



# Recipes for New Worshiping Communities

Over 90 “recipes” you can cook up to share  
with a world hungering for God’s love!

# Recipes for the First 18 Months

All of the recipes have been written by people who have already led a group of people to become a new faith community; they are written by practitioners. All of us wish that we had had some recipes to help guide us during the first 18 months of our service to start a new church. We believe that, like recipes, some of the cards in this box will connect with you and some will not. Some of the recipes you will need to try for the sake of health and others for dessert – something sweet to add to your community's life. Not every topic will apply to you nor attract you because your taste, context, and needs are unique.

Our prayer is that God will use this box of recipes for the

First 18 Months of a new faith community to guide you and bless your work for God's kingdom.

## **How to use this resource:**

Go through the recipes and pull out the ones that speak to you.

Prioritize the cards - which ones you will do now, this month, this year.

Try out the recipes that God's Spirit places on your heart. May God bless you as you are a blessing to others. Cook well.

If you would like to download a copy of the Recipes go to [www.Presbyinnovate.com](http://www.Presbyinnovate.com) or [www.onethousandone.org](http://www.onethousandone.org). If you would like to order a set of cards contact the office of Evangelism and Church Growth, Presbyterian Church (USA) 888-728-7228 ext 5247.

There seems to be at least ten topics that rise to the top for starting a new worshiping community. The recipes are broken down into those ten topics. Consider them like food groups. You cannot concentrate on one area at the expense of the others, yet all of us naturally gravitate towards certain food groups in our everyday diet. We encourage you to consider a balanced diet. But do not panic if one area is stronger in your community than others; every community is a little out of balance. The out-of-balance for your community might be exactly what God wants for you at this time. The ten topics are not hierarchal. They fall naturally into a wheel.



# What Recipe Would You Like to Share?

We would love to have you share one of your own recipes on one of the topics included in this set:

Mission of God

The Missionary's Personal Life

Worship

Money

Systematic Community Care

Denomination

Discipleship

Community Outreach

Ministry Practices

Prayer

If you are willing to share a recipe, email [Brian@RiversideChurch.com](mailto:Brian@RiversideChurch.com).

We will continue to collect and share recipes to help all of us be more faithful and true to the Mission of God.

No one involved in this projects has taken credit for any of the recipes included in this box because our only mission is to serve God. We hope that those who have written these recipes will both be blessed by sharing and be a blessing to those doing the work of starting something new about spreading the Good News of Jesus.

## Need a Coach?

We have trained new church development coaches from different regions and cultures with experience in urban and suburban ministries.

We would love to get you connected to a coach to help you with your new worshiping community.

A coach is not someone who will tell you what you should do. Instead, a coach can come alongside you as you seek to discern the way forward in your context. A coach can provide you the margins to reflect and discern God's agenda for this ministry amidst the chaos and constant decision-making that is the nature of church planting.

Contact [Brian@RiversideChurch.com](mailto:Brian@RiversideChurch.com) to get more information on NCD Coaching.

Be prepared to share a little bit about your project and what you are looking for in a coaching relationship.

We will work to find a coach that is well-suited for your situation.

# 1001

## WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

# 1001 New Worshiping Communities

The Holy Spirit has ignited a movement that has called us to launch 1001 new worshiping communities in the next decade. This movement is faithful to the Gospel, which says “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Mt. 28:19) and has the potential to transform the whole body of Christ.

Fresh expressions of faith renew and revitalize established churches by reconnecting them to the mission of God in their neighborhood, while fanning into flame the missional Spirit of God in the local congregation. That excitement washes back into the life of the established church. New Worshiping Communities have the power to bridge traditional dichotomies within the body. This is a kairos moment God has provided for the revitalization of the whole church.

Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the Harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field” (Luke 10:2 (NIV)). Clegg and Bird (Lost in America) say, “The un-churched population in the US is so extensive that, if it were a nation it would be the 5th most populated nation on the planet. Thus, our un-churched population is the largest mission field in the English speaking world.”

Leaders of new worshiping communities are called to move into communities, build relationships of mutuality, and work and pray for the well-being of the community. We hope that these Recipe Cards will help you do just that!

Visit these websites for additional resources to help you on the journey: [www.onethousandone.org](http://www.onethousandone.org),  
[www.presbyinnovate.com](http://www.presbyinnovate.com) (Presbyterian Centers for New Church Innovation) and  
[www.onethousandone.org/1001Communities/media/1001-Media/pdf/starting-new-churches.pdf](http://www.onethousandone.org/1001Communities/media/1001-Media/pdf/starting-new-churches.pdf)

**CARD**  
**1**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**INTRODUCTION**

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“As the Father has sent me so I send you.”  
John 20:21 (NRSV)

Across the arc of scripture, in different times and contexts, God sent people to people for the sake of people. As sent ones, we must open our lives to the mystery of God’s movement in this time and place, among a particular people. What unique elements will comprise God’s work here? Who is God calling us to be? What’s our missional fingerprint? Let the following cards season your imagination with some ingredients of God’s call to start a new church.

**REFLECTION**

God saw the suffering of Israel in slavery and sent Moses. God saw a lavishly rich people, oblivious to those in need, and sent Amos. God saw others, like sheep without a shepherd, and sent Jesus.

- What qualities seem prominent among those in the area to which you believe God is calling you?
- What implications does this have for a new, “sent” faith community?

**ACTION**

Ask locals to identify the primary gathering place(s) in your community, then spend an afternoon (or other appropriate time) there each week for three weeks. Ask God to open your eyes to the people and needs of this community.

**CARD**  
**2**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**MOVING INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

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“The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood.”

John 1:14 (MSG)

Jesus frequented houses of worship but that wasn't his primary focus. He spent far more time on the roads and in villages, sharing meals and thoughtful conversation, unpacking holy intersections with everyday life, offering friendship, and extending compassion. He moved into the neighborhood. He noticed the people around him. He touched the wounded. He challenged the smug. He embraced the unlikely. He ventured into the messiness of unkempt lives.

We are tempted to focus exclusively on the mechanics of “religion” ... on performance, ritual or vibes that center on the house of worship. We will do well to “get out of the office” instead, to move out into the neighborhood and see what God is up to in the avenues of real life.

**REFLECTION**

- Where do you spend most of your time each day?
- Are there parts of your daily work that you could do out in the neighborhood?

**ACTION**

Set a goal for the number of hours per week you want to be out of the office. This week keep track of the number of hours you spend in and out of the office and try to meet your goal.





**CARD**  
**3**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD** **STICK WITH GOD'S MISSION ... NO MATTER WHAT!**

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Many of our “mission thieves” try to steal the mission with good intentions because they simply cannot see what God is up to at this time. The reality is that we, the leaders of some new work, can be the ones who take the mission off course. Our need to be successful, liked, edgy, or accepted can lead us to be stumbling blocks to the mission. Remember, too many cooks can ruin the pot. There can only be one Lord of the church.

The pressure to do anything else besides God’s purpose for this people, in this place, at this time, is something every new work of the kingdom of God must overcome. Jesus had to tell Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” (Matthew 16:23 NRSV)

Even our best leaders will occasionally work to get us off the course of doing the mission of God, especially the hard, sacrificial work. People who have grown up in a church often cannot imagine God working in new ways. And, people who have rejected the church or never attended a church bring baggage of what church should be that is often contrary to the calling and the sending of God to a new people in a new way.

**REFLECTION**

- Can you state clearly the purpose of this new work?
- How are your own personal needs impacting this mission (e.g. the need to be liked, the need for success, etc.).

**ACTION**

Write out: 1) Who God is sending you to, and 2) What God is asking you to do. (See the booklet “Starting New Churches” to expand on this question.

**CARD**  
**4**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**PERSON OF PEACE**

You are not the beginning of this work. God has been working in the lives of people you are now sent to for a long time. If you have been sent by God into your community, God has already been preparing the community for you to come. Look for people who have been prepared for your coming. Look for people of peace. Jesus instructed his followers being sent out into new towns with these words:

“Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house!’  
And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person.”  
Luke 10:5-6 (NRSV)

Throughout the Bible there have been people of peace who are open to what God is doing, even if they cannot name God for themselves. Think of Rahab who welcomed the spies, the woman by the well who gave Jesus some water, and Lydia in Philippi. Take the view that the mission of God would be fulfilled by you in seeking and partnering with the people God has already prepared. Finding the “people of peace” rather than seeing the mission as a new ministry or program, will ensure that you are doing kingdom work rather than busy work.

**REFLECTION**

- Have you found a person of peace in your community?
- If not, what will you do to look for a person of peace?
- Or, if you know your person of peace, what does it look like to “stay with” him or her?

**ACTION**

Write out an action plan to “be with” your person of peace. Put that plan into action.

**CARD**  
**5**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**THE SUCCESS OF THE MISSION**

The Book of Acts tells us that Jesus had only 120 followers at the end of three years but after one sermon Peter added 3,000 new followers. Today we would ask Jesus to consider attending one of Peter's teaching seminars because he obviously is a person who gets results. We miss the mission of God many times because we are centered on results. The problem is we do not control the results. We cannot create a new community of God followers. Following and responding to God are acts of the Holy Spirit and of a people's openness to the Spirit working in their lives. We can introduce, implore, show, encourage, but we cannot create results. Jesus himself was not about reaping great results:

"He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Mark 8:34 (NRSV)

The mission of God is not results based. It is based on faithful obedience to God's leading. A century ago a group of missionaries entered a town and were beheaded by the leadership of that community. A second group went to that town and did not live to see any results either; they, too, were killed for being outsiders trying to introduce foreign influences. A third and then a fourth group experienced the same results as the first two groups. Finally when the fifth group came the leadership of the town asked, "Why do you keep coming?" The fifth team was able to explain about the love of God that is of such value to share they would be willing to die to share it. That was the start of a very successful movement that spread Christianity rapidly through central Korea. Success of the mission is not results but faithfulness. Without the first four groups the fifth group would not have seen any results. I pray you are the fifth group in your new mission, but hope that you have the faithfulness of the first four.

**REFLECTION**

- How do you define success for the new work you are called to be a part of starting?

**ACTION**

Write yourself a short note that defines faithfulness to your new mission. It should be independent of attendance rates, offering amounts, or number of ministries. Review the note when you feel you are seeing great results or when you are seeing no results.

**CARD  
6**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**CREATE A CULTURE OF ADAPTABILITY**

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You are leading a new mission, but remember that many new missions are irrelevant just 10 years after they begin. The world around us has changed and it continues to change at a rapid rate. The ministry, service, action – and how you communicate – must change every year. Last year’s great thing is just one new technology away from being irrelevant. The church, as a group of people, often seems to adjust very slowly to the world. By the time the latest and greatest technique for going into the community is being taught, that community has already changed and that technique no longer applies.

We cannot accurately predict future trends and what the new realities of our community will be, but we can begin to teach adaptability to the people who join a new mission. Adaptability is love. Loving a child must be expressed differently when the child is 1 year old compared to when that child is 21. We adapt because we love. This is a lesson we just don’t teach enough.

**REFLECTION**

- What defines your community of faith?
- What ministry, program, or activities would be hard for you to stop doing?

**ACTION**

Schedule a time with your key ministry leaders each year to evaluate your ministry program. Ask, “Why should we continue \_\_\_\_\_ ministry?” for each ministry you conduct.

**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**WHO IS GOD SENDING US TO MEET AND  
IMPACT WITH THE LOVE OF CHRIST?**

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While we are called to love all God's people, God can and often does call us to reach out to a specific group of people with Christ's love. Paul had a call to the Gentiles. Peter was called to the Jews. Mother Teresa was called to the poor of Calcutta. Each call was unique and required a different approach to ministry. Who are you and your team being called to reach with Christ's love?

**REFLECTION**

People come in all flavors: rural, urban, minority, immigrant, young adults, senior citizens, international, punk, country, poor, rich, etc.

- What flavor is God calling you to put in your recipe for the kingdom?

**ACTION**

At your next team meeting have everyone write down a description of the type of person they hope will be a part of this new community. Collect responses and read them aloud.

**CARD**  
**8**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**LOVE THOSE GOD PUTS IN YOUR MIDST!**

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An important note of caution for the first year of a new work: Do not be discouraged if at first you do not seem to be reaching the group God is calling you to reach. Always be willing to love whomever God puts in your midst! Truly authentic ministry will reach a broad spectrum of people no matter who you focus on. While it is good to focus on one group to help define what ministry approaches you need to take, just don't let that focus blind you to the people God is sending to you.

**REFLECTION**

- What are some unique ministry possibilities with the group you are being called to reach?

**ACTION**

Spend a day, yes an entire day, at a local park, meeting place, or coffee shop making observations of all the different types of people who come there.

**CARD**  
**9**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?**  
**WHAT ARE OUR MOTIVES?**

At the height of his ministry, John the Baptizer yielded his ego for the sake of God's kingdom. Looking at Jesus, he announced, "He must increase and I must decrease." Are you willing for this work to advance, even if you're not part of it? Are you compelled by God's Spirit rather than human definitions of success?

Even among the best of us, motives get fuzzy. Are they of divine calling or personal drive? Discernment or selfish ambition? To unmask ungodly motives, conduct a fierce inventory of those things that energize you about this opportunity: Are you excited to be your own boss, to do what other churches wouldn't "let you do"? Do you secretly desire to be a "religious celebrity" or respected leader or to get credit for the next "cool thing"?

Do you possess an unshakable hunch that God dreams of a new work in this place? Amongst these people? Are you called to play an integral role in that movement? Does the faith community, a governing council, a circle of passionate Christ-followers, share your conviction? Do others confirm your unique gifting for this expression of God's kingdom?

**REFLECTION**

Could you walk away from this call? If so, why? If not, why not? If you were not "center stage" in this vision, would you find it as compelling?

**ACTION**

Carve out a three-hour block of time to be quiet and apart. Determine that you will maintain a posture of emotional openness. For example, only asking God silent questions rather than making statements or petitions.



**CARD  
10**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**WHAT ARE YOUR CORE VALUES?**

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While a recent survey of our church revealed that we were a diverse group in our religious and Biblical understanding with a wide range of conservatives and liberals in our community, it also revealed that we were united in our core values. The core values of our church for liberals and conservatives were our value on communion and our work in compassion. Sharing these core values has helped us identify who we are and has defined our mission beyond differences of opinion within the community.

While there are many flavors of what to value in the church of Christ ... social justice, community outreach, reaching the un-churched, feeding the poor, sharing God's word, reconciliation, and theological reflection ... it is equally important to reflect on the core values that will hold your community together in the mission of God.

**REFLECTION**

- What words or phrases identify your core values as a new faith community?
- Does your mission statement express your core values?

**ACTION**

After discerning your values, do something to make them a reality! If your value is feeding the poor do something to feed the poor!





**CARD  
11**

Recipe for **MISSION OF GOD**

**UNDERSTANDING THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

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We can easily become frustrated and get off course when we come into the field of harvest with a predetermined course of action. Do we really understand who it is that we are called to work with? Our response may be different with different people in our demographic.

Jesus went to Bethany after Lazarus had become ill and died. He met Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, and dealt with each differently. Though they each said essentially the same thing to Jesus, to Martha he gave a firm theological lesson. Mary, he joined in weeping. (John 11:17-37) Jesus knew what the needs of each woman were. He knew his target audience!

**REFLECTION**

- Have you really spent the time to know the community wherein your call resides?
- Will the worshiping community meet the needs of the target audience?

**ACTION**

- Meet with community leaders (officials, school representatives) to discuss and learn the nature and make-up of the community.
- Meet with a local newspaper representative to learn more about the community to which you have been called.
- Walk the community to see what you find about its nature.

**CARD  
1**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**INTRODUCTION**

“They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ He said, ‘I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.’

Genesis 3:8-10 (NRSV)

Your life, your actions, your relationships, your habits and hobbies all are crucial to starting a new worshiping community. The Presbyterian New Church Coaches have found that the point of greatest failure in starting a new church is the lead missionary’s personal life. Integrity of what you say and what you do will impact a generation one way or the other. It is not accidental that scripture says that more is expected of teachers and leaders because what we do will directly impact others. Unfortunately it is not rare that a life changing community of faith implodes around the personal life of the lead missionary. We all try and hide our “apple eating” but God is not fooled. God asks, “Where are you?” in the most profound and soul-searching way. That question, “Where are you?” is the most important question to you. People can thrive through bad plans, poor music, less than inspiring teaching, but they rarely thrive when the lead missionary’s life is a lie and she has been hiding from God. Your honest answer to that question is quite possibly the most important criteria to determine if you are beginning a life-giving or a soul-destroying community.

**REFLECTION**

Write out your answer to God’s question to Adam and Eve, “Where are you?” Really?

**ACTION**

Share your answer to your reflection with someone you trust.

**CARD  
2**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**THE WAY IS UNCERTAIN**

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“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value.  
The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”  
Galatians 5:6 (NIV)

Often church planting can fill you with uncertainty and doubt. Most often it can arise from worrying about what's next. What do I do now?

When we get caught up in the details and struggles of the journey, we quickly forget what is most important: faith expressing itself in love. It does not read faith expressing itself in anxiety, brainstorming, or numbers of people in worship. Faith is expressed in love above all else!

Jesus was always on the move, ready to offer hope, mercy, and love to those he met along the way. He simply allowed his faith in the Father to express itself in his love for others.

**REFLECTION**

- What non-essentials (circumcision) are you getting caught up in at this stage of this ministry?
- Where is faith truly expressing itself in love in the community?

**ACTION**

Read all of Galatians 5 aloud to your team. Reflect back to each other what you hear.

**CARD**  
**3**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**LOVE IS THE POINT**

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“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35 (NRSV)

In three sentences, Jesus chalks out the framework for a life of discipleship. He describes love as both a playbook, a new commandment that gives direction and focus, and a jersey, the trait that reveals our corporate identity.

As we seek God's direction for a new kingdom work, we must ask of each potential path: How does this action embody love? How does it produce love for and among the community? Does this look like Jesus or does it look like me or my group on the large screen?

**REFLECTION**

- What is your “jersey?”
- What would need to change in what and how you do things for your jersey to be love?

**ACTION**

Review your schedule for this week. What is the one task you most dread or find the most mundane? What can you do to show love in that task? Do that!

**CARD  
4**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**DISAPPOINTMENT**

Many of us who are called to begin something new are wired to grow things, see things created, and to be a part of progress. Few of us are very comfortable when nothing is growing, when what is created is short lived, or when, instead of progress, we see things moving backward. We can learn a lot about ourselves, our motives, and our service when things are not going well.

To live with the belief and self image that when things are growing you are good and worthwhile and when things are not growing you are a not worthwhile is to replace God's call with your ego. God sometimes asks people to do things that will seem very successful; at other times he asks people to do things with seemingly few or no results. A true servant is ready to do either if commanded. Habakkuk was a true servant of God. Without any relief in sight, the book of Habakkuk ends with the words below. May they be your words, too:

“Though the fig tree does not blossom, and no fruit is on the vines; though the produce of the olive fails, and the fields yield no food; though the flock is cut off from the fold, and there is no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation.”

Habakkuk 3:17-18 (NRSV)

**REFLECTION**

Answer the question, “Why do you do what you do?” List your reasons, both positive and negative.

**ACTION**

Find someone you trust and share your responses to the question.

**CARD  
5**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**I AM NOT THE SOURCE**

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“Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.

Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”

John 15:4-5 (NRSV)

In these verses we find the blueprint of the Christian life. You are not the source of life. It is not your energy and vitality that bring life and fruitfulness. The Christian life is a dependent life. You are not the source; instead You are the conduit for the energy of life to flow from Jesus through you in abundance for the good of the world. Jesus is the source.

### **REFLECTION**

- Is your work as a missionary “my work for God”? Or is it “God working through me”? “My work for God” places the emphasis on my skill, my ability, my success; it focuses on what I do, what I can control, fix or manage in my part of the vineyard. “God working through me” requires a different stance, that of conduit, that of being available to the source. It requires not holding too tightly to my opinions, but instead discovering that that presence flowing through me accomplishes far more than I could ask or imagine.

### **ACTION**

Where is God asking you to yield to the ideas of another? Look at your calendar for the coming week; schedule an hour of silence to listen for God’s direction. How could silent listening be more a part of your life of prayer?

**CARD  
6**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**LOVE THOSE CLOSEST TO YOU**

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“Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.”  
Romans 12:9-10 (NRSV)

Planting a new church is hard. It's all-consuming. It asks things of you and your family that can cause emotional strain and resentment. The line between family and ministry is often blurry. This reality can create unique pressures that take a toll on the whole family.

You are not called to sacrifice your family for the sake of this ministry. Your role as a husband/wife/parent is just as much a calling as your calling to lead this new church. And the quality of your relationships at home has a direct bearing on this new community you are forming.

**REFLECTION**

- Are you giving your family the leftovers of the love and energy you are primarily pouring into this new church?
- How could you live out Romans 12:9-10 with your family, even in the midst of the pressures of church planting?

**ACTION**

Remember that your family is sacrificing for this ministry as much as you are. Ask them what is exciting about being a part of this new church adventure and what is hard about it. Listen without defending this ministry. Plan some fun time with your family. And go do it!

**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**GET AWAY BEFORE YOU RUN AWAY!**

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“In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.”  
Mark 1:35 (NIV)

In “Monty Python and the Holy Grail,” whenever King Arthur and his knights face immediate danger they turn their heels and begin shouting “Run away!” as they do just that! One of the most immediate dangers that we face as NCD pastors is being overwhelmed to the point of feeling like all we want to do is turn heel and run in the opposite direction as fast as we can! In part to guard against this tendency, Jesus intentionally “got away” to be with the Father on numerous occasions. If Jesus did this, how much more should we take time to “get away” before we end up “running away” from the very thing God is calling us to do.

**REFLECTION**

While Jesus did often go out on his own to pray he also frequently took others with him. James, Peter, and John joined him for both the transfiguration and in Gethsemane. We can assume there were other times they went with him as well.

**ACTION**

Form a monthly retreat group with several other pastors in your area. Find a retreat center where you can go and meet for one day each month. Take this as a time of prayer and solitude. Meet for Morning Prayer at 9 a.m., which can be led by someone in the group, or, ideally, by someone at the retreat center. Then take the next several hours to be silent. Do some spiritual reading. Walk around in the outdoors. Take a nap! Just “be” for a few hours each month. Gather again at 1 or 2 p.m. You could share a meal or possibly fast. Share in some prayer time together. Leave by 3 p.m. You will be amazed at how just a 6-hour retreat every month will help you face those run away scenarios.



**CARD  
8**

Recipe for **THE MISSIONARY'S  
PERSONAL LIFE**

**DO YOU ENJOY WHAT YOU ARE DOING?**

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“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.”  
Philippians 4:4 (NRSV)

Sandra L. Brown says that joy comes when you make peace with who you are, where you are, why you are, and whose you are. When you need nothing more than the love of God to bring peace, then you have settled into the abiding joy that is not rocked by external factors. It's not rocked by anything.

You belong to a loving God who wants you to find the joy of serving others and sharing His love with the world through your words and actions.

**REFLECTION**

God wants you to feel the immense joy of doing what you were made to do. God wants you to enjoy life!

- Are you enjoying where you are and what you are doing?
- Do other people see joy in you?

**ACTION**

Write an action plan for bringing more joy to your work and service. Consider your health and your health practices. Consider your time off. Consider your motives for why you do what you do. Share your plan with a close friend who will keep you accountable to it by asking monthly, “How is it going? Are you enjoying what you are doing?”

**CARD**  
**1**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**INTRODUCTION**

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.  
Psalm 100:1-2 (NRSV)

What is the proper place of worship in your community? One new worshipping community may do little else but worship, investing the leadership’s time and energy almost entirely in worship that is a powerful witness to the world around them. Another new worshipping community may invest almost none of its leadership’s time nor energy into worship. They believe worship is what the family does together and therefore does not have to be “performance” quality. Instead, their witness to the world around them is how much they invest in service, aid, and care. Worship is one of the areas of starting a new worshipping community in which there is no right way for everyone.

**REFLECTION**

Considering how God has wired you, what defines “worship” for you? Now consider where your new worshipping community is located or the people you desire to reach.

- Would your definition of “good worship” fit that of this community?

**ACTION**

Write down your plan for worship.

- Where should it be held?
- How much of your community resources, both time and financial, should be dedicated to worship?
- What are the elements of worship that need to be included?

**CARD**  
**2**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**I HOPE YOU DANCE**

---

“David, ceremonially dressed in priest’s linen, danced with great abandon before God.”  
2 Samuel 6:14 (MSG)

You are leading a new worshiping community. In your dreams, when you picture this community at worship, what do you see? Remember the image of King David dancing with all his might as the ark returned to Jerusalem?

Gratitude to God was expressed with uninhibited joy and energy. David’s worship was so focused on God’s goodness that he became unaware of those around him.

**REFLECTION**

- Would your worshiping community be comfortable including non-self conscious worshippers like David?
- What is an appropriate posture for worship?
- C.S. Lewis wrote about the expression of praise being its necessary completion. How can you encourage joyful expression in worship?
- How can you serve as an architect for this new worshiping community?

**ACTION**

Spend a day this month alone with the Lord with the goal of returning with a working blueprint for the culture of worship in your church. Read the Psalms of Ascents (120-134) to shape your thinking.

**CARD  
3**Recipe for **WORSHIP****WORSHIP AS A LIFESTYLE**

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes, ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

Acts 2:46-47 (NIV)

After Pentecost, the community of believers enjoyed worship together on a daily basis as they devoted themselves to prayer, learning from the apostles, and breaking bread. But eventually their public worship at the temple’s courts was taken into their homes as they shared with those in need so everyone had everything in common. This became a public testament of unity, love, and compassion for one another which brought two things upon the church: “the favor of all the people” and many newcomers. When the church takes the public worship experience and lives a daily life of worship through acts of compassion and love, others will begin to believe and will want to be part of the church. Living worship as a lifestyle speaks louder than words.

**REFLECTION**

- Does your community of believers consider worship a lifestyle or just a public gathering for singing and praying?

**ACTION**

Preach a sermon on worship as a lifestyle and commission your congregants to walk the talk during the week by practicing an act of compassion. Then have them share the experience as part of next week’s public worship.

**CARD  
4**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**RECOGNIZE COMMUNITY RITUALS**

---

Read John 2:1-12 and Acts 17:16-34

Deep in every human heart is longing for relationship with the eternal. Deep in every human ritual is the expression of that longing. Jesus knew that. He didn't run away from human events like weddings, dinners or gatherings. Paul knew that. He walked around the cities with a discerning heart. As you engage your community and walk among its people, look beneath the rituals for the longing. Connect the longing of your people, the ways in which longing is expressed, and the worship rituals of your emerging community.

**REFLECTION**

Describe your vision for the ideal worship experience ... setting, type of music, how prayers are done, who leads what parts, what people see, hear, touch, smell and taste.

**ACTION**

Spend a day in your community. Ask yourself if your ideal worship service you described above would make sense to the people you see. Would it connect with the longings of the people in your community?

**CARD  
5**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

## CREATING WORSHIP THROUGH THE BODY OF CHRIST

---

“How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.”  
1 Corinthians 14:26 (NKJV)

Worship in the early church was something that occurred as the Holy Spirit spoke to and through the members of the Body. Involving others in the leading of worship increases the likelihood that it will fit the culture of those with whom you are called to share the gospel. How rich worship becomes when believers are given an opportunity to use the gifts they have been given by the Spirit to celebrate the presence of God.

### REFLECTION

- Do you pray for the Lord to raise up those who have gifts that can contribute to the worship in your community?
- Who in your fellowship has gifts in the arts, creative thinking, or a heart for a worship?

### ACTION

Invite some folks to be a part of a Worship Design Team that could help in planning worship. Share with the Team some future sermon themes for it to consider how worship could be developed in line with them.

**CARD**  
**6**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**WHAT HELPS ME TO WORSHIP**

---

“But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

John 4:23-24 (NRSV)

We know that the woman at the well was trying to deflect attention from herself to anything but her. Jesus had struck a nerve and was getting too personal. So she decided to talk about worship! She might as well have asked “Jesus, what kind of music is appropriate for real worship?” or “Jesus, shouldn’t we recite a creed every week?” or perhaps, “Jesus, is the sermon before the offering or at the end so everyone will remember what I said?” But, Jesus will have none of this. Instead, he gets us to the center of what is important. Worship is not about where, when or how, but about having your whole self in it. Stay centered.

**REFLECTION**

- Can you remember a time when you worshipped in “spirit and truth”? What was it like?
- Can you name the things that happened and describe why?
- What things are transferable to your current context? What is not?

**ACTION**

Incorporate some of the things that you’ve experienced in worship in the past that have helped you worship in spirit and truth. Keep changing this up! Don’t settle on too strict a formula or it will become your “right way” of doing worship. Build adaptability into your worship planning.

**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**PREACHING — MORE THAN A SERMON**

“We met on Sunday to worship and celebrate the Master’s Supper. Paul addressed the congregation. Our plan was to leave first thing in the morning, but Paul talked on, way past midnight. We were meeting in a well-lighted upper room. A young man named Eutychus was sitting in an open window. As Paul went on and on, Eutychus fell sound asleep and toppled out the third-story window. When they picked him up, he was dead. Paul went down, stretched himself on him, and hugged him hard. “No more crying,” he said. “There’s life in him yet.” Then Paul got up and served the Master’s Supper. And went on telling stories of the faith until dawn! On that note, they left—Paul going one way, the congregation another, leading the boy off alive, and full of life themselves.”  
Acts 20:7-12 (MSG)

If someone were to die of boredom during your sermon, could you resurrect them?! This is just a dramatic means for us to consider that maybe worship isn’t all about preaching. Though it proved effective for Paul, we can miss out on all the other senses present if we simply rely on people’s hearing.

**REFLECTION**

- How many senses are being used each week in your worship?
- Are you leaning heavily on the senses of sight and hearing?
- Is your worship mostly words even if it is musical?

**ACTION**

Make it a challenge for you and your people to engage all five senses (sight, smell, touch, taste, hearing) each week during worship. Can you do it without it being the same each week? (It is a case for having communion weekly.)



**CARD**  
**8**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**THE OFFERING — MORE THAN MONEY**

“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.”

Romans 12:1-2 (MSG)

We know that when the Word is preached we are called upon to respond with some act of gratitude. We know that the giving of money is absolutely needed in our new church, but it doesn’t even scratch the surface of what God is asking. A friend recently commented that, “Money is a poor substitute for me crawling up into the offering plate!”

**REFLECTION**

- How many ways do you give people to respond when the Word is preached? Consider having several ways for people to respond to the Word preached. Maybe they can have the opportunity to sponsor children through World Vision. Or commit to going to a city council meeting on a night when justice issues are being discussed. Maybe it’s praying for someone.

**ACTION**

With a team, create several ways people can give themselves as an offering to God in their everyday lives – including giving their money.

**CARD**  
**9**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**TAKING IT WITH YOU**

---

“Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.”  
Romans 12:2 (MSG)

Worship doesn’t happen on just one day, in one hour. We are intended to live worshipful lives. Sunday is a day to remember and remind us of what God is up to in our lives. It is an encouragement and a correction to us so that we can reorient our existence, get back to the One who made us and rejoice in what we see God doing.

**REFLECTION**

- How do you carry Sunday with you throughout the week?
- What things do you offer to those in worship so that they might worship daily?

**ACTION**

Create a “Spiritual Offices of the Day” along the lines of a monastic order. Have your people set alarms on their phones/computers one, two, three or more times a day as a reminder to practice certain spiritual disciplines. For instance, set an alarm at 10:02 am each day. Pray Luke 10:2: “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the field. For the field is ripe and the laborers are few.” You can extend worship beyond Sunday. This you can change up for different seasons and sermon series.

**CARD  
10**

Recipe for **WORSHIP**

**SIMPLIFY – MORE GIFTS THAN THE PROFESSIONAL**

---

“As the day declined, the Twelve said, “Dismiss the crowd so they can go to the farms or villages around here and get a room for the night and a bite to eat. We’re out in the middle of nowhere. ‘You feed them,’ Jesus said. They said, ‘We couldn’t scrape up more than five loaves of bread and a couple of fish—unless, of course, you want us to go to town ourselves and buy food for everybody.’ (There were more than five thousand people in the crowd.)  
Luke 9:12-13 (MSG)

Scarcity and abundance are huge themes in the Bible. Often it is humanity’s view that God has left us with scarce resources in the face of huge challenges. God is often telling us to trust that there will be provision, and not “just enough,” but abundance. Jesus is clear in this text that we are to use what we’ve been given to address the challenges in front of us. We have enough to do when we do what God asks of us today. God has equipped us fully and completely. Often in new church planting we complain that we have neither this nor that, and if only we had it then we’d be golden. This text suggests we have enough to be faithful today.

**REFLECTION**

- What are the gifts that you have in your congregation right now for worship?
- What if you didn’t have any musicians?
- Consider that worship is not necessarily music. Can you say what worship is?

**ACTION**

Create a worship experience without music – or any other elements you rely on! If worship is the “grateful response of the people of God for the gifts of God” what gifts do you have (loaves and fishes) that God would like to see you use? Get the bakers to bake. Get the actors to act. Simplify it so that it is a collection of offerings.



## Recipe for **MONEY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

“No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Matthew 6:24 (NRSV)

Few of us want to talk to others about money, especially if we are asking people to give their money. While few of us want to talk about it, it is the idol of our age. Money is the reflector of our core values, our priorities, and our hearts. Wars are breaking out over the pain of being in need next to a world of great plenty. Marriages crumble under the pressure of money. Families divide over the issue of money. How can we avoid an issue that is at the center of so much pain in our world? If we believe we are a part of God’s work and mission, how can we not invite people to partner with us? The issue of money is consistently identified as the one issue that those who started a new church wish they had addressed earlier in the life of their community. Money either owns us or we use it to impact the world with the love of Jesus. Don’t let money own your new worshipping community. Talk about it.

### **REFLECTION**

- How you spend money and your attitude towards money are more defining than any mission statement. It is one thing to say, “We are here for the least” and another to create a budget that reflects that. It is one thing to teach people to live within their means and it is another thing for your new worshipping community to model that.
- How does your budget reflect your values and priorities?
- What does your budget really say about your understanding of God?

### **ACTION**

With your key leaders develop a list of concepts that will make up your “Guidance on Money and Finances.” On that list include topics such as:

1. How will you raise the finances needed for your mission?
2. What will you say, or not say, publicly to explain your approach and view towards money?
3. Would you ever borrow money and, if so, for what and how much?
4. What are your priorities when it comes to creating a budget?
5. What rules and practices will your new worshipping community follow when it comes to money?

CARD  
2

Recipe for **MONEY**

**FIRST THINGS FIRST**

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“You shall have no other gods before me.”  
Exodus 20:3 (NIV)

“You cannot serve God and money.”  
Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

Throughout scripture, God gives a consistent message that the only way to find joy, contentment, and freedom is to put God first in our lives. But humans consistently act as if there is another way. All kinds of other things vie for top billing in our lives – our jobs, our passions, our appetites – and especially, our money and our stuff. We live in a culture where money is God, and even people of faith begin to believe that we will be happier, freer, more powerful, more content – if only we have more money.

**REFLECTION**

- What are the most important things in your life?
- What consumes most of your time, energy, and attention?
- What is most important to the life of this congregation?
- When have concerns about money gotten in the way of your focus on God’s call?

**ACTION**

With a small group of others in your community, confess a time when concerns about (or desire for) money and possessions have gotten in the way of your putting God first in your life. When has this congregation focused on money instead of mission? Take turns praying for each other.



CARD  
3

Recipe for **MONEY**

## TELL A STORY: DEVELOPING A NARRATIVE BUDGET

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“When a large crowd was coming together and those from various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable.”  
Luke 8:4 NAS

Jesus frequently taught through stories and parables. In this manner he engaged his audience in a way which drew them in and made them think. Often when we talk of money in church we immediately get a response that is negative or people just tune us out. One way to change this reaction is to develop a Narrative Budget. A Narrative Budget does not just show the facts of where the money goes, but tells the story of how the money is being used for the sake of God’s Kingdom. One method of creating this type of budget is to use your church mission statement. Take each part of the statement and share the story of how it is being lived out in the community. Then assign the total financial cost it takes to make that part of the statement a reality with an explanation of what those costs include, such as percentages of staff salary, facilities use, materials needed, publicity, programmatic cost, etc.

You will find that this budget engages your community in a much deeper way than the traditional “numbers only” approach on paper. People will be more inclined to give and to pledge because they will feel they have a better understanding of how their money is making a difference for the kingdom of God rather than just how the money keeps the lights on in the building!

### REFLECTION

- With your team, talk about your experiences with church budgets and pledge drives. What were the things that worked? What did not work?
- It is crucial to establish good financial practices in the early life of the community. What types of practices do you hope to create?
- How do you think your community would respond to a Narrative Budget?
- For a deeper understanding of Narrative Budget read: [Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate: A New Vision for Financial Stewardship](#)  
by J. Clif Christopher.

### ACTION

- Begin to create or outline a Narrative Budget with your team.

CARD  
4

## Recipe for **MONEY**

**NO EXCUSES**

---

"As the day declined, the Twelve said, 'Dismiss the crowd so they can go to the farms or villages around here and get a room for the night and a bite to eat. We're out in the middle of nowhere.' 'You feed them,' Jesus said.

They said, 'We couldn't scrape up more than five loaves of bread and a couple of fish—unless, of course, you want us to go to town ourselves and buy food for everybody.'"  
Luke 9:12-14 (MSG)

One of the main distractions in a new worshiping community is the money question. It always seems like there is never enough. Many community planters will often lament, complain, or give up because they simply believe they don't have enough to do the work. Focusing on what you don't have instead of what God has provided takes a lot of energy away from the important work of the community. We have to trust that God has provided what we need at this particular time even if we think we need more.

### **REFLECTION**

- What has God provided this community with to accomplish God's mission today?
- How can I expand my understanding of what God has provided beyond money?

### **ACTION**

Reread the feeding of the 5000. Where is Jesus telling you to feed the people, even when you don't see how it can be done with the resources you have? Write down:

- Five new resources you can name that already reside in your community but were never thought of as resources, and
- Two ways that you might release them to do God's mission.



## Recipe for **MONEY**

## **WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS ...**

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“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”  
Matthew 6:21 (NIV)

Nobody trusts people who talk about money, especially in the church. Jesus spoke often, comfortably and directly about money, because people's management of money is a deeply spiritual matter. “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” This saying helps us both to evaluate the location of our heart and to plan for where we will put our love. Looking at our spending tells us where our heart actually is, rather than where we may want it to be. Deciding where to spend and give our money is the opportunity to decide where our heart will be. When you ask people to give to this new work of the Spirit you are asking them to put their heart in it.

### **REFLECTION**

- How are you helping your team/community think about their money and the money of the project?
- If you are hesitant or unable to talk often, comfortably and directly about money, what do you need Christ to transform in you to be able to do so?
- Do people know how their offerings are used? How do you communicate that?
- Do you simply need to learn how to talk about money as a matter of discipleship?
- Where will you/your team get that training? Some good resources are [Not Your Parents' Offering Plate](#) and [www.givingrocket.com](#).

### **ACTION**

Plan to teach/preach on the topic of money. Give people concrete help and guidance when you do this. Start a financial ministry in the community. There are people deeply burdened and in need who could use this help.



CARD  
6

## Recipe for **MONEY**

**RARELY CONTENT**

---

“Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have.”  
Philippians 4:11 (NRSV)

Those of us who are wired to start something new are rarely content. There is always one more thing to do or accomplish. When it comes to money, most of us spend too much time wishing we had just a little more. We justify our constant yearning by identifying all the great things we could do for God if only we had the right funds to buy the latest gadget, or hire one more staff member, or dig one more well, or lease a really cool space, or hire someone to clean up for us, or .... Once we start the list of what we could do with just a little more money, few of us know how to stop, at least on our own. Maybe that is the point. God uses our lack of funds to “stop us.” Maybe what we are planning is not what God desires for our community or for us. Our lack of funds might be God’s way of showing us what not to do or what we need to stop.

### **REFLECTION**

- How content are you with your personal finances?
- How content are you with the finances of your community?
- How content is your leadership with the finances of the community?
- Where there is a lack of contentment there is often a need to make adjustments, to stop doing something.
- If your new worshiping community is stressing over money, maybe it is time to make adjustments in what you are doing.

### **ACTION**

Gather three or four key leaders of your new worshiping community and, as a group, make a list of the ministries that you consider crucial to your community’s God-given mission. What are you funding that is not a part of that list? Are there things God is telling you to “stop” so that you can concentrate on other things? As a group come up with a plan that will allow your community to serve God with what you have, whether much or little.



## Recipe for **MONEY**

## **TEST GOD**

---

“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops.  
Then your barns will be filled to bursting.”  
Proverbs 3:9-10 (NIV)

Money is the area where we always have difficulty believing in the promises of the Lord. But when we begin to trust and see that God is faithful to his promises, we can see the fulfillment of God’s commitment to be our provider. In our first steps as a people of God it is important that we rely on him when we focus on our finances.

When we start to put the priorities in our lives in order and recognize that everything we have comes from God, we can move in an action of faith and trust in his promises. God has been faithful and when we are faithful with our tithes and offerings we will be supplied in all areas of our life. Those who trust in the Lord will not lack anything

### **REFLECTION**

- Before you talk to others about giving or trusting God, how much do you trust God with your own finances?

### **ACTION**

In the coming weeks start tithing. It’s time to believe God and trust Him.



## Recipe for **MONEY**

**GENEROUS**

Do you think the early churches asked how are we going to pay for all God is leading us to do? While we don't know if they were asking that question in the early church, most of us sure would have been! In Acts 4:36-37, "Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement) sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet." This is the first reference to Barnabas in the book of Acts and he is being generous. I'm guessing he was surprisingly generous – the disciples were not expecting this gift. God is still surprising people with generosity today.

### **REFLECTION**

- Who has been generous to the church you are planting already?
- Who have you surprised with generosity?

### **ACTION**

Encourage someone who has been a Barnabas to you by sending a note explaining how you were encouraged by that person. Pray for God to continue to send to you surprisingly generous people to encourage you and your mission.

**CARD**  
**1**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**INTRODUCTION**

---

“All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them.”  
Acts 9:39 (NRSV)

Every new worshiping community will have people who will “fall through the cracks” of getting the care they need without some system in place. Care is primarily one-on-one, relational. There will be people who come to you with real needs and without real relationships. Every generation has her “widows,” people who do not have family or resources. There will also be people whose legitimate needs go beyond what a small group can provide. The early church in Joppa had Dorcas to care for the widows. She was able to give them her full attention. Who do you have? What is your plan to care for the people God sends you who come unconnected and without any safety nets in life? Without a systematic plan, especially as more people come to you, people who need your care will not be cared for. Systematic care does not replace the care of a small group or of key individuals; it is in addition to that care. It is the safety net.

**REFLECTION**

- How will people be cared for in your community?
- Who are your first responders? What do you have in place for people who need extended care?
- What resources are available in your community outside of your new worshiping community?

**ACTION**

Gather with two or three other key leaders and develop your plan for systematic care. Write it down and have others review it and make suggestions. Present this to the entire community once you have it finalized.

**CARD  
2**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER**

---

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.”  
1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NRSV)

One strong temptation you must learn to resist is to think that everything depends on you. Much of the work depends on you, but not everything. One of the most important things you can do early on is to teach members to care for one another. The many “one another” passages found in the New Testament highlight this important priority. This means that you also need to be appropriately honest and vulnerable. It might not be easy but you need to let the people care for you just as you care for them.

**REFLECTION**

- How have you experienced the care of the community?
- How can you encourage the caring that is already happening in the community.

**ACTION**

Take time in your next gathering to give some simple instructions about encouraging and caring for one another and then set the people loose to put them into practice. In relation to caring, learn to highlight the ministry of others and not your own.

**CARD**  
**3**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**LOVE ONE ANOTHER**

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“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35 (NRSV)

Agape love is not something that we stumble across overnight; it requires time, commitment, space and intentionality. In other words, we need to work at it! We need to be with one another to experience it! It's hard to love what we do not know.

As a planter, it is always tempting to move from one activity to another, to always ask more from the group. It's easy to say the words “love one another, care for one another.” It's hard to slow down and create the space so people can meet one another and love one another.

**REFLECTION**

- How are you purposely creating time and space for people to just spend time with each other on a regular basis, learning about each other's lives, falling in love with one another?
- What signs of love does your community show? Will someone outside recognize and experience that love?

**ACTION**

Ask your team to come up with a series of opportunities where people can spend intentional time being with one another, sharing with one another, loving one another.

**CARD  
4**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**AFFIRMING THE LEADERSHIP**

“Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamation of thanks to God. Each exclamation is a trigger to prayer. I find myself praying for you with a glad heart. I am so pleased that you have continued on in this with us, believing and proclaiming God’s Message, from the day you heard it right up to the present.”  
Philippians 1:3-5 (MSG)

Even the most humble and God-focused people need an encouraging word. Despite a ministry lived in the midst of extraordinary challenges, uncertain outcomes, and trying times, the Apostle Paul regularly made a point of affirming the women and men who partnered in spreading the Good News. There is great power in a leader lifting up others and acknowledging the presence of Christ in their hearts and labors. It is easy to spend all of your energy focusing on the next task and challenge before you, but a moment of giving thanks to those who co-labor in the field is always worth the time.

**REFLECTION**

- When was the last time you were lifted up and thanked for the labors of your ministry? Were you able to accept the affirmation without dismissing it?
- Do you have a means of making sure the other leaders of the community are regularly lifted up and affirmed?

**ACTION**

Build into every Session/Leadership meeting a time for:

- Highlighting where God is at work in the ministry
- Affirming one another and offering a word of thanks to one another

Once a month in worship have one person celebrate the ministry and presence of another. Rotate through the leaders and make sure to include all over a period of time.

**CARD  
5**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**CREATE A LOVING COMMUNITY**

---

“Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other.”  
Romans 12:10 (NLT)

This scripture can guide us as we seek to create values, opportunities, thoughts and behaviors that help a congregation to establish an interrelated and interconnected faith community. The scripture suggests that persons in the community of faith need to understand what love is, know how to express it, and find joy in loving each other.

Romans 12 helps us to see how we can respond to God’s grace and mercy by making a necessary sacrifice to meet each other’s needs. When everyone is concerned for the needs of others, all needs are met. All are loved and feel affirmed and supported, which results in a loving community where care is experienced and expressed.

**REFLECTION**

Think about the groups and experiences in which you felt a caring and loving spirit.

- In what ways were these groups and experiences formal or informal?
- How can the values, beliefs, and behavior of a mutually loving community become a part of the fabric of our church?

**ACTION**

Identify one person to whom you will demonstrate genuine love this week. What need(s) do they have that you can meet? Meet them.



**CARD**  
**6**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**PROACTIVE**

---

“May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power,  
and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience....”  
Colossians 1:11 (NRSV)

Most care in the church community comes after a major event has happened. Care happens after the divorce, after the death, after the sickness and after the financial ruin. We need to be proactive in our care and prepare people to endure before major life events or help them to avoid in the first place some of the painful experiences people put themselves through. One way to be proactive is to evaluate the common challenges members of your faith community are facing.

Consider holding quarterly events that deal with the common life issues of your faith community. The goal of these events should be to prepare people to endure with patience. These events will be most impactful if they are designed to be proactive rather than targeted at those who have already experienced the life challenge covered.

**REFLECTION**

- What life challenges (finances, death, aging, career, marital communication, etc.) is your faith community facing? List your top 10.

**ACTION**

Distribute printed copies of your top 10 challenge list to your faith community on Sunday morning. Include directions asking people to circle 4 or 5 of the topics that interest them and place them in the offering. Have your leadership review the results and develop 3 to 4 proactive care events. The events should be short, to the point, and inviting.

**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**EMPOWER YOUR CARE GIVERS**

---

“Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.’ What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch.”  
Acts 6:3-5 (NRSV)

The early church appointed one care giver for every two proclaimers of the good news. Two to one is not necessarily a Holy ratio, but it does point out that you cannot proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ without also appointing others to care for the community. God’s community is not to grow without addressing the real needs of the people being added.

God has already provided you people who have the gift to care for others. It is their passion, so bring them together and give them permission to do what they already are wired to do! A true system is organized around people; it cannot be a program. If you can empower the people with the gifts of care to care, they will develop the system. The early church appointed people to care for people. The first system of care of the expanding church was impactful because the system of care was finding the right people to care for others.

**REFLECTION**

- Consider the people in your worshipping community. Have you witnessed them caring for each other?
- Are there specific people you can identify who seem to recognize the need for and provide the caring?

**ACTION**

Gather together the care givers in your worshiping committee and brainstorm on how to create a system of care for your community.

**CARD  
8**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**DON'T WAIT FOR A CRISIS:  
PRAY PRO-ACTIVELY**

---

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.”  
1 Thessalonians. 5:11 (NRSV)

Pro-active prayers – non-crisis petitions invoking God’s blessing, direction, support, and help – are an important way to encourage members of your community.

Though some fellow journeyers will seek you out and share openly when they face a significant issue, others will quietly plod onward, never offering a hint about the stresses they encounter in daily life. So how can a leader express equal care to the quiet ones? Every person faces issues with work or school, relationships, meaning, decisions, finances, stress, and the life of the Spirit. Ask for God’s help on their behalf. Pray for God’s goodness and self-revelation in addition to other “blessing” prayers for those entrusted to your care.

**REFLECTION**

- What kind of blessing prayers might you offer for those in your midst?

**ACTION**

Schedule time (in manageable chunks) to pray pro-actively for others. For example, pray through a column of names or a set of five to eight business cards each day or week—praying as you feel impelled by God’s Spirit for each person and his or her family. When you’ve prayed through all the names, circle back and begin again.

Ask God whether you should share with a person that you’ve prayed for them. (If you feel nudged to do so, ask God’s help to communicate this in an appropriate way—not in a way that’s self-congratulatory or weirdly pious.) You may be shocked to learn how often God builds up a person’s faith when they know someone else was praying for them without being asked!

**CARD**  
**9**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**    **EQUIP OTHERS TO PROVIDE CARE**

---

“Equip the saints for the work of ministry.”  
Ephesians 4:12 (NRSV)

The more you share care giving responsibilities with others, the healthier your community will grow. Consider these options for equipping others to provide care in your worshiping community.

- (1) Coach your emerging faith community to provide Christian care. When appropriate, take others with you (probably no more than one at a time) as you make pastoral visits, allowing them to be quietly present in order to increase their comfort level in such a setting. After participating in a few visits, they will cultivate skills of silence, listening, encouraging, and offering prayer.
- (2) When members explicitly allow you to communicate their life concerns with others, invite the congregation's prayers. Keep a supply of greetings cards (sympathy, get well soon, thinking of you, or blank cards) to help the congregation respond quickly. (Greeting cards can often be purchased in bulk or at significant discount through dollar stores.)
- (3) Allow others who feel comfortable with public prayer to pray at church gatherings or during pastoral visits, affirming the value of all people's prayers and minimizing the “professional Christian” syndrome that debilitates the church.

### **REFLECTION**

- In what circumstances this week might you mentor another leader in care giving?
- How can you ensure that he or she feels safe to ask questions and express concerns?

### **ACTION**

Encourage members of your team to express care by taking “one step up” along the spectrum of low to high commitment (from passive empathy to praying alone for a request, sending a card or email, praying out loud with someone else, placing a call, making a tandem visit with a leader, taking a meal or gift, providing a service, visiting without a leader or “props,” etc.). Please note: this spectrum is representative only; the spectrum will vary from person to person. Using the examples of actions above, strategize how you can equip congregation members to grow as caregivers. What steps can you take to help make that a reality? What other ideas might you try?

**CARD  
10**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**BE A RESOURCE,  
NOT THE RESOURCE**

“Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.”

Acts 6:3-4

Too often we in the church make the mistake of thinking we have to have all the answers and should solve all the problems. A homeless person drops in and we must house them. A hungry person comes by and we must feed them. After all, that is what Jesus told us to do, right? Well yes it is. But often there are others in our local communities with better resources to be able to handle the needs that are before us. Instead of trying to re-create the wheel and develop a ‘new’ ministry for every need that comes to our door, let us become more aware of the resources already in the community around us and be able to direct people to those ministries and agencies.

**REFLECTION**

- What sort of resources and services are you able to provide to the local community?
- What needs would be better met by other organizations in your neighborhood?

**ACTION**

Create a resource card that you can hand out to people that lists all the local agencies, with addresses and phone numbers, in the area that may be able to help address certain needs. You may want to include 12-step programs, recovery programs, job opportunity centers, meal centers, food pantries and free meals, homeless shelters, mental health agencies, transitional housing, or whatever else may be a resource in your area.

**CARD  
11**

Recipe for **SYSTEMATIC COMMUNITY CARE**

**CULTIVATE RATHER THAN  
PROGRAM**

“Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness”  
Psalm 37:3-4 NAS

As leaders we are frequently searching for the next big program that will get the job done. Instead of thinking of ourselves as those who ‘program,’ let us begin to think of ourselves as those who ‘cultivate.’ Instead of trying to program how people will get together and care for each other, it would be better to prepare the ground for the seeds of care to be able to grow. To cultivate is to prepare and to plant the opportunities for people to meet and engage in such a way that they will begin to care for one another. Rather than try and determine how exactly the care will grow, we draw people together in spaces that will allow community and relationships to emerge naturally. Early in a church plant this happens fairly naturally, but as the years go by it becomes harder for those who come to the community to find a place where they sense they are being cared for or connected to others. Always be imagining new ways to cultivate space for people to meet and engage with one another that they may discover, rather than be told, how it is they are to care for each other.

**REFLECTION**

- What have been some of your best experiences in being cared for in community? Was it programmed or cultivated? Think of five church “programs.” What would it mean to turn those into places of cultivation?

**ACTION**

Host an ice cream social for new comers! Have an ice cream bar for sundaes with all the fixings and several activities people can do as they get to know each other. Have “old comers” at the social as well and have them sit with the new people to share and learn what their passions are. Then have your church leadership share briefly some examples of how they have engaged with the church and various opportunities for people to participate. Make sure to follow up with those new comers in the weeks following.

**CARD**  
**1**

Recipe for **DENOMINATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

“And when I arrive, I will send any whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem.”  
I Corinthians 16:3 (NRSV)

At our best we share our resources, teaching, talents, energy, and spiritual gifts with more than just the local community of faith. We are connected to believers everywhere in the world in mission, witness, service, and life. Your relationship with the Presbyterian Church (USA), or whatever organization you are related to, will impact the growth and health of those God is sending to be a part of your new worshiping community. How you deal with the denomination, what you say about it, how you support it are all teaching moments to those joining you. It is not uncommon that conflict arises between new worshiping communities and the denomination. The new worshiping community often has a different world view, new practices, and new energy. It is easy to get frustrated and pull away from the work and ministry of the denomination when your new ways are not accepted and sometimes even criticized by people who should be celebrating them. Other times, because the ministry of a new worshiping community is different, it is easy for the leadership of that new community to become the local stars of the denomination and put all of their time and effort into denominational work at the expense of the mission of the new worshiping community. Your relationship with the denomination is a critical relationship, one that requires a healthy balance and can help your members see how to relate to their own extended families.

**REFLECTION**

Consider your relationship with the denomination. A healthy relationship is balanced. You have a local ministry and you are a part of something much bigger than your local community.

**ACTION**

- Write down two or three sentences that describe your relationship with the denomination now.
- Write down two or three sentences that describe the “ideal” relationship with the denomination.
- Write out a personal action plan to move from where you are now to the ideal.

**CARD**  
**2**

Recipe for **DENOMINATION**

**GLOBAL INPUT, LOCAL INPUT**

“Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’ And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders.”

Acts 15:1-2 (NRSV)

What is interesting in Acts 15 is that both the problem and the solution came TO the Church in Antioch rather than rose up FROM within. The issue of circumcision was not anywhere on the radar of the Church in Antioch until certain individuals came to that church, but now that it was brought to the church it had great potential to be very divisive. Once the debate began, the believers in the Church in Antioch realized they could not answer the question without getting the input from the larger church, so the solution also came from outside of the local new faith community. We are called to be a global church and some issues require global input. We are connected in a denomination and some issues cannot be answered without input from the larger church. We are also forming a local church and some issues will have a local response that will be unique from the rest of the denomination’s practices if we are going to be faithful to the unique mission God has assigned our faith community.

**REFLECTION**

- What potentially divisive issues and practices does your new faith community need to address?
- What practices and issues do you face locally that need the insight and perspective of the greater church?

**ACTION**

Discuss your answers to the reflection above with three people you trust from within your community and three people you trust from the greater church.



**CARD**  
**3**

Recipe for **DENOMINATION**

**DENOMINATIONAL ISSUES & RELATIONSHIPS:  
ONE TEAM**

---

“What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.”  
1 Corinthians 3:5-6 (NIV)

Even in the “glory days” of the early church, envy, division and comparisons infiltrated the faith community. Christ-followers pledged allegiance to certain leaders or perspectives – sometimes with such vehemence they accidentally lost sight of God’s greater work and their own subordinate role.

Within denominations, we may also be tempted to draw artificial lines of self-importance – as though we, alone, possess full insight. When that happens, how might we follow Paul’s example by embracing the reality that we and others work together in God’s mysterious economy?

At our best, we celebrate inter-connections. Rather than feeling threatened, we foster a climate of gratitude, humility, giving and receiving, respect. We focus on the greater work of God rather than our personal contribution.

**REFLECTION**

- How’s your relationship with the presbytery? How might you foster mutual respect and support?

**ACTION**

Determine that your worshiping community will give to the presbytery as well as receive from it. List three ways you can give to your presbytery.

**CARD**  
**4**

Recipe for **DENOMINATION**

**PARTNERSHIP**

---

“I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing [partnership] in the gospel from the first day until now.”  
Philippians 1:3-5 (NRSV)

The dictionary defines a partner as “one that shares; one associated with another especially in action.” The more we can develop healthy partnerships in this work, the better. As a church planter, Paul understood his relationship with churches throughout the region as partnership.

Healthy partnership looks like existing communities sharing for the sake of the new work of making disciples. It should look like encouragement, support, accountability, prayer, and a shared vision to expand the kingdom. It can sometimes include shared people resources and financial resources. Unhealthy partnerships are consistently adversarial, demand that you do this ministry “our way” on “our terms” so we can get more people in “our building.”

Partnerships can be allies in releasing amazing new ministry into the world. Or they can limit your ability to release what you believe God to be calling into being.

**REFLECTION**

- Are there churches that you consider partners? Are these healthy or not healthy partnerships? In what ways?
- Are there some aspects of these partnerships that you would want to reframe?

**ACTION**

List your current church partners. Is there anything you need to do to foster healthy partnership and shared expectations with these partners? Are there any other potential partners you need to pursue? Name them and develop a plan for an initial conversation to cast your vision of this new church with them.

**CARD  
5**

Recipe for **DENOMINATION**

**COMMUNICATION**

“David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of the thousands, the commanders of the hundreds, the stewards of all the property and cattle of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty warriors, and all the warriors. Then King David rose to his feet and said: ‘Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had planned to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, for the footstool of our God; and I made preparations for building. But God said to me, “You shall not build a house for my name...It is your son Solomon who shall build my house and my courts...”’”  
1 Chronicles 28:1-5, 6 (NRSV)

David recognized that what he had proposed was not *going* to occur and he needed to communicate that. He didn’t wait for folks to come to him; he proactively assembled the key stakeholders.

Some of you planters will be blessed by presbytery committees or leaders who take an active interest in what you are doing and check in with you. Others will find the committees or leadership to be disconnected and you will be tempted to complain that “they” don’t understand/care/listen. More often than not, they just don’t have the capacity to tend to all that is before them. Pay attention to David’s leadership, and begin to think about how you could proactively share what’s *going on* with your ministry. You don’t have to wait until someone comes to you.

**REFLECTION**

- Are you only talking to presbytery folks when signatures are needed for grant applications or reports? Or do you have an ongoing line of communication?
- Who should (or could) you be talking with at the presbytery level to share your vision about where your ministry is going, why, and what help you need to get there?

**ACTION**

Identify a person at the presbytery level who can be a regular liaison between your work and the committees/structure of presbytery. Contact that person and agree upon a regular rhythm of checking in about the ministry you are leading.

CARD  
6

Recipe for DENOMINATION

BLESSING

“The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.’”  
Genesis 12:1-2 (NIV)

So what does it mean to be blessed so that we become a blessing to others? So often this new worshiping community work seems like we’re always walking around with our hands out. We’re always on the look-out for more resources, more people, and, well, more of just about everything. It’s easy to get in this mode of receiving blessings and forget that it’s not supposed to end there. God blessed the people of Israel not for their own edification but for the purpose of blessing all the people on earth. Jesus reminds us through a number of parables that those who receive resources are expected to bear fruit with those resources. This means not only thinking locally but casting our thoughts more broadly. Sometimes it’s difficult to think about blessing the denomination. After all, it’s not always easy to love them, is it? Yet we are nurtured and supported in ways beyond our knowing, even through the denomination. Daily, new worshiping communities are learning new ways to gather people together as disciples of Jesus, exploring cutting edge forms of outreach and wading into places most won’t dare to go. The whole church can benefit from what you’re learning and how you’re navigating the crazy world in which we live. Blessing is a two-way street. We are “blessed to be a blessing.”

**REFLECTION**

- What gifts or talents does your community have to offer other churches in your mid-council, synod or denomination?
- How are you uniquely gifted to bless the denomination? What would that look like?

**ACTION**

List the possible ways your worshiping community could bless other parts of the denomination. More than money, what have you learned through starting this community that could benefit the whole church? List these learnings and choose a couple to develop into practical ways to support other churches and councils.

**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **DENOMINATION**

**CONNECTING**

Read Acts 11:19-30. It shows how the early church was well connected. The new worshiping community in Antioch was a great encouragement to the already established church and the already established church assisted the new worshiping community where needed.

Starting new worshiping communities blesses the whole Body of Christ including established, traditional congregations. Church planter and author Tim Keller has this to say: "The vigorous, continual planting of new congregations is the single most crucial strategy for the numerical growth of the Body of Christ in any city, and the continual corporate renewal and revival of the existing churches in a city." The Holy Spirit renewal that comes through new ministries reconnects tired, burned out church people to the mission of God in their neighborhood, while fanning the flame of the missional Spirit of God in the local congregation. That excitement washes back into the life of the established church.

**REFLECTION**

- How is your worshiping community a blessing to other worshiping communities in your neighborhood?
- How could your relationship with other congregations be improved?

**ACTION**

- Pray each time you gather for the other worshiping communities in your neighborhood.
- Send pastors (or other church leaders) a note telling them you are thinking of them and praying for their ministries.
- Meet with the leaders of other worshiping communities and suggest a shared project for the good of the common neighborhood.

CARD  
8

## Recipe for DENOMINATION

## WHAT'S IMPORTANT

“And this is my prayer: That your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

Philippians 1:9-11 (NIV)

It's easy these days to hear what's happening in the denomination and wonder how best to address it in your new worshiping community. Churches are leaving, tricky theological issues are being debated, and decisions are made that will upset someone. How much attention should we pay to what the denomination does? There are times when a denomination's decisions will affect your work in the community both for better and for worse, but these occasions may be fewer than you think. Some leaders get so wrapped up in national issues that they forget that their local community may not be aware nor care what a denomination declares. It slowly begins to take their focus away from the important things.

### REFLECTION

- How are our core values impacted by the decisions of the denomination?
- Will our vision to reach the community be compromised?

### ACTION

If an issue is a concern for you or your community, take the time to research what's at stake and what the issue is. Some denominational publications (as well as other publications) can distort the facts and conversation to promote a certain position. If you have contacts at the denomination, call them up and ask for their perspective on it. Look for a “neutral” news sources to get the information.



**CARD**  
**1**

## Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

## INTRODUCTION

---

We are called to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20) by living out the call of Jesus in Mark 1:17 (NLT), “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”

Discipleship is essential to the life and mission of the church. It involves helping others to learn to walk with Jesus on a daily basis. It involves persons of all ages and conditions. It takes place in the classroom as well as within the life and work of the community of the faithful. It serves to increase the understanding of the content of the faith and to enable maturing Christians to bring their faith to bear upon their life mission in the world. The goal of this life-long learning process is to develop fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ. Discipleship involves implementing an intentional strategy to move a new believer from being a babe in Christ to a mature believer, who later is able to come alongside and help others grow toward spiritual maturity.

### REFLECTION

- What is a disciple? Make a list of the traits and characteristics of a disciple.

One discipleship resource you can consider using is [The Tangible Kingdom Primer](http://TheTangibleKingdom.com) by Hugh Halter and Matt Smay. Check it out at [tangiblekingdom.com](http://tangiblekingdom.com).

### ACTION

What can your worshiping community do to intentionally develop and encourage those traits and characteristics?

**CARD**  
**2**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**LEARNING TO VALUE WHAT THE LORD VALUES**

---

There are many aspects to helping new followers become disciples of Jesus. A group of 40 pastors who all had started new missions identified “teaching to value what Jesus valued” as a key to discipleship. It is the “why” to every action. It is the fulfillment of the commandment Jesus identified:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’  
This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’  
On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”  
Matthew 22:37-39 (NRSV)

Maybe the real challenge of disciple making is to keep every discipline, every action, every process, in the context of learning to love the things God loves, learning to value what God values. We all need to be reminded and challenged about “why” we are doing what we are doing. The key to people doing or not doing the things that will help them be disciples might be as simple as how we communicate the reason behind our actions: Why we are hosting a dinner, gathering to learn, offering a discipleship group, hosting a Sunday morning class, beginning a mid-week gathering, sponsoring a service opportunity, introducing a quiet time alone with God, or having an all-church retreat.

**REFLECTION**

- Do people know the “why” behind what your church offers?

**ACTION**

Make sure your communication about what you are doing includes a “why statement.”



**CARD**  
**3**

## Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

## **TEACH SERVANTHOOD**

After washing his disciples' feet in John 13 Jesus asks them, "Do you understand what I have done for you?" Although the answer seems obvious, far too often we come as the conquering king rather than the humble servant. We come into a community to 'win' converts rather than 'lose' our life for the sake of the gospel. We view people as projects to be redone in our image of what a Christian should look like, rather than people to be served so they might experience the transforming grace of God's love.

The messenger is not greater than the one who sent him. The one who sent us was willing to wash the filthy, mud encrusted feet of his friends and even his betrayer. We must be willing to do the same. When we serve, the community around us will understand we have come to love rather than conquer them. After the washing Jesus said, "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." Go and be blessed. Go serve someone today.

### **REFLECTION**

- What church activities have you been a part of that felt more like conquering than serving?
- Reflect on a time you have been blessed by serving someone else.
- How can servanthood be a key ingredient in your new ministry?

### **ACTION**

Serve the community! Volunteer at local food bank. Do a trash pickup day. Help organize a community garden. Coach soccer. Visit a shut-in.

**CARD  
4**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**CREATING A COMMUNITY CULTURE THAT  
PRODUCES ORGANIC DISCIPLESHIP**

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Organic = derived from living organisms

Discipleship encompasses so much more than intellectual assent, yet we often imply that Christ-following equates to taking a class, attending worship, having answers, or agreeing with a series of doctrinal statements. Jesus invited would-be disciples to “come and see” his real life (John 1:39). They did and they invited others; together, they grew in relationship with God and neighbor.

How do we raise the sights of the gathered to recognize discipleship as the process of being shaped in real life rather than a philosophical end-state? How do we create safe space for people to open their lives to God – to engage scripture, experiment with prayer, practice Sabbath, demonstrate service – beginning where they are right now?

**REFLECTION**

- Do you have an intentional process to help people grow deeper with God and others?
- How might you encourage people to activate spiritual practices in a way that encourages and/or stretches them?

**ACTION**

Invite team members to list one to three practical ways they might open their lives to God through each of the following: Worship, scripture, spiritual practices, community, self-awareness, and service. Encourage them to commit to one item in at least three of these areas for the next two weeks, OR encourage your team to identify the non-church-specific roles they play in life: parent, spouse, supervisor, employee, coach, neighbor, friend, colleague, pet owner, roommate, community volunteer, daughter or son, etc. Invite them to list ways they could grow as a disciple of Jesus in each of those life roles.

**CARD  
5**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP**

Jesus' plan for discipleship was very straightforward. He came up to you, looked you in the eye, and said "follow me." Those who chose to do so would find themselves on a topsy-turvy ride that consumed their entire lives. What if we could learn to be as direct as Jesus was in our invitation to discipleship and what if our means of discipleship was just as life consuming? What would our communities of faith look like then?

Let us seek to discover the intentional means by which we invite people into life consuming discipleship with Jesus. It does us no good to wish it into existence or pray that seeds will grow where they have not been planted, but let us find a place in our community where we look people in the eye and say "Follow Jesus."

**REFLECTION**

- What have been your most meaningful times of discipleship?

**ACTION**

Consider some of the intentional discipleship plans in this collection: Which might you be able to use or adapt to your context? Or, write your own discipleship plan!

**CARD**  
**6**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**AN INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN**

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It is a little scary that we are commanded by Jesus, “Go therefore and make disciples...” What is scary is that we would not be commanded to make disciples if we were not able to actually do that! Conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit, making disciples from those who have come to believe is our work. That means we need to be intentional about making disciples.

**REFLECTION**

- What is discipleship?
- How can you help lead the people in your worshiping community toward discipleship?

**ACTION**

Develop an intentional discipleship plan. Consider establishing within your discipleship plan time to teach your mission, time to explore scripture, time for each individual to explore his or her gifts and ways to serve, time to discuss the needs of the community and how you as a church could meet some of those needs, and time to discuss what it means that God loves the world.

**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**TWOS AND THREES**

Jesus traveled with twelve disciples, a traditional small group, but he also often withdrew alone with Peter, James, and John. There has been much emphasis recently in church resources and teaching related to disciple-making in small groups, gatherings of eight to twelve people. Small groups are great, but we have missed the power of getting together with two or three in the work of making disciples. A group of two or three does not need a meeting night; they can adjust their schedules on the fly. A group of two or three can discuss real life a lot sooner in the group's life. And a group of two or three can hold each other to higher accountability.

Not everyone is wired to lead a group of ten or more people but all of us are wired to relate to one or two other people. The requirements and skills needed to lead a group of two or three are available in every believer. This opens up the possibilities of leadership much more widely than concentrating only on small groups.

**REFLECTION**

- Who in your new worshiping community would you trust to meet with one or two other people?

**ACTION**

Ask three people from your Reflections list above to join you for lunch and invite each of them to begin a group of two or three. Challenge them to have a weekly check-in time, read and discuss a Bible passage together, and share prayer requests.

**CARD**  
**8**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**DISCIPLESHIP, THE WORK OF THE COMMUNITY**

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Discipleship is not the work of the lead missionary; it is the work of the new worshipping community. Making disciples is not the job of the lead missionary; it is the job of the entire community. Opening the planning and directing of discipleship to your new worshipping community will teach your community to own the work of making disciples. Resist the temptation to make all the discipleship decisions yourself.

**REFLECTION**

- Who currently makes the decisions and plans for your community's discipleship?
- Are there mature believers who could help you design and implement what your new worshipping community does for discipleship?

**ACTION**

Call together four to seven key people and ask them, "What do we need to do as a community to make disciples?" Put those ideas into action.

**CARD**  
**9**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**IT'S GOOD TO BE ALONE**

---

“Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him.”  
Luke 9:18 (NRSV)

Discipleship happens when you can spend time alone with a few others. There are not many examples of disciple-making in large groups. Most of the gospels record the crowds going home leaving only a few – a few disciples. Jesus was intentional about spending time with those few he had identified as disciples and often withdrew with only three of the twelve – Peter, James, and John.

Disciples are made by spending intentional time with a few, teaching, praying, and sharing life together.

**REFLECTION**

- Who are your twelve?
- Who are your three?

**ACTION**

Be intentional about investing in twelve and three this year. Meet weekly with your twelve. Set up a time on your calendar. Commit to spend time weekly with your three either as a group or one on one. When you meet with either group, check in with each other, study scripture together, and pray together.

**CARD  
10**

Recipe for **DISCIPLESHIP**

**FOLLOW ME**

---

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”  
I Corinthians 11:1

The Apostle Paul understood that people who did not know God would have a hard time understanding how to follow Jesus so Paul said, “Follow me and you will end up following God.” Too many of us are afraid to say, “Follow me,” but that is the heart of discipleship. I think Paul understood that if people are going to follow God then they are going to need to follow someone who can show them God. That was the experience of the first disciples. So as we start new worshiping communities and start ministries we need to ask ourselves, “If people follow me or my church, will they end up like Jesus?”

### **REFLECTION**

- Who have you followed who has helped you follow Christ?
- If more people were following Christ as you are, would that be a good thing?

### **ACTION**

Think about who is imitating you. Pray for that person specifically and pray that you can live out I Corinthians 11:1 in their presence. Spend intentional time with that person.



**CARD**  
**1**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**INTRODUCTION**

---

“Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave.  
As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it;  
but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.”

Matthew 10:11-13 (NRSV)

A history of poorly done outreach in your community is most likely the reason you need to start something new. Most of us have experienced bad “outreach,” times when someone has called something offensive, pushy, or manipulative “outreach” or “evangelism.” That does not mean a new worshiping community should give up on a strategic plan or practice for reaching the community with the good news of Jesus. It means you need to do it right, centered on relationships, centered on people and on being in community with people. What does it mean for you to do community outreach well? What does it mean that you teach those who are joining you how to be real and do it well? Jesus had a specific plan for reaching new communities and he taught it. Do you have a plan? Do you teach it?

**REFLECTION**

List five examples of ways you have seen community outreach done poorly. List five examples of community outreach done well.

**ACTION**

Write out how your new worshiping community will reach out to the community around you.

**CARD**  
**2**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**BRING A JOYFUL MESSAGE**

In many circles of the church, evangelism has become a dirty word. People have a physical or emotional reaction just hearing it! We think of tracts or TV evangelists, or we can recall a moment when someone tried to “save us.”

In Luke 2:10 the angel brings “good news of great joy for all the people.” The word for evangelism comes from the Greek evangelize (εὐαγγελίζω) and means “to bring a joyful message.” So we bring the joyful message of the incarnation of God’s love to a broken world. Evangelism no longer has to be a dirty word, but rather it becomes the joyful word.

A simple look at Acts shows that there are many ways to bring the joyful word. Peter preaches (Acts 2), Phillip baptizes (Acts 8), Barnabus encourages (Acts 9), and Paul identifies with the local culture (Acts 17). The disciples travel, Paul takes a local job in a coffee shop (Acts 18), they eat together (Acts 2 & 4), they share with one another (Acts 2 & 4), all with the desire to bring the joyful message of God’s love to the people.

May you be encouraged by these practical examples of what it means to be an evangelist.

**REFLECTION**

- What images, feelings, or emotions does the word “evangelism” create in you?

**ACTION**

List five ways your community will reclaim the joy in evangelism.



**CARD**  
**3**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**ESTABLISH CONTACTS OUTSIDE THE  
ALREADY GATHERED CHURCH**

---

Remember that God sends you into the community. Seek ways to be visible in person – not just through media – in local businesses, schools, neighborhoods, recreational leagues, and gathering places. Become a regular at community coffee shops or eateries and learn the names of staff. Try prepping a sermon or Bible study there. If business is slow, ask wait staff about their work or hobbies. Tip generously. Over time, find out how you can pray for staff and other patrons – and then do it.

Make an appointment with the school principal and learn how your new faith community might resource and support faculty, staff, students and parents. Send periodic notes of encouragement. Participate in Chamber of Commerce events or business networking gatherings – concentrating more on the people you meet and their needs than on handing out 25 business cards. Resist the temptation to objectify people as potential church members who might “come” to you ... and remember that you go to them, where they are, as an emissary of grace.

**REFLECTION**

- How has God wired you?
- How do you naturally fit into the community?

**ACTION**

From the suggestions above, identify one action and do it – or come up with your own.

**CARD  
4**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**EVERYONE HAS SOMETHING  
TO CONTRIBUTE**

It is tempting to consider only the “joys” or only the “hurts” of a community when considering the ministries or services of a new mission. We can miss that many times the most powerful outreach a new mission can have is when it allows God to use it to connect the joys and the hurts of a community. Every community has joys and hurts. Discovering how to connect your community’s joys and hurts might be the very center of the activity of God in your neighborhood.

For example, rather than focusing on the needs in a community with economic diversity the real community outreach might be to connect those with a need for food with those who have plenty. This might be the key to impactful and sustainable community building. Those with plenty do not feel they need to hear a great praise band in a worship service; they have access to concerts and clubs with wonderful music. What they do feel is a need to be of earthly good. The invitation to partner with you to meet real needs might be the only open door in their lives to see Jesus in action as you impact the community in a real way because of the love of God in you. Those with needs don’t need something done for them, but with them. Their needs should be met in a relational, neighbor-to-neighbor way that creates friendships. Done right, connecting the “joys” and the “hurts” of a community can be the door for reconciliation of the individuals involved, the community, and eventually the world.

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.  
2 Corinthians 5:18 (NRSV)

**REFLECTION**

- What are the joys and hurts of your community?

**ACTION**

Gather two people with the ability to dream from your new mission and list ten possible actions, services, or ministries that could be done to connect the “joys” and the “hurts” of your community. Present the list to your leadership team to choose one of them to implement.

**CARD  
5**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**SOME PRACTICE, NEW LOCATION**

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“Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.”  
He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.”  
John 21:5-6 (NRSV)

No fish! That is a hard reality for many of us starting a new work for God. We start out excited about the call to be fishing for people as we set sail into new waters but then we reach a point of no new fish. We understand the despair of the disciples to Jesus' question, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” It is tempting to give up fishing or to throw our nets away. First, we need to consider casting our nets in another place.

The same practice in a new location might change everything. The Apostle Paul often moved from preaching in the synagogue to preaching in the market place. A vacation Bible school at a church will most likely reach a very different group of people than that same vacation Bible school in a city park or community school. Sometimes we have the right ministry but we are doing it in the wrong place. Consider casting your net on the other side.

**REFLECTION**

- Where does your community outreach, ministries, or programs physically take place now?
- Where else could they take place?
- What would be the advantage or disadvantage of doing something you are currently doing but in a new place in your community?

**ACTION**

Identify one community outreach you are currently doing that could be done somewhere else. Try that new location.

**CARD  
6**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR**

---

“The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.”  
John 1:14 (MSG)

Community outreach begins at home – your home. We all live in a neighborhood, but do our neighbors ever see us? Do the people who are a part of your church community add value to their neighborhoods or are they rarely home? How active are you and the members of your church community in the lives of the people who live around you?

It could be that the most successful strategy for your church community to reach the greater community would be for you to create time for people to be better neighbors. For example, establish Monday as neighbor day and don't hold meetings then. Instead, challenge each member of the church community to do something good for your neighbors or one neighbor that day. People are busy so it will take an honest assessment of what would be good for your neighborhood. Outreach could range from a free hour of babysitting to a plate of cookies baked and delivered without much said.

**REFLECTION**

- At your next leadership gathering ask your leaders, “How good of a neighbor are you?” and “How are you a blessing to your neighborhood?”
- Have your leaders develop a list of ways to be good neighbors in their neighborhood.

**ACTION**

Pick a day of the week when you and your church community agree to have no meetings and strive to make it “Neighbor Day.” Share with your church community the list of ways to be good neighbors that your leadership developed as a way to spark people's imagination.

**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**MAKE YOUR HOME  
WHERE YOU ARE PLACED**

---

Read Jeremiah 29:4-9

The prophet Jeremiah reminds us in Jeremiah 29, that contrary to Jewish behavior, God has asked God's exilic people to embrace the neighborhood in which they find themselves. Let's be honest, at best it would have been easier for God's people to disengage from this culture that has displaced them. And, at worse, to be adversarial to the perpetrators. Yet God speaks through the prophet and asks the people to build gardens, make houses, and give their children in marriage.

In short...God asks them to make their home in Babylon.

Your job in outreach is, as Jeremiah writes, to seek the welfare of the city, not to see yourselves as captives of the culture in which you find yourselves. Your job in outreach is to make your home with the people where God has placed you.

**REFLECTION**

- How have you previously viewed outreach?
- Where are you captive to the culture?
- How can you better make home with the people who surround you?

**ACTION**

This week, immerse yourself in a part of your neighborhood where you are disengaged. Afterward, ask yourself where this felt comfortable and where it felt uncomfortable.

**CARD**  
**8**

Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**KEEPING FOCUS**

“Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, 4 while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.”

Acts 6:1-4

It became evident in the early church that the “tyranny of the urgent” was a powerful force that threatened the very work of spreading the gospel. When the needs of this newly gathered community began to distract the Apostles from the business of sharing the gospel, Stephen came up with a solution that empowered members of the community to care for those that had gathered, while releasing leaders to continue to preach the gospel to those who had not heard. As your new worshipping community grows, the needs of the people gathered can quickly overwhelm the capacity of the leaders to care for existing community members while continuing to reach out and connect with new people. Remember that the primary work of the leaders will be to keep the community focused on those they have yet to reach while, at the same, time finding ways to continue to meet the needs of those that have gathered. Challenging!

**REFLECTION**

- Are there community outreach activities that you have had to discontinue to meet the demands of those who have gathered?
- Are leaders spending more time with those who have gathered than those who are in the community?
- How are people being empowered to take care of internal tasks so that those whose call it is to reach the community are able to do so?

**ACTION**

Take a moment and determine how much time your leaders spend on those who are gathered versus those in the community. Do this monthly to track how your practices shift over time and to help set a baseline for evaluating as the worshipping community grows.



**CARD**  
**9**

## Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**FREE FOOD**

---

“Here is a boy with 5 small barley loaves and 2 small fish...but how will they go so far among so many?”  
John 6:9 (NIV)

Recently one church did a spiritual formation survey. In doing so they discovered that one of the most effective ways people felt like they grew in their faith was by eating food and sharing in conversation! This really is not that surprising. After all this is what Jesus did time and again. He shared in table fellowship with everyone and anyone as he spoke of the Kingdom of God. Even when he gave a sermon he made sure everyone had some food to eat before they headed off for the day, as if he knew they now needed time and space to share with each other everything they just heard. One pastor says, “Our church is all about table fellowship. Every Sunday we have communion and have a free lunch that follows. Every Tuesday and Thursday we offer a free community meal that 75-100 people attend. We partner with other churches and groups to bring the food. And every Saturday we take meals to homeless camps around our city. Often through these entry points people come to be more deeply involved in the life and community of our church.”

### **REFLECTION**

- How has food and conversation been an important part of your faith journey and formation?

### **ACTION**

Consider when you might be able to offer a meal to the community you are looking to serve. It does not have to be big. You could start by seeing if there is a “Meals on Wheels” program already in place that you can participate in or a food pantry you can help volunteer with. Or, maybe just make it a practice to have food with every worship service. There is good reason why church potlucks have been so popular ever since a kid with a bit of bread and a few fish decided to share his lunch with everyone!

**CARD  
10**

## Recipe for **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**STORY TELLER NIGHT**

“Be quick to listen...and slow to speak.”  
James 1:19 (NIV)

If you have never encountered the NPR program, “The Moth,” you need to check it out right after you read this card! In this radio program, real people are invited to tell real stories about their real lives. It is often through the power of sharing our stories that we end up connecting with people in deeper ways. And there is truth to the fact that everyone loves to talk about him or herself! What we need to remember when we start new worshiping communities is that it is far better to listen before we try and speak. The Bible is all about story. It is the stories we tell year after year, season after season that keep us connected to God and to each other on our journey of faith. At times the church can get caught up in the ‘study’ of the story instead of just allowing people to experience the story yet again as if for the first time. Jesus frequently used stories as a means of deepening his audience’s understanding of who they are and who God is.

### **REFLECTION**

- Listening is hard work. Are you a good listener?
- What distracts you from listening well?

### **ACTION**

Host a storytelling night based on “The Moth” series. Find a public space that is willing to work with you and invite people to submit a 200 word synopsis of the story they would like to tell. Then pick the ones you think will produce the best stories. They should be about 10-15 minutes in length. Have a theme they need to follow, such as adventure, love, growing up, the neighborhood you are in, etc. The list is endless!

When you show you are willing to listen to the stories of the people and the neighborhood around you, you will find that in return they will be more willing to listen to the story of God we long to share with them.

**CARD**  
**1**

## Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

## INTRODUCTION

“Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number...their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food...the twelve called...’It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables.’ Therefore... the word of God continued to spread.”  
Acts 6:1-7 (NRSV)

The “therefore” of Acts 6:3 is the ministry practices of the community. While most new worshipping communities dream of being totally “organic” in their care and governance, as growth happens “practices” and “systems” need to be established or else people will be neglected or the mission will be lost. How your community makes decisions, cares for the “least”, handles disagreements, responds to outside influences, and works with other community groups are just a few of the ministry practices that need to be established sooner rather than later. There has been too many of us who have established good ministry practices after people were overlooked or hurt. The more pro-active you can be in establishing solid ministry practices that fit your mission the healthier your new worshipping community will be as it adds new people. Good ministry practices allow “the word of God to spread” just as it did in the story of Acts 6 1-7.

### REFLECTION

- What practices do you currently have in place?
- How are decisions made now? How do you want decisions made in the future?
- How do you handle conflict? Who cares for the people God sends to you?
- How will you care for people if you double, triple, quadruple in size?
- Are your practices written down?

### ACTION

Have your leadership brainstorm with you the “ministry” practices that would be good to establish now, even if not needed for a few years. Develop some written plans for implementing those practices.

**CARD**  
**2**

Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

**DON'T DO IT ALL ...**

The future life and health of the new missionary work you are leading will depend on your ability to live out the words, “Don’t do it all!” Many established churches are filled with spectators watching rather than disciples doing. The early leadership often unconsciously sets a paradigm for this practice by feeling the need to do it all. Once the paradigm is set it is hard to undo. It is much healthier from the start to invite people to join you in doing than to wait a year and then deliver a new set of expectations.

The first 18 months is an amazing time to teach “This is how we do things.” The depth and the practice of the ministry of all believers must begin from day one if it is going to exist in two years. Read the story of Jesus and the woman at the well in John 4 and consider all the things Jesus did not do. He did not baptize; His disciples did. He did not go into the town with the good news; the woman without one class or training was the lead evangelist. The practice of intentionally “not doing” is an interesting part of the ministry of Jesus.

Not doing things yourself means more work for you because it is often easier to do it yourself than to take the time to find, explain, and teach others. The gospels indicate that the time invested early in “not doing” is time well spent.

**REFLECTION**

- What are you currently doing alone?
- Do the things you are currently doing alone need to be done?
- Who could you invite to do something “with you”?

**ACTION**

Next week do nothing ministry related alone.

**CARD**  
**3**

Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

**ACT YOUR AGE**

Ministry practices are often gleaned from large churches that have been established for a number of years. Trying to adopt the practices of a strong, established church while you are just beginning is like asking a 4-month old to run before she has crawled. First, trying to do certain ministries before you have the resources and bandwidth only leads to failure and disappointment. You need to carefully pick and choose what you can do now and what you hope to do in the future. State up front that you are not trying to do it all but hope some day to be able as a group to do certain ministries when you are ready to do them. Second, learning to crawl is crucial to development and the ability to learn. Without first learning to crawl, doing church without everything in place, the people you are gathering will learn to focus on the programs rather than the community. The journey of learning to crawl together as a community is a good journey, don't rush it. Walking will come. Most long-established churches need to learn to crawl again. You have the privilege of knowing crawling is your goal this year.

**REFLECTION**

- How would you define crawling and running?
- What are you trying to do that you might not be ready to do today?

**ACTION**

With your team come up with one “walking” ministry – something you would like to do or have in place but are currently not ready to do today. Create a realistic outline of what might be needed to develop that particular ministry, listing what needs to be in place before you begin to take that step. Then set your list aside and wait for God to create the opportunity for your “walking ministry” as the things on your list are in place.

**CARD**  
**4**

Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

**DESIGN A PLAN TO DEVELOP LEADERS**

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As your faith community begins to take shape, invite God to help you discern those divinely called to leadership. The missionary wisely avoids rushing to judgment, instead experiencing a person's spiritual vitality and maturity over many months...watching to see how potential leaders handle difficulty and not getting in their way, recognizing clues to their life with God, listening to how they speak about others, considering the health of their closest relationships and observing their patterns of life-investment.

When a potential leader seems solid in all or many of these areas, prayerfully invite her or him to participate in a significant but low-cost decision (maybe "Which of these two Bible studies might we engage and why?") but not yet, "What are our community's core values?" or "Who do we add to the primary leadership team?" As appropriate, invite this person either into more consequential or other low-cost decisions.

1 Timothy 3:6 warns against appointing a recent convert to a vital leadership role. He or she may be passionate but untested. Watch for leaders who are seasoned in their faith and growing in the God-life.

**REFLECTION**

- Which members of your faith community seem to be promising leaders?
- How would you describe each one through the lenses identified in the first paragraph?

**ACTION**

Practice low-cost decision making with potential leaders. Kindle spiritual conversation with them in a personal context. Reveal how you are personally growing deeper with God and others and reaching wider to serve others. How are they doing this?

**CARD  
5**

Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

**ARE YOU “APPOINTING?”**

“And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.”

Acts 14:23 (NRSV)

The work of “appointing” people to key positions is not short work. It is an intentional process that begins with asking people to serve in a way that makes sense to them. It involves challenging people to serve in ways that might stretch them. It requires providing people the right amount and type of training to successfully serve where they are needed. Some roles require extensive training while others are entry points where learning on the job is best. Some roles require spiritual maturity while others require only a willing spirit.

How do we get people to serve in a new worshiping community in the right roles with the right training? By appointing them. Too often we make ways to serve available by posting or emailing them to the entire community. In addition to having our messages become lost in the deluge of information, these generic appeals rarely attract the right people for the role. You need to make eye contact with people. An ancient practice that makes sense today is directly challenging the people God has placed around you to serve in a role that fits them and helping them be ready to fulfill that role. Does your church “appoint” people to important positions?

**REFLECTION**

- How do you currently recruit people to serve with you?

**ACTION**

Over the next three months, write down each week names of two people involved in some way with your new worshiping community. Pray for them throughout the week and consider roles they could play now and in the future. Invite each of them to meet with you in the next few weeks to discuss these roles and any training that could lead to new opportunities for service. At the end of three months evaluate the impact of this rhythm of ministry.

**CARD  
6**

Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

**DISAPPOINTMENT AND RELATIONAL  
FAILURE DEAL WITH IT!**

How you will deal with relational failure and hurt might be the most important practice your new worshiping community needs to implement and teach regularly. It is not a matter of, “Will your people hurt and disappoint each other?” but rather “How will the people in your community react when others hurt or disappoint them?” How your community handles relational failure and disappointment will determine your community’s ability to be a witness of the love of God to the world. Acts 6:1-7 tells the story of a ministry failure: one very helpless group, widows, was being over looked in the distribution of food. Someone brought the matter to the attention of the leadership, instead of allowing gossip to spread and escalate. The leadership dealt with the problem openly and intentionally, while not allowing the issue to take them off the course of their mission. The results of dealing well with conflict were summed up in these words: “The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem...”

**REFLECTION**

- When someone wrongs another member of your community, what do you expect the one wronged to do in response?
- What do you expect the one who wronged someone to do in response?
- What do you expect those in your community to do when they see relational failure?
- What scriptures do you see as models of how your community will relate to each other, especially when there is hurt or disappointment?

**ACTION**

Develop a clear set of expectations on how your community will deal with relational failure and disappointment. Teach those expectations—and the scriptures that inform them—annually to your congregation and twice a year to your leadership. Mark on your calendar the dates you will teach this. Make it a real practice of your community.



**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

**ARE YOU BUILDING “DWELLINGS”  
NOBODY NEEDS?**

“Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings.’”  
Luke 9:33 (NRSV)

Peter had just witnessed Jesus in His glory. He had just met Moses and Elijah. His response: “let me build three dwellings.” Jesus does not even acknowledge his plan; Jesus, Elijah, and Moses do not need Peter to build three dwellings. Peter had just witnessed the amazing and his response is underwhelming. Three dwellings had nothing to do with why Peter was brought to the mountain with Jesus.

The reality for most of us who are in the lead of beginning a new worshiping community is that we are constantly building “dwellings” nobody needs or wants. We run with our great ideas without listening to the needs of the community or reflecting on our God given mission. Stop building what nobody needs or wants. Especially, stop trying to build what God has never asked you to build.

**REFLECTION**

- How clear is your mission?
- Who has God called you to “be with”?
- What do you believe God has asked you to be about in your community?

**ACTION**

Bring together two trusted key leaders from within your community and a third person you trust from outside your community. Review with them every practice of your new worshiping community. How do your practices relate to your mission? Are there any practices that are, like Peter’s dwellings, not needed and not relevant? Identify the practices that are not a part of God’s mission and begin to eliminate them.

**CARD**  
**8**

Recipe for **MINISTRY PRACTICES**

**LOOK FOR THE LEADERS GOD HAS  
ALREADY SENT YOU**

“You should also look for able men among all the people, men who fear God, are trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain; set such men over them as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens.”

Exodus 18:21 (NIV)

God has wired all of us to be able to relate to two or three other people. Everyone needs to have those skills and abilities just to make it through a day. But not everyone is wired to lead a group; even a small group of 10 people is a special calling. Moses was taught by his father-in-law to take the time to “look” for people who can lead 10 others, people who can lead 50 others, people who can lead hundreds of others, and people who can lead thousands of people. Most of us in the first 18 months of a new worshiping community do not need to worry about looking for those who can lead thousands or even hundreds, but we do need to start looking early for those who can lead 10 and those who are wired to lead 50.

## REFLECTION

Moses was told by Jethro to look for people who feared God, are trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain.

- What are you looking for in a person who could lead 10 or 50 others in your new worshiping community? Think through those God has already sent to your community and create three lists: one list of people who already fulfill what you are looking for in a leader, a second list of those who have “most” of what you are looking for in a leader, and a third list of those who have the potential to be who you are looking for to lead others.

## ACTION

Review your lists. Ask the people who already have the qualities you are seeking to assume a leadership position now; God has sent them to you for a reason. To those who have “most” of what you are looking for in a leader, assign someone now to help them develop what they are missing. (Early on, that someone will need to be you, especially if your first list is bland). For those on your list who have leadership potential, develop and implement a plan to move them forward. Each month, review, add to, and subtract from your lists of potential leaders as appropriate.

**CARD  
1**

## Recipe for PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

“He said to them, “This kind can come out only through prayer.”  
Mark 9:29 (NRSV)

There are many things that will only happen through prayer. A new worshiping community cannot heal the un-healable, open locked doors to people's lives, or overcome the deep needs of the community without prayer. The job of starting a real, Holy Spirit led, eternal life giving, new worshiping community is simply beyond any human's ability. On our own we can only start great organizations, but God knows that real worshiping communities will constantly face things that can only be done through prayer, through God's power, not through our abilities. We are about much more than can be seen. Real change in people's lives creates eternal ripples; if we only rely on what we can see and touch we will not be the deep life giving world changers God has called us to be in our communities and world. While we cannot pray from God's perspective, it is obvious from our vantage point on life that when we pray we stop trying to do it on our own and trust the creator of the universe to do the work of starting a new worshiping community.

**REFLECTION**

- Is your personal prayer life something you would like those God is sending to your new worshiping community to copy?
- Is prayer the “one thing” you must do today or something that you squeeze into a full schedule?
- When your leadership gathers, is prayer a central activity or something done so you can move on to the work of the church?

**ACTION**

1. Schedule a time each day into your calendar to meet with God (enter “m.w.G.” into your calendar daily). Make that time a priority appointment to keep. Imagine you are meeting with the one who can fund your new worshiping community, provide new contacts, and fix what is broken in your community, because that is who you are scheduling to meet with. Show up!
2. Write out a plan for how you will try and make prayer a central activity in all that you do as a new worshiping community.

**CARD**  
**2**

Recipe for **PRAYER**

**THE POWER OF PRAYER AND FASTING**

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“And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.”  
Acts 14:23 (NRSV)

Scripture is full of stories about miracles, big events, church growth, conversions and teaching moments, preceded by prayer and fasting!

The leaders we call in the church are generally adept at leading. Through our relationships with them it's become clear they know how to influence others, get things done and make stuff happen. They are generally not adept at prayer. Few of them have ever fasted for anything other than a medical test or procedure.

Yet, there is power in prayer! It moves mountains! Fasting taps into that power.

**REFLECTION**

- If you were asked to share how much time your leaders spend in prayer asking God to help them discern how to lead, what would you say?
- Is there a plan in place to help your leaders become prayer/fasting leaders?

**ACTION**

Before your next big event lead your leaders through a one-day fast.

**CARD**  
**3**

Recipe for **PRAYER**

**LORD OF THE HARVEST**

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“Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”  
Luke 10:2 (NRSV)

According to Scripture, Jesus taught his disciples to pray two prayers. One was the Lord’s Prayer, and one was this prayer to send laborers into the fields. Jesus wanted his disciples to understand the urgency of the mission – the fields are ripe – as well as the reality that they were not the only carriers of the mission. God’s intention is to send other laborers to join in the work of ministry. Do we really expect God to send them? Do we really trust God to do what God asks us to pray?

**REFLECTION**

If you were asked to share how much time your leaders spend in prayer asking God to help them discern how to lead, what would you say?

- What “ripe fields” do you see in your ministry context?
- What does it mean to you to pray to the “Lord of the Harvest”?
- Reflect on what it could mean for the faith community and the work if you were intentional about praying for the Lord of the Harvest to send laborers.

**ACTION**

Whenever you find the conversation and planning moving in the direction of what you don’t have or what you need to move the ministry forward, pray for the Lord of the Harvest to send laborers. Set your phone, computer or watch alarm to go off at 10:02 every day. The alarm will be a reminder to you to pray this prayer Jesus taught. Ask the Lord of the Harvest to protect this emerging community from an attitude of religious consumerism. Pray that this community of disciples would come to deeply understand the call to be co-laborers in the field.

**CARD  
4**Recipe for **PRAYER****CONVERSING WITH GOD**

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“Pray continually.”  
1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV)

Paul encourages the church at Thessalonica to “pray continually.” Most churches excel at talking with each other about God. But, can you imagine a group of people in a room talking about someone who is also in the room but rarely, if ever, directly addressing the person they are speaking about?

To pray continually is to continually converse with God rather than talk about God. Eugene Peterson once said that “prayer is the language of faith.” What, when, how and if we pray ... or don't ... expresses what we really believe about God in the world.

**REFLECTION**

- Does your leadership team spend more time talking about God than talking with God?
- What are the intentional ways your community is cultivating “the language of faith”?

**ACTION**

Rather than opening or closing your leadership time or other gatherings with prayer this week, stop the discussion at 15 or 20 minute intervals and spend time praying, continually acknowledging God's presence and leading.

**CARD**  
**5**

Recipe for **PRAYER**

**INTERCESSORY PRAYER**

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“Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray...Is anyone among you sick?  
Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.  
And the prayer offered in faith will make them well; the Lord will raise them up...  
The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”  
James 5:13-16 (NIV)

The word “intercede” means to intervene on the behalf of another. Or, in the context of prayer, to seek the presence of God on behalf of another. Interceding in prayer for and with others is one of the most life-giving and loving communal practices we can engage in with one another. Intercessory prayer moves us away from our self and into both community and the lives of others.

**REFLECTION**

- What keeps you from praying for others?
- Who are the people God has brought into your sphere of influence, in your leadership team, in the neighborhood, at your local coffee shop, your denominational judicatory?

**ACTION**

This week, along with your leaders, try an experiment: ask if you can pray for each person (Christian or not-yet Christian) you meet with at the end of your meeting. Create one other space or place in the life of your community where people can receive prayer.

**CARD**  
**6**

Recipe for **PRAYER**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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Read Matthew 6:9-13

There is the list maker, the person who keeps a tight list of all the prayer requests. There is the whisperer, the person who gently beckons the Spirit through soft nuances of sensitivity. There is the responder, the person who grunts, groans, and agrees in moments of communal prayer. There are many postures that our sub-contexts often demand of our prayers.

And then there is the way that Jesus teaches us to pray. He says stop praying as if the performance of your prayer determines your destiny. Instead, he says, pray the 57 words in Matthew 6:9-13.

Our ability to articulate our supposed need is not a prerequisite for God to be faithful in our lives. All thanks be to God. Instead, Jesus teaches us to pray the Lord's Prayer.

**REFLECTION**

- How would you describe your own practices of prayer?
- How would you describe the congregation's practices of prayer?
- From where do these practices originate?

**ACTION**

Pick a time to pray the Lord's Prayer every day with your church (e.g. at 9:13 every morning). Set alarms on your phones and though most will be in different places, pray the prayer together at the time you choose. Allow it to form the prayer posture of your church.



**CARD**  
**7**

Recipe for **PRAYER**

**PRAYING WITH OTHERS**

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“As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses’ hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up – one on one side, one on the other – so that his hands remained steady till sunset.”  
Exodus 17:11-12 (NIV)

The battle against the Amalekites was literally won by Moses’ ability to remain in a posture of intercessory prayer on behalf of the Israelites. When the Israelites were in battle Moses, stood at a distance and prayed and in this instance he did not do it alone. Aaron and Hur were there with him, supporting him, praying with him, holding up his arms. The intercessory prayer that Moses was engaged in was so taxing that his arms grew weary and he needed Aaron and Hur to stand and support him. If you are like many of us, you have a desire to pray, but you grow weary, tired and lack the focus and “stick-to-itiveness” to labor in prayer on behalf of others. Often, we need others to pray with us while we pray on behalf of others.

**REFLECTION**

- Have you allotted enough time in your weekly schedule to pray for and with those God has called you to serve?
- Who within your team has God-given gifts of intercession to pray like Moses or like Aaron and Hur, to hold up the arms of others in prayer?

**ACTION**

Take a week or two to review in scripture all the times that Moses prayed as he sought to lead the Israelites. For instance: When the Israelites complained and argued, when the Israelites disobeyed God and built a golden calf idol, when the Israelites wanted to kill him, when Moses was confused and lost, and when there was sickness or plagues.

In light of that, where is one place you can add more prayer in your ministry?

**CARD**  
**8**

Recipe for **PRAYER**

**FAST BEFORE YOU GO**

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“There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children...”  
Ezra 8:21 (NIV)

We can sometimes hesitate to ask our own community of faith to pray for the mission specifically, and to pray for their own protection in participating in what is a risky venture. We can get caught up in engaging our communities of faith in the logistics, plans and activities, and miss that they really do believe that they are part of a spiritual endeavor.

Ezra asked the people to prepare for their journey out of exile back to their homeland with fasting and prayer. Although they were returning home, what awaited them was uncertain, and the journey would be fraught with dangers, including wild animals and bandits.

**REFLECTION**

- What journey are you about to begin and who are your fellow travelers?
- In what ways are you placing the practice of prayer before your leaders and people and at the front end of your plans and activities?

**ACTION**

Take a prayer walk in your neighborhood and have a clear destination. Invite members of your community to walk and pray with you.  
Try fasting before the walk, then ending your walk with a meal.

**CARD**  
**9**

Recipe for PRAYER

DEVELOP PRAYER PARTNERS

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“For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places”  
Ephesians 6:12 (NRSV)

Starting a new community of faith that is a signpost of God’s Kingdom involves spiritual warfare. Participating in the Spirit’s work of seeing lost people come out of darkness into the light and life of following Christ is at the center of gathering a new missional community.

**REFLECTION**

Consider developing prayer partners who are NOT members or potential members of the church plant. Why? So that prayer requests can be very specific and address the cutting edges of where the Spirit is moving in your community of faith and where you are coming under spiritual attack.

- Who are the people in your life who know you, the people who have encouraged you to take a “leap of faith” into a church planting call? Consider asking family and long time friends who are already praying for you to be your official prayer partners. Would these people be willing to make a “step-up” commitment to receive regular prayer requests and rejoice with you in prayers already answered?

**ACTION**

Prayerfully develop a list of people to be prayer partners. Make a simple prayer covenant before you ask for a formal commitment, such as “I/we believe God has led me/us to regularly pray for you.” Ask prayer partners to discern whether or not to make this commitment. Regularly communicate with your prayer partners, share stories and pictures of what God is doing; specifically share prayer requests for lost people you are spending time with - ministry contacts and key initiatives – as well as share answers to prayers. Annually ask for a prayer covenant renewal.

**CARD  
10**Recipe for **PRAYER****PRAYERLESS IS POWERLESS**

“I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down in God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high and how deep his love is. May you experience...the fullness of life and power that comes from God.”

Ephesians 3:16-19 (NLT)

“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.”  
Ephesians 6:18 (NLT)

Prayer is the power that pulls every aspect of the life of any church together, so the more you make prayer part of the life of the community of faith, the better. Jesus taught his disciples to do this and the disciples, in turn, handed this down to us. It is true that a prayerless church is a powerless church. We are to pray without ceasing just as the early church did. Even in the early church when there was some misunderstanding regarding the distribution of food, the disciples took appropriate action through prayer to take care of the situation.

**REFLECTION**

- How much time is allotted for corporate prayers in the weekly activities of your church?
- Is there some emphasis on fasting as you pray as a church community?
- Have the members of your congregation experienced answers to prayer?

**ACTION**

Set a time for weekly fasting and prayer and one particularly on a Sunday so that those who are not able to participate in corporate prayers during the week can do so on a Sunday. The leadership of the congregation should have a special time to pray. Consider a prayer retreat every quarter. Encourage home fellowships where people can share in prayer in small groups.

**CARD  
11**

Recipe for **PRAYER**

## THE INDISPENSABLE PART OF YOUR PLAN

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“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.”  
Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength.”  
Luke 22:42-43 (NIV)

Ministry can be daunting to say the least. You have studied and made plans and established priorities only to discover you're stuck; it's just not working the way you intended. You are overwhelmed with unanticipated challenges and you are unable to simply execute your plan. You thought you were called here, but this is just too much! It's more than you signed up for. Now you are even experiencing some personal angst. As the magnitude of the sacrifice appears unbearable, it is now impacting your peace and confidence. You feel so weak and helpless.

### REFLECTION

Jesus teaches us that God can decide to remove whatever the challenge is. More importantly, he teaches us that it's not about our plans anyway. God will provide the help and strength you need to succeed in God's mission.

- Are you committed to making disciples and participating in the mission of God?
- Are you listening in prayer or doing more talking?
- What will happen when you begin to listen to God and allow God to order your steps—all of them?

### ACTION

Make a commitment to prioritize prayer. Let prayer be the only indispensable part of your ministry plan.

There seem to be a least ten topics that rise to the top for those **STARTING A NEW WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY**. The “recipes” in this box are broken down into those ten topics. Consider them like food groups. You cannot concentrate on one area at the expense of the others, yet all of us naturally gravitate toward certain food groups in our everyday diet. We encourage you to consider a balanced diet. But do not panic if one area is stronger in your community than others; every community is a little out of balance. The out-of-balance for your community might be exactly what God wants for you at this time. The ten topics are not hierarchal. They fall naturally into a wheel.

