain and when I get there read aloud the Ten Commandments." Thinking this would please Dr. Brooks, the church member was surprised to hear his pastor say, "You know, I can think of something even better than that." The man responded, "You can, Pastor? And what might that be?" Brooks replied rather bluntly, "Just this. Instead of traveling thousands of miles to read the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, why not stay right here at home and keep them?"

May the God who called you fill you with enough of His presence to keep you as you walk in His footsteps this week.

SERMON TWO:
Celebration

Today is Vision Sunday and so this will feel quite a bit different than a normal Sunday here at Newark Nazarene. I would like you to take out the cards you were given this morning when you came in. If you don't have them, we have them available in a larger version here on the platform. There are symbols on each one that will help you remember what our vision is all about. (Samples of these cards are provided on this CD-ROM.)

There are three elements that make up the vision of how we do ministry. They are Celebration, Community, and Call. We believe and teach that to be a fully devoted follower of Christ, you will have all three of these elements in your life. This morning we are going to give you as many of the details as we can of what we believe the future needs to look like for our church.

Each week Brian Redman leads us in worship in our Sunday Celebration service and I have asked him to share a some thoughts with you about celebration.

Brian:

Each week the Worship Design Team meets on Tuesdays to design our Celebrations for Sunday mornings. Through prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit, we try to create an atmosphere that leads us through a worship experience...where each of us participates in authentic worship.

I absolutely enjoy our celebrations each Sunday. God has given me a passion to really worship Him and to lead people do the same.

But if you're like me...it hasn't always been easy to genuinely worship God with a sense of freedom, abandon, and awe. In fact, it's only been in the last few years that I feel that God has helped me to understand what it means to truly worship Him. And although I'm certainly not in expert on the subject of worship, I just want to share a couple of insights that have helped me grow as a worshipper:

1. I need to have a relationship with God. In other words, I have to know Him as my Savior, the One who has forgiven my sins.
2. I need to have a heart for God and a heart for things about God. To do this, I have to spend time daily with Him. This can be a difficult one.
3. I need to have a heart of surrender...a heart that listens and obeys God's spirit as He calls. It's living it out 24/7.
4. Be who you are! Be sincere, honest, and vulnerable.

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“But the time is coming—it has, in fact, come—when what you’re called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter.

“It’s who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That’s the kind of people the Father is out looking for...those who are simply and honestly themselves before him in their worship. God is Spirit. Those who worship Him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration” (John 4:23-24 NIV).

A lot of words to hear at one time...but the key phrases are:

1. I love God with everything in me. I love music. I love being together in this place. I love to feel things deeply...but when it came to expressing my worship in a passionate way (my true self) I felt so stifled. But God has given me a freedom to worship and experience Him in a real way...and there’s a whole story that I don’t have time to tell you this morning. But I want to encourage each one of you to pursue God with a heart that’s hungry for Him. To become authentic worshippers who want the things of God more than the things that we want for ourselves. To pursue God’s presence and obey His Spirit.
2. I believe when we come to this place, that true worship can be experienced...and that’s my prayer for everyone as we gather together each Sunday to celebrate God and His glory.

Wes:

Now I would like you to look at the back of your cards—the celebration card to be exact. The question that we obviously need to answer is, “Where are we going to have this celebration service in the future?”

About a year ago when our attendance began to exceed a comfortable level for this facility, especially in the 10:00 a.m. service, there was a terrible wrestling match that began inside of me. Pastors in today’s church climate have been almost saturated with the thought that bigger is better and if bigger is happening in your church, you need to do everything you can to not lose the “big Mo,” as one church growth expert of the past has worded it. Momentum is everything, many of us have been taught. Do whatever is necessary to preserve momentum. I have watched many churches take this advice and launch into building programs, only to find that the unwritten theory, “if you build it they will come,” is truly just a good plot line for a movie. I have watched them shift their emphasis from mission and ministry to mortgages and building funds. This is not true in every case, but this is what I have wrestled with.

From day one, I have been drawn to try to engage the community around our church. Personally, I believe we are responsible to at least make a good effort to touch our own church neighborhood with the message. So the big question has been: to leave or to stay?

We have explored many different options. From the former Big Bear building on 21st

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Street to the empty Scott Lumber building to pieces of property where we could build. None of these options felt right.

The big conclusion for the present is that we have been strategically located here for a reason and we are going to stay in this neighborhood. How do we do that when we continue to grow? Good question. Let me give you some direction and answer that question.

To stay here is not a cheap option. It is much less expensive than if we were to move completely to another location. But, there are things we need to do to enable us to have effective ministry here. This includes the acquiring of a couple of additional buildings in close proximity to the church to expand our ministry.

We will, in the next few days, launch a capital campaign. This campaign will cover the cost of finishing the reconstruction of this property as well as allowing us to purchase at least two additional structures. While I cannot take the time this morning to give you precise details, we will keep you informed about this over the next few Sundays. We are going to need between \$600,000 and \$700,000 to complete this campaign and do the things that are critical for staying here.

I will tell you that when this money is raised, we will finish putting windows in this building, pave the parking lots, address drainage problems that will allow us to finish rooms in the basement that currently take on water during heavy rains, raise the sound booth into a balcony and many other exciting things that desperately need to happen. Down the road, who knows what God will lead us to do? I still have in my heart the building down the street that I believe that we will one day be using for ministry. The current owners don't see it yet, but they will.

All of these things are important because we are staying here to minister to a neighborhood that needs us. Making the functional and aesthetic changes to our building will make a much-needed statement to our community. We will raise the value of homes around us as we clean up our own property.

There is a very important reason that I am not worried about growth and getting bigger. We will, I believe, continue to grow. We are prepared, if necessary, to expand to a Saturday evening service later this fall or next year. The reason I am not concerned with trying to get bigger is that we have a critical need to stop where we are and address some major spiritual issues.

We own the fact, as a leadership team, that while we have grown as a church numerically, we have to address the issue of spiritual transformation. Spiritual transformation or growth will not happen by just attending a Sunday morning celebration. We are going to take the needed time to focus on putting the structures in place that will promote the spiritual transformation of the body. Tevis Austin is our Executive Pastor. He is responsible for day-to-day operations, staff development, and also will share in the teaching and preaching that we do in the future. I have asked him to share the vision for Community. After a time of worship and celebration, he is going to come and share this part of the vision for us.

Tevis:

Community – “We are reaching in.”

Jesus made it clear in Matthew 28 that our mission is to go and make disciples. Therefore, Newark Nazarene is more than a great celebration on Sunday mornings. We are more than upward, we are also about reaching inward and encouraging one another toward spiritual transformation—making disciples. We are about leading people into a growing relationship with Christ. In order for real spiritual transformation to take place, you need more than just celebration. Celebration is a very meaningful way to worship God, but it is an entry point for new people. Just because you attend something doesn't mean you are growing spiritually. You will never grow to spiritual maturity just by attending celebration.

Are we saying that you can't just go to the Celebration service and be a Christian? You can come to Celebration, get up on Monday, dress yourself, brush your teeth, go to work, make some money, have a family, and survive life. But God's way isn't for you to survive spiritually. His way is for you to thrive spiritually.

We don't assume everyone who attends believes, or even knows the Bible. We do assume everyone who comes through our doors is open to exploring the Bible, and we do expect everyone who is around our community for any length of time to be growing spiritually.

Illustration: It's like going to gas station and just sitting. Just because you go to gas station doesn't mean You're getting filled. It doesn't mean things are being checked underneath the hood. You've got to do something. You must make the effort to grow and thrive spiritually.

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess. And let us consider how we may spur one another and encourage one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:23-24 NIV).

None of us have arrived in our spiritual journey. We need each other to spur one another, to encourage and support each other on in our spiritual journey.

People long for community. We crave authentic, genuine, and transparent relationships. We want to be connected to others. We are able to make it through hard times, survive conflicts, and overcome life's challenges in community. But apart from community, we can lose faith, and life can seem to fall apart. That is why community is so important. That is why the atmosphere we try to create here from the very first time a person comes is so important. That is why our Connect ministries are so important—people who are helping in parking lot, greeters, helping to get coffee and refreshments ready, ushers, people whose main responsibility is to connect with people and care.

We are committed to be a real place where real people are able to share faults and weaknesses and not fake it. Where people do life together, where people are committed

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to knowing others and being known, to loving others and being loved, to serving others and being served.

We experience spiritual transformation in community. We discover who we are in community, and we cannot fulfill God's purpose for our lives by ourselves apart from community. In the past, we have had a few ministry structures in place to help, but we have been behind when it comes having some intentional structures in place to help people grow and thrive.

What we offer:

1. **Starting Point:** Beginning September 15, a group for New Christians to help understand what it means to be Christian.
2. **Small Groups:** Have played and will continue to play an essential role in the spiritual transformation of people. We currently have around 20 small groups that meet every other week at different locations and different days throughout the week. Small groups are a great place where people are known, loved, and can serve others as they do life together. Holly Lawrence has been here since 2002 and she has played a major role in developing small groups. We are so thankful for her leadership. Some of you may or may not know that Holly is actually transitioning out of this role. Holly is planning on still being around, helping out some at Eastside, but we want to express our thanks for all you have invested in small groups. John Hunt has been here for 5 years, and he has been involved in music ministry, small groups, and he has headed up construction at Eastside. He even has full-time ministry experience. John is now preparing to provide leadership for our small group ministry. We are even preparing to have a "Get Connected" event in September for people interested in joining a small group and to perhaps launch some new groups. We hope to have a get connected event once a quarter.
3. **Bible Studies:** We have other groups that meet like men's and women's Bible study, and a Bible study for moms called Moms In Touch. These take place on Wednesdays.
4. **Sunday Night Series:** We are also planning a spiritual formation series that will take place about once a quarter on Sunday nights. This series will cover topics like prayer, spiritual disciplines, and holiness. The first one will start October 2.
5. **A Follower's Life:** Did you know that the most checked box on our connection card each week is "interested in membership." American Express – "Membership has its privileges." When it comes to membership, stores offer discounts for just signing up. Often we can sign up to join things with no requirements or expectations.

Listen to what Paul says when it comes to being a member of the church:

"In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about

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is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of his body" (Romans 12:4-5 THE MESSAGE).

But to Paul, being a "member" of the church body meant being a vital part. Membership in body of Christ, means being committed to care for each other and to ultimately as a church body care for others outside our walls.

Membership at Newark Nazarene is more than attending the Celebration service. It is a commitment to be a part of community and to ultimately serve in ministry.

We are preparing to start "A Follower's Life," a 12-week class to help people not just understand what it means to be a Christian and a member of the church of the Nazarene, but especially help people to discover the God-shaped ministry for their lives. In fact, we are strengthening the requirements for membership here. In order to become a member, you must now complete this 12-week class and commit to serve in an area of ministry.

People are all at different stages of the spiritual journey. You must decide the best place for you to get involved. Just like you don't feed a newborn baby filet mignon, if you are a new Christian, you may not be ready for "A Follower's Life." You may need to get involved at a starting point. Some of you need to get connected to a small group; some need "A Followers Life." Even if you have taken membership class before, or if involved in ministry, we encourage you to consider "A Follower's Life."

We believe that if you are serious about spiritual transformation, then you must move beyond the auditorium to a place where you are connected to a small group and ultimately to be a person who is serving and investing in the lives of others.

Wes

Call:

It isn't so hard to understand why people look to the church as a refuge from the realities of the world around them. The world can seem like a scary place. It's like getting on a roller coaster and having your seat belt break. While someone else may scream, "Do you want to go faster?" You're begging to get off and move to stable ground.

Many church people have felt like the seat belt broke, and didn't know if they were going to make it. So they turned churches into monasteries: places that became spiritual havens for us, focusing on our spiritual life, caring for our spiritual needs, and nurturing our spiritual health.

While I can hardly believe it, the church, for many, has become a place where the unbelieving world cannot get to them. They feel protected from this drastically changing world.

Listen carefully: God never intended for His church or body to hide behind the walls of a building. In fact, God intends there be no hiding place, except in His presence. When the church becomes our shelter from the radically changing world, we fail to turn to God and make Him our hiding place and our shelter. (Much of the above adapted from *An Unstop-*

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pable Force, Erwin McManus)

Jesus plainly gave us our mission statement: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them. . . , and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

When asked one day what the most important commandment was Jesus responded, “That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence and that you love your neighbor as well as you do yourself.”

Jesus cares about people. We as a church are going to take care of people.

When asked, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus told a story that made it very clear who our neighbors are. You can interpret His story locally, nationally and globally. I believe Jesus delights in standing up against injustice and standing up for sharing His message and His love at the same time.

We believe that God is calling us to a holistic approach to ministry. We are going to walk the unique balance between caring for people’s physical needs and at the same time ministering to their spiritual needs.

Jesus wants the church to be a place of refuge—not for the church—but for those who are hurting, broken and weary. This is not exclusive to those in poverty. Some of the most impoverished people I have known have also been the wealthiest people I have known. The call we are answering is for everyone. We are to reach everyone we possibly can regardless of racial, socio-economic backgrounds, or any other discriminating factor.

The bottom line is this. If you are a part of this church you should be serving. That will mean different things for different people but we are going to be providing you opportunities to serve and use your giftedness. Here’s how you can be involved:

In reach:

We will continue to focus on providing a dynamic Sunday celebration. This takes an incredible amount of people. You will probably be asked in the near future to help serve. If somehow we miss you, you have my permission to ask to serve.

To make the call and the vision happen we are adopting a ministry work ethic: Attend one, Work one!

It’s Sunday, the Lord’s Day, and we don’t think it is too much to ask that your time given to God on this day be more than an hour. We believe that this is His day and that we are accountable for how we spend it. There are many in reach opportunities and you will be kept apprised of those on a regular basis.

Outreach:

Jesus taught that when you have done it to the least of these you have done it to Him.

This week and next at Newark Nazarene:

1. Ben Franklin Elementary landscaping beautification project.

2. Eastside VBS: Many of you went to help staff the Eastside VBS and without a doubt this changed your life. One of you sent these words to me by e-mail:

I wanted to talk to you about the impact that VBS has had on me this week at Eastside. The stories that some of these kids talk about as their home lives breaks my heart. There is one kid in particular who has touched my heart. I am hoping that I am making an impact on his life because I know he has on mine. If you talk to Chris before I see you, he can fill you in on some of it.

Anyway, there is a reason that I was put with these kids, and I want to do something to help them in some way, even if it is just being their friend. By the time I left (VBS) last night, I was in tears. It is amazing how "perfect" our world seems to us, and how comfortable we get with our world, and how hesitant we are about reaching out to those that aren't as "perfect" as we think we are.

Operation Gear Up!

I want to thank every one of you that participated in yesterday's school supply give-away. Some of you gave supplies, money and a whole lot of you showed up to help. This was a team effort and an incredible day. It felt like we were finally functioning as the body of Christ. I wondered if anyone would come to the church since we don't really have a lot of contact in the neighborhood, but they did come.

At least 251 kids received school supplies and 60 kids received haircuts. Close to 400 were fed.

Here is an e-mail I received last evening:

I just wanted to take a moment and sincerely thank you for the afternoon that we just spent with our children at your school supply fair. We all enjoyed it a great deal and wanted to commend you and your staff for being so kind and generous. We have a large family—four of our own children as well as three foster children—so I'm sure you can imagine the expense involved with preparing the children to return to school. You certainly helped alleviate quite a bit of those expenses. We have been talking about trying to find a church lately as neither one of us has attended in quite some time. I think that your fair might just be the catalyst for returning. Once again thank you for your community spirit, it certainly made quite an impression on our family.

Believe me, those of us who had the privilege of being here are going to do more of this in the near future.

It is a tired old saying but so true, People will not care how much we know until they know how much we care.

The Eastside Project

In 1945, our church launched a church plant on the east side of Newark. We have been afforded the opportunity to reconnect with this ministry. The church has been closed and will reopen this fall. We are partnering with them in ministry. We are going to be asking some of you to consider being a part of this core group as they restart as a church and compassion based ministry. You will hear much more about this later.

There is no doubt that God has us here for a reason and we are going to explore exactly what it is and where it is that He wants to lead us.

Know this, we are celebrating what God is doing, we are going to become a functioning community and we are going to respond to the call and watch God change lives in a dramatic fashion.

Special Report to the board made available at the service

Who are we and where are we going?

Mission: Leading people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

We live out this mission by embracing the following three principles:

Celebration: We believe that to have an effective community we must commit to a time of weekly celebration. At these celebrations you will experience authentic worship and challenging, biblical teaching on issues that are important to you today. We are a church that is fluid...adjusting our methods along the way to more effectively be the Church to our community.

Community: We are a church that cherishes authentic community...providing community groups to foster genuine and transparent relationships. Community groups or small groups play an essential role in the care and development of a believer. We are a church that is constantly growing...knowing that none of us have arrived in our spiritual journey, but are here to spur one another on in our spiritual transformation.

Call: We are a church that sees the potential in people and facilitates them in discovering God's design for their life and contribution to His kingdom. We believe that God's design was for every believer to participate in serving and building the church. We are a church that is compassionate...about people with needs in our community and is actively looking for ways to serve others in our community and around the world.

The Eight Core Values: . . . are the application of biblical truth through the unique personality of Newark Church of the Nazarene

Authenticity

As “a real place for real people” we believe we can’t be what God has called us to be if we play games with each other. Whether it’s what happens on the platform, within our small groups, serving teams or in our homes, we need to be able to share our faults and weaknesses and not fake it. That’s authenticity, just being real.

Biblical Truth

Newark Nazarene is a place for people on every part of the spiritual journey, from those investigating whether there is a God, to those who have made following Christ the priority of their life. This is a safe place for everyone. But safe doesn’t mean serene. The Bible presents a dangerous message of life change. We don’t assume everyone believes, or even knows the Bible, but we do assume everyone who comes through our doors is open to exploring it. We believe the Bible is God’s inerrant truth and it is foundational to everything we do.

Culturally Relevant Communication

“Why did they do that?” “What does that have to do with church?” How many times have you heard (or thought) that after you saw something during a service here at Newark Nazarene? Maybe it was a movie clip or a secular song. Stuff that seemed to be the last thing you would have expected in church. Well, believe it or not, there is a reason for all of this. There is a method to the madness.

Culturally Relevant Communication is one of our eight core values! Newark Nazarene is a place that helps connect those who are spiritually exploring God’s love and truth. To do this, we’re committed to doing anything to help people connect God’s timeless truth from the Bible with their day-to-day life. We do not engage in anything immoral or anti-scriptural to do this, but we do embrace creative methods used in our current culture. The challenge for us is that the Bible was written a long time ago for people in another culture. The fact that we are in Newark, Ohio in the 21st century doesn’t change the message that God gave 2,000 years ago, but it does mean that we need to do some work to connect it to our lives today. That’s what we mean by culturally relevant communication.

It’s nothing new. It’s the kind of thing the Bible referred to in Ecclesiastes 12:10 which says, “The teacher searched to find just the right words.” In fact, it’s exactly what Jesus did. Whether it was stories about sheep and goats, vineyard workers, or a guy who throws a party, Jesus used the current language and daily life of those around him to communicate truth.

Doing Life Together

We aren’t interested in being a church where a lot of people get together for an inspiring service but never move beyond the casual arm’s distance relationships of an auditorium. We want to grow by really doing life together. Community is knowing and being

Making Extraordinary People out of Ordinary People

known, loving and being loved, celebrating and being celebrated, and serving and being served. The people, who really grow at Newark Nazarene, are those who move beyond the auditorium through serving and/or being part of a small group, service team and building friendships in which all of these happen.

Excellence

We don't believe in striving for unrealistic perfection. We do believe excellence is about bringing your best to God's work and to life in general. Whenever we do anything as a church we want to bring our "A Game." Whether it's our communication and music, how we hold babies in the nursery or how we take care of the building, we want it to reflect this.

Functional Structures

We believe that ministries are only valid when they are functional. Ministries that no longer support the mission of the church or are not functioning effectively will be reviewed and eliminated. New ministries will proactively be encouraged and affirmed to meet the changing needs of the culture and our community.

Growth

We don't expect everyone who walks into this church to be a committed Christ-follower. But we do expect everyone who is around our community for any length of time to be growing. We expect every person to be moving closer to being the complete image of Christ in every area of life. When it isn't happening, we need to ask why. The answers aren't always comfortable. In fact, we often grow only when we are pushed out of our comfort zone. We believe that growth includes service. We are about service, not serve-us.

Reproduction

Reproduction is about recognizing something that God has created and then being a tool when He reproduces that element in other places. Newark Nazarene wants to be a place where Christ-followers reproduce Christ-followers, leaders reproduce leaders and churches reproduce other churches.

A Vision for Today and the Near Future

As the Lead Pastor of Newark Church of the Nazarene, I have spent the last several months seeking to understand the will of God concerning this ministry. I have sought to understand this city and the needs that are very obvious. After many board meetings, future facilities team meetings, a focus group, private conversations with church members, attendees, fellow pastors, staff and general and district denominational officials, I have come to the following conclusions:

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1. Our church is poised to engage in significant ministry that will affect the greater Licking County area and beyond.
2. We have the resources to begin to engage our culture outside the walls of the building.
3. We have a very meaningful Sunday morning service that serves as an entry point for new people.
4. We have a few ministry structures in place, but are woefully behind the curve for the amount of people we serve.
5. We have a good ministry structure on paper but must continue to focus on implementing the vision and our core values.
6. We have staff areas that must and are being addressed to strengthen our ministry capabilities. These include executive pastor, children's ministry leader, small group leader, and administrative secretary/bookkeeper.
7. We have a continuing space issue that affects parking, second-service seating accommodations, and the need of expanding ministries (children, youth and adult) to have more space during the week.
8. We have an (un)employment problem in the church. While many people serve there is no functional structure in place to proactively move new people into ministry.
9. We are in serious need of a systematic approach to discipleship. While there has been some attention to this need, we are—again—very behind where we need to be.

The Plan

1. We will begin to raise the necessary funds needed to make our existing building and grounds more accessible and attractive. This will enhance the value of other neighborhood properties and make a statement regarding our willingness to be a part of this community.
2. We are a vital part of the church refocus effort on the east side of Newark. This church was started in 1945 as a church plant from our congregation. For years, it has been a struggling ministry with little or no contact in the neighborhood. It has also had very little contact with us as a congregation. We are changing all of this and some from our church body will make up the core group for this new church plant in the near future. Pastor Chris Easton and this congregation will have access to all of our technology, curriculum, and any other resources that will benefit their ministry.
3. We will continue to promote and engage in professionally produced marketing (printing) for all existing and new ministries and events.
4. We will focus on leading the body to engage in outreach opportunities. These may be as simple as the outreach cards, bottled water giveaways, or free car washes. They will also include a more focused ministry and a planned strategy for practicing social justice, community development, community involvement, etc.

Making Extraordinary People out of Ordinary People

5. We are taking steps to “plus” the already successful Sunday Morning Celebration. I think there are things we can do that will make this time a more meaningful ministry. These include: rearranging the seating for the services (other than second service), involving more people in ministry from the platform to the parking lot (and every ministry in between).
6. We are going to emphasize our core values. We believe that every Christ-follower should have a ministry. Often people are not involved because they have not been asked, or led to understand how they can use their unique giftedness. One of the ways we will address this is to strengthen the requirement for membership.
7. We will be ready if and when a Saturday evening service is needed in the future. This service, along with the first and third service on Sunday, will provide childcare and/or children’s ministry. This will take a lot of commitment on the part of the body. We are moving toward an environment of service. We must take steps to implement a capital campaign to address the needs of this building as well as the securing of other property in the immediate neighborhood. We will continue to monitor the spiritual growth and discipleship of the body. This growth will lead to other ministries around town, (compassion centers, a coffee house, youth centers, counseling, etc.) Eventually it will lead to church plants, and maybe even the building or acquiring of a bigger facility.
8. Creating an atmosphere of serving our community is a top priority. This is basic discipleship and we must address this glaring need. Small groups have played a role and will continue to be an emphasis, but because of the nature of many of the de-churched people who attend and are seeking to join this church, we must help them come to understand Christianity and its focus.

Jesus said that we were to teach people to obey all that He commanded. Discipleship has always come with some pretty high demands and to be faithful and good stewards of the Word of God, we must teach the people who are coming to Newark Nazarene.

I am not interested in leading us to a place of large debt at this time. Every opportunity that we have explored is beyond what we can do at this time without shifting our vision from ministry to mortgages.

Conclusion

I know that this has been a long time in coming but I am at peace for the first time in months. I know what we have to do, and we as a staff know the direction we need to lead. Most people will understand this vision for ministry, but it would be very unusual for everyone to be on board, especially at first. I thank you for entrusting me with the role of lead pastor. We are moving forward.

We have many things to address, but it is clear that there is a path for us to follow. I invite you to join along on this journey.

A Follower's Life

Membership at Newark Church of the Nazarene

This membership class was started as a result of phenomenal growth in our church and the consistent interest expressed by new people in becoming members. We soon realized that many of these individuals were totally unchurched and in needed basic teaching on what it means to be a Christ follower.

By the end of these 12 weeks, they are ready to stand in front of the church and introduce themselves and briefly share where they are or will be serving in the church ministries. For more information you can contact our church at www.NewarkNaz.org

Wes Humble, Lead Pastor

SECTION 1: LIFE IN CHRIST

SESSION 1: Who Is Jesus? (Part 1)

SESSION 2: Who Is Jesus? (Part 2)

These first two sessions deal with the authenticity of Christ's identity based on a biblical foundation. Time is also spent on the history of the Bible. There is also an opportunity for people to individually evaluate who Christ is in their lives.

SESSION 3: What a Christian?

This section takes a deeper look into the personal relationship with God made available through Jesus Christ.

SESSION 4: The Lordship of Christ

This class is devoted to introducing the concept of the Lordship of Christ in a Christ follower's life. We use this time to do an initial exploration of sanctification as well.

SECTION 2: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

SESSION 5: Who Is the Holy Spirit?

This class is designed to introduce the Holy Spirit as a force in our spiritual lives. We also explore the idea of being filled with the Spirit.

SESSION 6: Lifestyle in the Spirit

Lifestyle in the Spirit spends time in the study of the fruits of the Spirit. This is a hands-on class and includes using real fruit and challenging them to make up a fruit salad and then share the ingredients and their significance.

SESSION 7: Understanding Spiritual Gifts

We supplement this class with a spiritual gifts inventory with DISC personality overviews. This is published by The Institute for Motivational Living, Inc. Each participant seeks to discover and understand their uniqueness in Christ.

SESSION 8: Sharing Your Spiritual Journey

This class is a time for reflection and partaking in communion together. Each participant is invited to share part of their personal spiritual journey. This gives them the opportunity to be comfortable in sharing their faith.

SECTION 3: Life in the Community

SESSION 9: Keys to God's Heart

This is a teaching about spiritual disciplines. These keys or disciplines are presented as a way to connect with God. They are considered to be a means to an end and an essential part of spiritual growth.

SESSION 10: Organism or Organization?

We use this section to talk about the church. We introduce the participants to the International Church of the Nazarene using a video from the UCME. They also learn about our local church mission and vision.

SESSION 11: Knowing God's Call

In this session, the future members are invited to listen to a prepared CD talking them through four different prayer stations. By the end of this session, they will have determined where God is calling them to serve in the church.

SESSION 12: Where Will I Serve?

This last session is a time of sharing. We eat together and each participant is asked to tell the class where God is calling them to serve. This is a very positive time for everyone including those who have taught the different classes.

A Follower's Life was adapted from a membership class at Ginghamburg Church. It is authored by Carolyn Slaughter and Sherry Douglas.

Newark Church of the Nazarene

Mission Statements and Vision Statements

The mission statement of our church is simple and clear:

Leading others into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Our vision for ministry is defined by the 3 C's:

NewarkNaz 3 C's

Celebration: We believe that to have an effective community, we must commit to a time of weekly celebration. At these celebrations, you will experience authentic worship and challenging biblical teaching on issues that are important to you today. We are a church that is fluid...adjusting our methods along the way to more effectively be the Church to our community.

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As a church we embrace eight core values. These values define the internal culture of the church.

Eight Core Values

*...are the application of biblical truth through the unique personality
of Newark Church of the Nazarene*

Authenticity

As “a real place for real people” we believe we can’t be what God has called us to be if we play games with each other. Whether it’s what happens on the platform, within our small groups, serving teams or in our homes, we need to be able to share our faults and weaknesses and not fake it. That’s authenticity, just being real.

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