

arc

Clean Water, Pure Hearts p62
What If? p68 / What I Wish I Knew Then p96

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? / MANY FACES OF ARC

Fighting for Families

Generation Church is a family that fights for families. One of their values is they believe that unity in the family is sacred, and they fight for households to serve the Lord. p30

Generation Church is a family that fights for families. One of their values is they believe that unity in the family is sacred, and they fight for households to serve the Lord. p30

We are a global family of church and business leaders that exist to see a thriving church in every community reaching people with the message of Jesus. We do this by providing relationships, resources, and opportunities to leaders of new and existing churches so that they can thrive.

arc



ARC MAGAZINE

Volume 5 • Issue 1 • April 2020
The Official Publication of the
Association of Related Churches

PUBLISHER

Shaun Ray

EDITORS

Rachel Compo
Lindsey Hansen
Ann Rivera

CONTRIBUTORS

Tommy Barnett
Tiffany Cooper
Michael Fletcher
Claudene Francis
Lindsey Hansen
Tim Lucas
Jesse Lusko
Micah McElveen
David Payne
Marlo Philip
Treavor Pound
Jesse Reed
Dino Rizzo
Josh Roberie
Meghan Robinson
Rich and Tina Romero
Danny Schulz
Michael Smith
Larry Stockstill
Greg Surratt
Tori Townley
Kenneth Wagner

PROJECT MANAGER

Lauren Song

DESIGN & LAYOUT

Alissa Cucjen
Ervin Edodoleon
David Song

HOW TO REACH US

Association of Related Churches
1201 Lee Branch Lane
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 981-4566
info@arcchurches.com
arcchurches.com

p18

Where Are They Now?

Catch up with a few of our planters to find out more about their ministry.

p24

Building His Church

by Danny Schulz

p26

7 Factors to Consider When Choosing Portable Church Equipment

by Jesse Reed

p28

Developing Leaders for Church Planting and Beyond

by Josh Roberie

p30

Fighting for Families

God began to stir a desire within the Romeros to start their own church. Rich recalls, "It was during this time that God gave me the vision to plant a life-giving church in our city."

by Lindsey Hansen with Rich and Tina Romero

p36

A Look at ARC Global

Over the years ARC has been asked to expand its mission and plant churches in other countries around the world.

by Michael Smith

p50

Many Faces of ARC

We believe in the strength of relationships, and value each person's wisdom and experience, and we want to share that with you.

p56

Living a Legacy Life

by David Payne

p58

The Way Out of Weariness

by Claudene Francis

p60

More Than Survival

by Micah McElveen

p62

Clean Water, Pure Hearts

Not only does Liquid Church have a unique name, but it is uniquely meeting the needs of its community, and the world is taking notice.

by Lindsey Hansen with Tim Lucas

p68

What If?

Throughout my life, I've sensed God's clear call to find a need and fill it, to find a hurt and heal it.

by Tommy Barnett

p84

Q&A with the ARC Founders

p90

Healthy Things Grow

by Kenneth Wagner

p92

How to Have a Thriving Marriage in Ministry

by Tiffany Cooper

p94

Sundays Keep Coming

by Jesse Lusko

p96

What I Wish I Knew Then

Leading up to my birthday, I decided to capture some of the lessons I've learned in these forty years.

by Meghan Robinson

p102

Creating a Sending Culture

The struggles of the early church have been repeated throughout church history. It seems we Christians are habitually reluctant to reach beyond our comfort zones, to risk potential conflict and loss in stretching the boundaries of Christianity.

by Michael Fletcher

LET ME ENCOURAGE YOU FROM SCRIPTURE. I was reading the story of Joshua. Right after he became a leader, he's following Moses, and he comes to his first obstacle. He has to take the children of Israel across the Jordan River. To make matters worse, it's at flood time. Joshua goes to the Lord, and the Lord gives him a plan. They get across the river, and once they are on the other side, God tells him to make a monument there.

Some of us may feel like Joshua. Maybe you're a young leader that's just transitioned a church from a more experienced veteran. Or perhaps you're getting ready to plant a church, or you haven't led a church very long. No matter what stage of ministry you are in, we're all facing this obstacle together - COVID-19.

You may have thought, am I capable? Will I be able to lead? And in our darker moments, we wonder, will there be people on the other side of this? What about the resources? What about finances? Well, I've got good news for you. Just like Joshua, this situation is not a surprise to God. God wasn't surprised by the flood tide at the Jordan, and God is not surprised by what you and I are facing today.

In Joshua 4:14 it says, "That day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they stood in awe of him all the days of his life, just as they had stood in awe of Moses." Here is an obstacle. Joshua is not fearful. He's full of faith. He's not discouraged, but he's encouraged in the Lord. He leads the people to a victory, and that victory establishes his leadership in the eyes of the people.

God is going to lead you to victory in this season. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Stay in faith. When you come through, God is going to establish your leadership like nothing you've seen before. I believe that for you. I believe it's true because we've seen examples of it in God's word.

Not only are we going to get through, but we're going to get through together, as the ARC Family. Family takes care of one another. We're going to help each other through it. I believe that the best is yet to come.




GREG SURRATT
President, ARC



317

AVERAGE LAUNCH DAY
ATTENDANCE IN 2020
(Highest in ARC history!)

437

LAUNCH DAY SALVATIONS IN 2020

\$8M

DOLLARS INVESTED INTO
CHURCH PLANTING IN 2019

100%

PERCENTAGE OF PARTNER
GIVING THAT GOES DIRECTLY TO
CHURCH PLANTING.



902

NUMBER OF CHURCHES
LAUNCHED WITH ARC

A Thriving Church

The vision of ARC is to see a thriving church in every community, reaching people with the message of Jesus. Although the current state of our world may have caused our methods to change, we are committed to seeing the Church thrive through every situation because Jesus and the local Church are the hope of the world.

There is no greater calling than to serve broken humanity. Our job is to minister life to those who are hurting. People needed Jesus before COVID-19, and they certainly need Him now. People need healing in their bodies; their families need restoring; they have financial troubles. The world needs the Church to be strong and united to help bring healing.

Instead of focusing on all the things we can't do during this season, let's think about the opportunities. There are millions of people, at home, on their phones and computers, looking for hope. This may be the opportunity for someone who has never stepped inside the church doors to try church for the first time. Or the chance for someone who gave up on church, to try one last time. They may be in your city, or they may be thousands of miles away. What a unique opportunity we have to bring the life-changing message of Jesus to a hurting world like never before.

Not only do we want to help you maintain your church during this season, but we want

it to thrive. ARC Family, we are praying for you, and we're here to help provide resources and support for you and your church. We want you to know that you are not alone. We learned early on, pastors need resources and relationships. The phrase, "Don't do ministry alone," has never been more true than today. Even if we are physically apart, we don't want you to feel isolated in ministry. Family takes care of family, and we want to help resource and connect you in any way that we can.

When the COVID-19 situation began, the ARC Family stepped up immediately to provide resources for local churches. We were able to connect pastors whose venue had closed with churches who had a permanent facility to meet. Churches offered their studio space for others to film weekend services. Pastors rallied together in communities and formed creative solutions to serve the people in their cities. Churches became clinics and food banks. Pastors began sharing their knowledge and experience and coached others through online webinars. ARC Meetups moved to online meetups for pastors to gather and connect regionally. And the ARC Family was able to resource those churches who were in the greatest financial need.

These are precisely the characteristics that make up ARC's Family Values. We are so honored to be able to lead alongside so many of you who exemplify these values daily.

LOVE. *We love because He first loved us.*

GIVE. *We are generous with our resources.*

UNITE. *We gather to advance the Kingdom.*

SERVE. *We strive to meet the needs of the community.*

HONOR. *We value the past and celebrate the future.*

BELIEVE. *We have confidence in the calling.*

DREAM. *We have a vision for what's to come.*

The Church is united like never before. If you haven't already, I encourage you to join the Unite 714 movement at unite714.com. Pastors, leaders, churches, and individuals from around the globe are joining together—with one heart, one voice, and one prayer—to see the spread of COVID-19 halted, lives healed, hardships mitigated, people come to Christ, and an outpouring of God's Spirit.

God promises in 2 Chronicles 7:14, that when we humble ourselves, unite in prayer and seek His face, He will hear us, He will speak, He will forgive, and He will heal our lands. Thousands of churches are joining in one united prayer during church services and praying the same prayer at 7:14 each morning and night.

As we believe for healing in our land, the mission of ARC continues. We are continuing

to help new and existing churches thrive by providing leaders with relationship, resource, and opportunity. This includes church planters. We have recently crossed the mark of 900 churches planted with ARC. This milestone is a huge accomplishment for us as an organization. We are so grateful for what God has done in communities around the world. Our founder, Billy Hornsby, would be proud of who we are. But he would tell us to, 'push on,' because there is more work to do! Church planters are still working, training, and planning to launch churches this fall or early next year. They need your prayers and your support.

We don't know what to expect in the coming months or exactly what our world will look like, but we do know that the world needs Jesus. These local churches will reach people who have never been reached. We believe every community deserves to have a life-giving church. We want to see lives changed, needs met, families restored, people healed, and communities transformed.

Thank you for being a part of our family. We are on this journey together. We'll take it day by day, but we're excited about the future of ARC and the future of the local Church.




Dino & Delynn Rizzo
DINO & DELYNN RIZZO
Executive Directors, ARC

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a dense city skyline, likely New York City, featuring numerous skyscrapers and buildings. The image is semi-transparent, allowing text to be overlaid. The text is centered and includes a sub-header, a large main title, and a paragraph of text. A horizontal line is positioned below the main title.

THE MISSION

Launch

WE EXIST TO SEE A THRIVING CHURCH IN EVERY COMMUNITY REACHING PEOPLE WITH THE MESSAGE OF JESUS. THANKS TO OUR ARC FAMILY, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ASSIST HUNDREDS OF COUPLES PLANT CHURCHES NATION-WIDE AND FORM GLOBAL NETWORKS TO LAUNCH CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD. PLANTING LIFE-GIVING CHURCHES IS AT THE CORE OF ALL WE DO. WE ARE EXCITED TO CELEBRATE EVERY SUCCESS AND MILESTONE AS THESE CHURCHES GROW, BUILD, AND MAKE AN IMPACT ON THEIR CITY.



IN THIS SECTION

*p*18

Where Are They Now?

Catch up with a few of our planters to find out more about their ministry.

*p*24

Build His Church

Despite our best efforts, Sunday almost never went off without a hitch. My leaders could tell I was bothered. We were doing the work, but the joy of serving was waning. I noticed that our team seemed more concerned with pleasing me than serving God.

by Danny Schulz

*p*30

Fighting for Families

God began to stir a desire within the Romeros to start their own church. Rich recalls, “It was during this time that God gave me the vision to plant a life-giving church in our city.”

by Lindsey Hansen with Rich and Tina Romero

*p*36

A Look at ARC Global

Over the years ARC has been asked to expand its mission and plant churches in other countries around the world.

by Michael Smith

5 Attributes of a Church Planter

by Josh and Amy Roberie
ARC Launch Team

- 01. EVANGELISTIC.** The heart of the Great Commission is to make new disciples of Jesus. Do you have a burning passion to win souls for Christ?
- 02. AUTHENTIC.** Are you comfortable being yourself? There is a difference between learning from others and wanting to be like them at the expense of being your authentic self, and it's important to know this distinction. If you aren't comfortable being yourself, then others will have a hard time being comfortable around you, too.
- 03. ENGAGING.** You cannot rely on marketing tools or other people to build your team. You must be able to attract people to the vision God has given you. This happens by being authentic and speaking the everyday language of people outside the church. Are you someone who can engage in modern culture, or do you speak in preachy religious terms?
- 04. HONORING.** You must honor where you came from, and the churches in the area where you are going. You may know "honor-speak," but do your actions and attitudes match your words? If you are not ready to honor, even when it hurts, then you are not prepared to be a church planter.
- 05. LIFE-GIVING.** You must believe the best in others. You cannot claim to have great faith without having great faith in people. The people God sends to help you launch your church are your greatest assets.

ARC has an assessment process that gives effective feedback about one's readiness to plant a church. We don't determine your call because we know that is between God and you. We do our best, though, to help you find the right timing and circumstances to launch strongly. Visit arcchurches.com to learn more about our process and to apply.



ARC Health Plan

archealthplan.com

We understand the rising costs of health insurance premiums can be tremendous. The ARC Health Plan aims to provide affordable health insurance for ARC Family lead or senior pastors and staff*.

We are pleased to announce that Phase 1 of the ARC Health Plan is now available for enrollment. This comprehensive Apex Advantage Plan is a part of the largest health network in the U.S. Health insurance coverage is available immediately following enrollment.

Phase 1 of the ARC Health Plan is an affordable option for individuals or churches who currently pay high insurance health insurance premiums or do not currently have health insurance coverage.

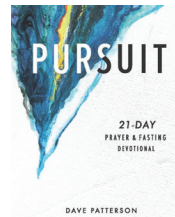
For more information visit archealthplan.com.

**Eligibility subject to ARC Family partnership requirements.*

Resources



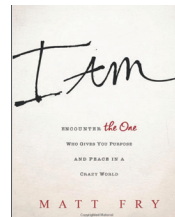
HIGHLANDS COLLEGE
highlandscollege.com



PURSUIT
by Dave Patterson



DANGEROUS PRAYERS
by Craig Groeschel



I AM
by Matt Fry

Welcome Home Church

by *Marlo Philip, Ph.D*

New Delhi, India

I have always loved the local church. In the early 80s my family hosted Sunday services in our living room where we experienced a strong sense of community. And I always knew God was calling me to build a life-giving, relevant, and influential local church in India.

God sent me to New Delhi, the capital of India. On many occasions, I thought I was in the wrong city. But I decided to persevere and do what I could do best: keep loving people.

My wife and I sat in cafes for hours and watched people. Thousands of people would walk past us, and our hearts broke for the many lost people in the city in which God was planting us. We knew God was birthing something amazing—building His Church in the political epicenter of India.

We started a coffee and worship gathering in our living room for university students and young working people. We convened in small groups of 15 to 20 people for about six months before officially launching Welcome Home Church in December 2016.



Through our Street Live programs, we invited many non-Christians to our launch. We played music on open streets of our city near the university campuses, major shopping centers, city metro train stations, and affluent areas. As a result, more than 600 people attended our launch service. About 60 people gave their lives to Jesus, and 70 people re-surrendered their lives to Him. This was an incredible day for all of us; it was like seeing a green light from God to move forward with the mission and reach more people in Jesus's name.

A strong team means a stronger church. We are training many young leaders, and it's exciting to see their passion for God as they serve the local church. Our church is known in the community as one that values one-on-one relationships. We establish connections for new visitors who attend our Sunday services, and they show great interest in being part of the family. God knew all the plans before we fully understood how they would unfold. To our amazing Father be all the glory!



Pre-Service Playlist

Created by Josh Sorenson on Spotify

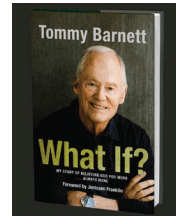
TITLE

See The Light
 More Than Good Enough
 Oasis
 Free
 So Alive
 Who We Are
 Momentum
 Even in the Valley
 Reality
 Caught Air
 Evergreen Reimagined
 I Got You
 Let My Words Be Few
 Come Alive / Speak Life
 With Every Step
 Safe Here
 Live Like You
 Give It Away
 This Is Revival
 Never Gonna Stop
 Ordinary
 Heart Set Free
 The Cross Said It All
 Your Love Conquers
 Marvelous Light
 Overcome
 Miracles
 Like No Other
 Higher Places
 Love
 I See the Promise

ARTIST

Hillsong Worship
 Joel Vaughn
 kalley
 Riley Clemmons
 The Young Escape
 MDSN
 ZOE Worship
 Kingly, John Strandell
 Elevation Rhythm
 ZOE Worship
 Amanda Lindsey Cook
 Aaron Bucks
 Local Sound
 Verses
 Covenant Worship
 Tasha Layton
 Northwood Worship
 Johnson Ferry Worship
 Adam LaVerdiere
 Canyon Hills Worship
 Hannah Kerr
 NLC Worship
 Ascent Project
 City Impact Church
 Justin Tweito
 Arise
 FRVR Free
 Thrive Worship
 Enjoy Worship
 Youth Alive
 C3 NYC

Resources



WHAT IF?

by Tommy Barnett



PROPEL WOMEN

propelwomen.org



ONE DAY LA

July 19-26



THE CHURCH BUILDER PODCAST

by United Pastors Network

How to Remain Unshakable

by *Larry Stockstill*

larrystockstill.com

■ DON'T BLAME GOD

The worst possible thing you can do in a “shaking” is to allow a deep anger against God to rise up in you. Job lost his entire fortune and family in one day and yet he refused to shift off his foundation of faith and blame God.

“God is for you.” Circumstances, laws of nature, and Satan combine to produce some huge “cave-ins” in our lives. The one constant, however, is that “God loves you and is for you.”

■ FIND AN ENCOURAGER

When airplanes start to shake, it’s good to look over and have a friend beside you. When Frodo, the ring-bearer in *Lord of the Rings*, felt the ground of Mt. Doom shake under his feet, his best friend, Sam, would always remind him about the “green grass back in the Shire.”

Find a friend who is unshakable. Their emotions, their decisions, their friendships, their career, their spirituality have exhibited a “rock solid” perspective. Call them, look them in the eyes, and draw the deep support God intended a true friend at your side to give you.

■ BREATHE...AND SING

Two things help your emotions to calm in times of “shaking.” First, take a deep breath, hold it five seconds, and let it out five seconds. Do that for a minute and your body (and soul) will “reset” itself. I often do that several times a day in times of high stress.

Second, learn to “sing for stability.” When I sing a familiar psalm, hymn, or spiritual song, the Holy Spirit takes over in my deepest being. Paul and Silas practiced this very thing when they were beaten and in chains at midnight in the Philippian jail.

■ TRUST

When everything is shaking, “trust.” The Hebrew word for “trust” is of a baby laying back in the arms of her mother. Sound asleep, she never notices that her mother may be in the middle of a great storm.

God is a wonderful Parent. He holds you. He carries you. He fights your battles. Rest in His arms. “Underneath are the everlasting arms.” You are going to make it through this storm because He is holding you.

START A CHURCH WITH ARC

If you have a dream in your heart to start a life-giving church and reach your city with the message of Jesus, ARC is here to come alongside you in the journey. Our goal is to help you see that dream come true by providing resources, training, and coaching, to help you launch and grow a thriving church.

The ARC launch model has been proven through the launch of hundreds of churches. These churches have record-breaking launch day attendance and long-term success that exceeds national averages. When you launch with ARC, you have access to all the resources that make this possible.

LAUNCH WITH ARC AND RECEIVE:

- >> TRAINING
- >> COACHING
- >> FUNDING
- >> RELATIONSHIPS
- >> RESOURCES
- >> OPPORTUNITY

GET MORE INFORMATION BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE:

- >> [ARCCHURCHES.COM/LAUNCH](https://arcchurches.com/launch)

Catch up with a few of our planters to find out more about what is happening in the life of their church.

Over the past 20 years, ARC has helped launch over 900 churches. We had the opportunity to catch up with a few of our planters to get an update on what is happening in the life of their church. It's such a great honor to work with couples that have a heart to launch a thriving church in their city!



Francis

AARON & LITSA

ARC CHURCH PLANT #774
Soul City
 KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

HOW HAS YOUR CHURCH CHANGED OR GROWN OVER THE YEARS?

We're one-and-a-half years in! The core of who we are and our mission haven't changed, but our methods and systems have. We've certainly grown and evolved during this period. I think we're much more intentional about everything we do.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR YOUR COUNTRY AND CHURCH?

We're believing for Malaysia to be saved and to experience a revival unlike anything before seen. We're believing for God to use our church to advance His Kingdom in Malaysia and in Asia.

WHAT ENCOURAGEMENT DO YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH OTHER PASTORS?

Keep moving forward. The enemy will always try to discourage, distract, and disappoint us, but everything we do and are doing now is crucial to seeing the fulfilment of our calling and purpose. Rest in His ability, strength, and wisdom. **arc**

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PLANT YOUR CHURCH IN DALLAS?

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex is home to more than eight million people and counting, and more than 300,000 transplants have moved to DFW during the past two years. Of these eight million, two million people are far from God. My wife and I were motivated to plant Vive City Church in Dallas because we feel compelled to show those in our city who are far from God that they are loved, they belong, and they matter.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF YOUR GREATEST MOMENTS SINCE PLANTING YOUR CHURCH?

Our one-year anniversary was one of the greatest moments. Year one was full of many battles, but seeing our church celebrate the 183 people who chose Jesus during our first year—and knowing we had a part in that—made every battle worth it.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE TOUGHEST MOMENTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY?

The Sunday after launch when our attendance decreased by more than 50 percent was one of our toughest moments. Although this experience was challenging at the time, I'm grateful for it now because it pushed me to love, care for, and connect with every person possible and help them grow.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH SOMEONE THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A CHURCH PLANTER?

Walk by faith, not by sight. You'll see things that look contrary to the words God spoke to you. In those times, trust in what He said, not what you see! **arc**

Davis
BRANDON & THOMESHI

ARC CHURCH PLANT #814
Vive City Church
DALLAS, TX





WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY?

From the moment you walk in the church, you are greeted with love and acceptance. Many people who have joined La Red share that they felt like part of a family from day one. We are thankful we have been able to sustain a healthy and life-giving culture.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE TOUGHEST MOMENTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY?

During the first few years it was difficult not to see the fruit of our hopes and prayers. It wasn't easy feeling that we had been sowing and giving our all without seeing the outcome.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHANGE YOU'VE SEEN IN YOURSELF SINCE YOU PLANTED?

We planted the first church without knowing it would grow into a church-planting network. This process began with a change in my heart after realizing the great need for more church-planting organizations in the Spanish-speaking world. Through the process of planting a church, completing ARC trainings, and connecting with other church planters, my wife and I discovered our greater passion for helping others believe in themselves and fulfill their church-planting dreams.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH SOMEONE THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A CHURCH PLANTER?

If this is what God has called you to do, you can do it. You are not alone. The world needs more churches. Your city needs your church! **arc**

Escobar

DANIEL & MISTY

ARC CHURCH PLANT #302

Iglesia La Red

MANASSAS, VA (WASHINGTON D.C.)

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR CHURCH?

I love the fresh feeling of our church. We have people who are brand-new believers and people who are established Christians. They all have the same spirit to reach the unreached, to be a church that loves and welcomes everybody. Whatever the need, everyone rallies around it. I've been blown away by how together the people of City Point can do the impossible. They love extravagantly, serve with humility, give generously, work hard, and seek God with passion. Our church feels more like a giant family than an organization.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF YOUR GREATEST MOMENTS SINCE PLANTING YOUR CHURCH?

Planting a church puts you on the front line where God is changing lives, and we see His influence in so many ways. We have seen marriages healed, bodies made whole, and lives transformed. We have seen atheists and agnostics receive Christ and serve in the church. We have seen broken hearts restored and people discover their gifts. We have seen grown men and women with tears in their eyes as they come out of the baptism waters. We have seen teenagers' hearts catch on fire with a passion for God. Certainly, there are difficult days, but great moments are always there to lift us up.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE TOUGHEST MOMENTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY?

Our toughest moments revolve around our meeting space. Our church has grown steadily, so we are always adding services or looking for a larger space. By our fifth year we had met in four different venues. We renovated three of the four spaces for our church. It has been a good problem, but raising funds and completing expansion projects are not always easy for a young church. **arc**

Woods
EDDIE & JULIE

ARC CHURCH PLANT #299
City Point Church
ALLEN, TX



Shaffer

JERRY & CARRIE

ARC CHURCH PLANT #54
The Well
 GENEVA, (CHICAGO) IL



WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PLANT YOUR CHURCH IN CHICAGO?

Carrie and I felt called to Chicago in the late '90s. When we started looking for a home in 2000, the western suburbs were one of the fastest growing areas in Chicagoland. Not only that, but the towns were old and hadn't been founded as part of Chicago, so they had a real sense of identity and community that we loved after coming from a small southern town. In the end we simply fell in love with the town, people, and church Jesus was calling us to start.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE TOUGHEST MOMENTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY?

During the third year after we moved to Chicago, our little fledgling church of 45 people completely fell apart. All but one family moved out of state in a single summer, and we were left with only a handful of guests we had recently met. We spent that fall and winter rebranding and relaunching, but it was a tough season.

Also, shortly after we purchased our building this year, we lost our entire roof in a freak storm, and in a week, we had to go mobile. The process and season were rough, but our people and team were amazing. It's been difficult, but I am confident that what the enemy meant for evil God is going to use for our good and His glory.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH SOMEONE THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A CHURCH PLANTER?

Do it! It's the hardest thing you will ever do, nothing will turn out the way you think it will, and you are not who you think you are, but these are the beauties of it all. God will reveal Himself and His Kingdom to your community and you in ways that nothing else ever could. And if you are faithful, it will be worth it. **arc**

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR CHURCH?

I love that no matter how big the church has grown, people have remained friendly, outward-minded, and inclusive. People often say this church is the friendliest they've ever attended, and hearing those words puts a smile on our faces. A culture of friendliness is one of the best-kept secrets to growing a church.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF YOUR GREATEST MOMENTS SINCE PLANTING YOUR CHURCH?

Baptizing 120 people in one day during our second year was one of our greatest moments. We had to hire portable grandstands for the car park, multiple pools, and a DJ to set the party atmosphere. People still talk about that day. The other moment was 12 months ago when we moved into our brand-new building. Since that time the church has doubled in size; there's no doubt that something shifted that day.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE TOUGHEST MOMENTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY?

If you are wired to love people, it is difficult when some of the closest people you love decide to leave. We have had a few moments when people who we thought would be with us always moved on when least expected. After talking to many pastors who have planted churches, we realized that as the church grows and changes, so do people. Even Jesus had Judas leave him, which is a little comforting. Every time we thought someone was irreplaceable, God brought someone else. We have learned to keep moving forward! **arc**



JOEL & ELLEN
Cave

ARC CHURCH PLANT #367

Glow Church

GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA

Build His Church



by *Danny Schulz*

📍 @daschulz

WHEN I BEGAN DREAMING of planting a church, I imagined building something awesome out of nothing. Then my wife and I attended an ARC Launch Intensive, and I started to believe that dream was possible. The level of excellence and attention to detail at the event was breathtaking. Each session began with a countdown clock, and the program stayed perfectly on schedule. The staff had thoughtfully provided water for everyone, and the labels on each water bottle faced exactly the same direction. I was listening to every word the presenters shared with a little drool hanging off my lip.

Our church launch was a far cry from what we experienced that weekend in Birmingham. I'm proud of what we accomplished, but we had a long way to go. Every week we focused on making the right tweaks and moving closer to our vision.

Over time, our Sunday experiences improved and our church began to grow. Each weekend we were becoming a little more like that church in my dreams. But as we progressed, something else was happening: I started showing up to our Sunday gatherings wound up emotionally.

Every week had to be my very best preaching. Every worship set had to be flawless. Every greeter had to stand in the perfect place, with the perfect smile. There was no room for "less than the best" because people's eternities hung in the balance.

Despite our best efforts, Sunday almost never went off without a hitch. My leaders could tell I was bothered. And before I knew it, the low-grade tension in me was spreading to my leaders and the rest of the Dream Team. We were doing the work, but the joy

of serving was waning. I noticed that our team seemed more concerned with pleasing me than serving God.

Something had to change. As I sought to unwind the tension, I learned the following.

RECOGNIZE THE MIXED MOTIVES. Yes, my work is for the Lord and the lost, but it's easy to assume my heart is in the right place. The truth is, there's something else beneath the surface, another reason I want our services to be excellent: my desire to feel successful and be respected. Sure, I want to reach people. But I also don't want to look bad. I needed to identify the mixture in my heart and allow God to search me and know me.

REST IN THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. I had to realize that Jesus is the Savior, not me. He's building His church. And unless the Lord builds the house, I'm laboring in vain. While I absolutely have a part to play as a pastor, Jesus is the head of His church. He wants to win the lost and build His church more than I do.

At the end of the day, it's not my efforts, brilliance, or charm that cause anything good. It's a result of God's grace by God's Spirit.

RETURN TO MODELING JOY AND CELEBRATION. I'm bound and determined to show up on Sundays (and every day) full of joy and ready to celebrate the victory that Jesus has won. I've started getting up earlier on Sundays to ensure I spend additional time preparing my heart before Him so I can set a culture of joy with my smile, my worship, and my conversations. As lead pastor, I'm the chief culture

creator on the team. It's up to me to live what I want to see in our church.

RELAX INTO A MARATHON PACE. I plan on being in ministry for decades to come. My wife and I are leading with a focus on the next generation, believing that the church we launched will thrive long after we are done leading it.

If we lead at a sprinter's pace, we'll never last for the long haul. The success of our ministry doesn't rise and fall on this Sunday; there's another one coming. And the longer I'm in ministry, the more I realize that most people like to see our humanity and mistakes. They may be inspired by our strengths, but they identify and connect with our weaknesses.

By managing this tension, I'm learning to better trust that the Lord will do His part of ministry while taking joy in the part He allows me to play. He hasn't designed me to pastor from a place of tension or anxiety. We're still committed to doing our best work and constantly getting better, but we no longer attempt to minister in our own strength. I'm now enjoying our gatherings in a fresh way, and I'm seeing a confidence and spirit of joy growing within our team, too. **arc**

Danny and Jamie Schulz are the lead pastors of Sun City Church in Spokane Valley, Washington. They dreamed to plant a church for more than a decade before their previous church sent them to Spokane in 2015 to launch Sun City (ARC church plant number 466). Since then, it's been a wild ride of building teams and growing the church into a flourishing community in the heart of Spokane Valley. To learn more, visit suncitychurch.com.

7 Factors to Consider When Choosing Portable Church Equipment



by *Jesse Reed*

 @portablechurch

FINDING THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT for your portable church is no easy task. Space, storage, and transportation are a few of the factors you must take into account. In addition, setting up and tearing down equipment every week can be a unique challenge.

Focus on these seven key points to best equip your portable church and its specific needs.

1. COSTS INVOLVED. Choosing the right portable equipment can save your church thousands of dollars, but costs don't end with the equipment purchase. Don't forget to consider these costs:

- Rent, utilities, and other expenses
- Storage and transportation
- Equipment repair due to wear and tear
- Replacement of equipment

2. VENUE FACILITIES AND LIMITATIONS. No two portable churches have the same

equipment needs. For example, a church that meets in a school may not need chairs, whereas a movie theater church might not require a projector and staging.

Before you choose any equipment or use the facility's systems, ask the following questions:

- Will the setup be the same each week? Or, will we need to move our equipment to different parts of the facility?
- What are the landlord's expectations regarding payment for any damage or repairs of equipment?
- If we need to use another part of the facility, will we be able to move the permanently installed equipment there?
- Will the facility's electrical capacity be able to handle all the equipment?

3. SETTING UP AND TEARING DOWN. Installing and packing equipment is a key

element of the portable church experience. While this weekly exercise encourages a healthy volunteer culture, it can be tiring and frustrating for your team. You can avoid such fatigue by ensuring your equipment allows for efficient and easy setup and teardown.

Before zeroing in on the equipment for your mobile church, here are a few crucial considerations:

- How much time will it take to set up and tear down this equipment?
- How many people will be on the team handling these tasks?
- Will it be easy for volunteers to carry equipment in, around, and out of the building?
- Does handling this equipment require special skills? Or, can volunteers be easily trained to install, use, and put it away?

4. PROPER STORAGE. Storage (or the lack of it) is a key determining factor when choosing your portable church equipment. While a few rented venues offer on-site storage, most will require your equipment be brought in and taken out each week. Therefore, it is important that the equipment you choose allows you to:

- Store it in a safe manner.
- Stay within your allotted storage space.
- Keep your storage space costs to a minimum.
- Maintain some free space for storing additional equipment.

5. EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION. The weight, size, and volume of your portable church equipment have a direct impact on

transportation logistics. Ask these key questions beforehand:

- Is the facility accessible via both stairs and elevators?
- Will the team be able to load and unload the equipment in the truck or trailer safely and efficiently?

6. DURABILITY AND SAFETY. The life of the equipment is another important factor. Sometimes it's wise to invest in slightly more expensive equipment if it will last longer. Consider the following:

- Must the equipment be upgraded every few years?
- Is it made with safe and durable material? Will it withstand the rigors of the road, and will it sustain weekly setup and occasional drops?

7. APPEAL AND COMFORT. Finally, your equipment will be used by your teams every week. Therefore, it's key to ensure they can use it comfortably and efficiently and have fun while doing so! Make sure the equipment checks these boxes:

- Comfort
- Appeal
- Ease of use
- Durability


arc

For more than 25 years, Portable Church® Industries has helped thousands of churches launch strongly and thrive in a mobile setting. They design custom solutions that fit each budget, vision, and venue. Portable Church is a valued Resource Partner with ARC. To learn more, visit portablechurch.com.

Developing Leaders for Church Planting and Beyond



by Josh Roberie

 @joshroberie

YOU HAVE HEARD the saying, ABC: Always be closing. In ministry the phrase should be ABD: Always be developing leaders (including recruiting leaders). When recruiting people for your church plant, consider reaching those far from Christ, finding people who need a church to grow in their faith, and gathering leaders who can help you support the mission of the church.

Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, says, “If I were running a company today I would have one priority above all others: to acquire as many of the best people as I could [because] the single biggest constraint on the success of my organization is the ability to get and to hang on to enough of the right people.”

Such a good thought for church planters in the recruiting phase. I believe this also applies to all seasons of any organization. Leaders are the skeleton that supports church growth. You can swell without good leaders. You can gather by taking advantage of seasons and great planning for an event. But sustainable growth requires great leaders and teams of leaders to hold the pieces together. Leaders are the ones who transmit the values and culture into others.

Understanding the following three phases of pastoring helps you develop leaders while taking care of everyone else in the church.

REACHING NEW PEOPLE. If your church plant is not reaching out to those far from

“Leaders are the skeleton that supports church growth.”

God, then you are missing the point. A new church should not merely add a new worship service to a community. It should be an outpost of help and rescue, actively displaying the love of Christ by helping people meet their spiritual and physical needs.

CARING FOR MEMBERS. Members easily can be overlooked in the mix of starting a new church or growing an existing church. Alternately, they can become the total focus of a church that then unintentionally ignores other groups. Being a wise pastor means continuously providing love, encouragement, and correction to members. We must cry with them and celebrate them. Our goal with this group is to help them take one step at a time in their faith, patiently caring for them along the way.

DEVELOPING LEADERS. Leaders require a different type of attention and plan of action. We don't love any group more than another, but to love everyone equally, we must love each person differently. As a church planter, keep your eyes open for gatherers. These are people who carry their own influence and have a desire to share that influence with you to grow the local church. The goal is to let them know they are appreciated, while

encouraging them to carry the culture. They may get more access to you, and this investment is significant. When the time is right, you will multiply your efforts by delegating responsibility to your leaders.

To summarize, we must focus on recruiting three types of people: New people, through service and outreach; new members, through gatherings and pastoral care; and new leaders, through access and individualized plans. This is not only an important strategy for church planting; it is an effective approach to get and hang on to the right people and help your ministry achieve its mission of reaching the community and growing Christ-followers. **ARC**

Josh and Amy Roberie are a part of the ARC Launch Team. They have helped hundreds of couples through the ARC launch training process to successfully launch their churches. They love to help couples take a dream and turn it into a reality. To learn more about starting a church with ARC, please visit arcchurches.com and click, “I want to start a church.” We will provide free resources to you simply for connecting with us.



Fighting for Families

By Lindsey Hansen with Rich and Tina Romero



Rich and Tina Romero were both raised in Miami, Florida. They met as teenagers in church youth group and became high school sweethearts. They served together at church and at an early age began to feel God call them to full-time ministry.

After high school, Rich moved to Columbus, Ohio, and attended World Harvest Bible College. His vision at the time was to work with youth and sports. After college, he served as a youth pastor at a new church plant in Miami—his first ministry job, although technically he wasn't paid. Soon Tina and he were married, and Tina received her degree in education. The couple was happy to be working with students and had plans to develop a sports outreach program in the community.

After a few years Rich and Tina were offered a full-time position at their home church, where they first met. This church is very diverse, with many Hispanic cultures and Spanish-speaking people represented. Rich and Tina both have Cuban heritage, and they began to serve as youth pastors and develop the English-speaking ministry at that church.

After a few years on staff, God began to stir a desire within the Romeros to start their own church. Rich recalls, "It was during this time that God gave me the vision to plant a life-giving church in our city."

Planting a church was never previously on their radar, and Tina said her first honest reaction was to resist. "I had put God in a box and had a plan for what I was supposed

“In order to do a great work, we’ve got to do it together.”

to do,” she says. “I had to allow God to work in my life and give me a new vision.”

In 2016 the couple began to discuss with their pastors the dream of planting a church and spent a year praying about it. “That year was full of a lot of prayer, fasting, and ensuring we were hearing the voice of God and not just us,” Rich says.

God confirmed the vision in their hearts, and the Romeros knew they were called to start a church in Miami. “Miami is a major city, but there aren’t a lot of life-giving churches,” Rich explains. When the Romeros began praying about starting a church in Miami, there was only one other ARC church plant in the area. “It is a melting pot. We’re from a part of Miami that is very Hispanic, and everyone speaks to you in Spanish.” Hispanic or Latino (of any race) make up 70% of Miami’s population.

“Miami is also very driven by materialism,” Rich adds. “Make sure your car looks good,

your Instagram looks good, your clothes look good, and you’ll fit in. There’s a lot of drug abuse. There’s a very high rate of divorce. And, because of the strong Hispanic culture, there’s a lot of Catholicism. We felt the need in our city, so it was a no-brainer for us,”

Josh Cossey, whom Rich first met while he was in Bible school, was one strong early influencer in the Romeros’ church planting experience. Josh and Tiffany Cossey planted Faith Church in 2011 in Oklahoma City (ARC church plant number 186). Josh introduced the Romeros to ARC, and they began ARC Launch Training.

ARC Launch Training includes an online training platform where couples can work through courses together at their own pace. ARC Launch Intensive is three days of focused training, where couples are paired with a Launch Coach to offer counsel and advice through launch day and beyond.

Rich says, “When we went to the intensive, we didn’t know what the process would look like. We knew we had a big dream and a big vision, but didn’t know where to begin. How many people do we need to get started? How much money do we need to raise? Where are we going to have church? ARC helped us dial in those details,” he explains.

After Rich and Tina attended the ARC Launch Intensive, they felt confident that they could accomplish their vision. “We were blessed because we were planting a church in our hometown,” Rich says. “We had resources and a network here. We’re Hispanic, so half of our launch team was our family!”

They set out to recruit 100 people to their Launch Team and raise \$200,000 to start their church. “We had aunts, cousins, friends, and friends of friends start coming to our launch



“Whatever we have, we’re going to hand it down to whoever needs it.”

vision nights,” Rich recalls. “We had a lot of launch parties, rented out a lot of restaurants, fed everybody, and started casting vision.”

Tina adds, “ARC encouraged us during our planting process, to reach out to the other pastors in the area. This has created an environment of comradery amongst local pastors. We now have friendships with one another. We talk about things together, and we plan serve days together.”

Ministry in Miami wasn’t always so collaborative. Rich says, “It’s refreshing to see the next generation of pastors who get it. In order to do a great work, we’ve got to do it together.” Today, there are more than six ARC church plants within the Miami area, plus more ARC Family churches.

The Romeros continue to foster those relationships with new and existing churches throughout the city. “From day one we said that we’re going to be the most generous church in our city,” Rich says. “Whatever we have, we’re going to hand it down to whoever needs it.”

Throughout the entire launch process, the Romeros felt the favor of God. They were able to recruit a team, build relationships within the city, raise money, and secure a venue. “One of the horror stories I hear from other church planters is about how difficult it is to lock in a venue,” Rich says. “We were looking at two schools that were our dream venues. We contacted both, and one responded within a week and a half. After our first meeting with that principal, God graced us, and we got a ‘yes.’”

The Romeros’ church meets directly across from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. It’s a prime location that allows them to attract people of all ages.



“It’s been really cool to see people express outwardly what they’ve decided to live inwardly.”



“The type of church we’re trying to build is very different than anything our city has ever been exposed to,” says Rich. “We are a very family-oriented church. That’s why we named it Generation Church.”

Rich and Tina both grew up in broken homes with parents who battled addiction. They wanted Generation Church to be a church that fights for families. “If we are going to plant a church, this is why we’re going to do it,” Rich explains. “We’re going to reach the lost, expand the Kingdom, fight divorce head-on, and help keep families together.”

Rich explains that the life-giving approach and the simple tools ARC provided made what seemed impossible, possible. “Honestly, I don’t know where we would be without ARC. ARC surrounded us with the right people and was the key to our success.”

Rich and Tina, with their then three-month-old baby girl, and their team, launched Generation Church on January 21, 2018 (ARC church plant number 744). On launch Sunday 594 people attended, and 36 people gave their lives to the Lord! Every service is a big party with food, families, and fun. They preach in English but offer simultaneous translation devices during the service. This feature allows multigenerational families to attend church together.

Generation Church is now in its third year. The Romeros have witnessed nearly 60 people follow God in water Baptism since they’ve launched. “It’s been really cool to see people express outwardly what they’ve decided to live inwardly,” Rich says.

Generation Church has expanded to two services on Sunday morning, and recently secured its first permanent facility to use

as office space for staff, team nights, training, and a new internship program. And the Romeros are looking forward to even more exciting developments this year.

Tina is an assistant principal at a school in Homestead, Florida. It's located south of Miami, almost to the Florida Keys. When Generation Church launched, the principal of Tina's school was not a believer. Rich recalls, "She had her doubts about the church and what we were doing. But she had something unexpected happen in her personal life and began attending Generation Church. She was radically saved and experienced an incredible transformation in her life."

Recently the school Tina works in purchased a performing arts center, and the principal has asked the Romeros if Generation would launch a campus in

Homestead. Rich and Tina understand this could be an incredible opportunity to occupy a rent-free building. They are continuing to pray about their second campus and all that God has in store for their church this year.

Rich says, "When I think about the highlights from the past two years, I think about the individual stories from people and families that have been transformed. This is not my church plant. I'm merely stewarding it. I don't care how big of a dream it is for me and how much work I put into it; at the end of the day, it's His Church. He's going to grow it. He's going to fund it. He's going to grace it. It's incredible how faithful He is." **ARC**

To learn more about Generation Church, visit mygeneration.cc.



CANADA

IRELAND

UNITED
STATES

A LOOK AT ARC GLOBAL

BY MICHAEL SMITH

DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL NETWORKS, ARC

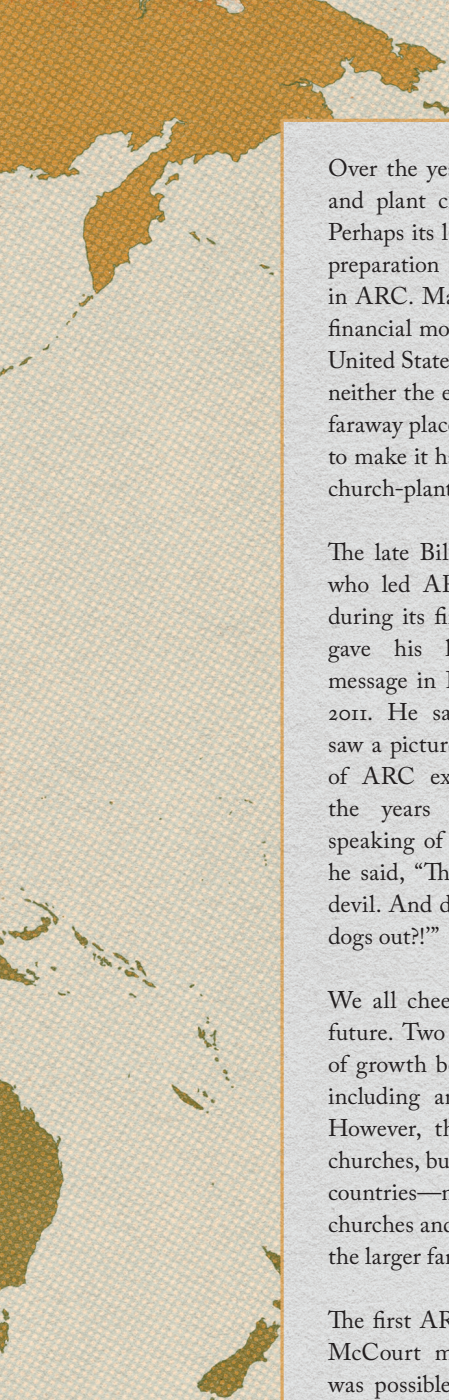


PAKISTAN

When describing ARC church planting, you may think of words like relationship, training, coaching, and funding. These characteristics describe church planting in the United States, but they also apply to planting churches globally.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

AUSTRALASIA



Over the years ARC has been asked to expand its mission and plant churches in other countries around the world. Perhaps its large launches and model of strong church-plant preparation provided the inspiration global leaders found in ARC. Maybe the impact of new church plants or ARC's financial model had a profound effect. Regardless, the ARC United States Lead Team always stepped back feeling we had neither the expertise to approve and train church planters in faraway places nor the seemingly unlimited resources needed to make it happen. ARC was designed to be a United States church-planting organization.

The late Billy Hornsby who led ARC so well during its first 10 years gave his last public message in February of 2011. He said that he saw a picture in heaven of ARC exploding in the years ahead. In speaking of this vision, he said, "There's going to be a roar in the kingdom of the devil. And do you know what it's going to say? 'Who let the dogs out?!'"

**"WE CELEBRATE WHAT IS
BEING ACCOMPLISHED
THROUGH THESE CHURCH
LEADERS AROUND
THE WORLD."**

We all cheered after hearing God's word to us about our future. Two months later Billy passed away, and new levels of growth began to take place that would transform ARC, including an expansion that we now call ARC Global. However, this time it was not about planting individual churches, but rather launching new ARC "networks" in other countries—networks that would plant and fund their own churches and be connected to ARC United States as a part of the larger family.

The first ARC Global church launched in Ireland. Andrew McCourt met with Greg Surratt and convinced him it was possible to see the ARC network replicated and life-giving churches planted on the island. Five years ago two charters, two bank accounts, and three board members from each country—Northern Ireland and the Republic—were assembled. Today Ireland has a strong lead team that has planted four new churches and trained many more in ARC's life-giving model.

Canada was next. John and Helen Burns, Brent Cantelon, and Jonathan Lambert met with Greg and me in the green room at the ARC Conference in Jacksonville, Florida and proclaimed: “We can do this!” Today the country has planted 18 churches and a handful of campus launches. And more than 40 churches are giving to the church-planting mission through ARC Canada.

Australia was in the hunt as well. The nation has trained multiple church planters and planted six churches. Then three years ago South Africa joined. Today the country has established 15 partner churches and launched six new church plants in what is called ARC Southern Africa. And Asia, a non-public ARC network, has planted 38 churches! The churches in this network are navigating a difficult climate, but their excellent leaders are guiding them well.

Most recently, in January of this year, ARC Pakistan launched. For a number of years, Mushtaq and Kanwel Anjum and their team have worked to build relationships, bring a life-giving culture, and elevate the conversation of church planting in Pakistan. More than 1100 people attended the first conference in Karachi, making it the largest ARC conference outside of the United States!

Some pastors across the globe do not have an “official” ARC network, but we consider them family. They have carried the spirit of ARC by promoting life-giving churches, generosity, a friendly environment, and intentional church growth to change their nations.

We celebrate what is being accomplished through these church leaders around the world. They, along with many other pastors and leaders in our ARC Family, have shepherded the development and growth of

ARC Global. These leaders include Michael Murphy, Rob Hoskins, David Branker, Robert Barriger, Rod Plummer, Sebastiaan van Wessel, Desmond Frey, Philip Murdoch, Eduardo Fernandez, Samuel Stephens, Gary Skinner, Jerry and Sharon Miner, and Helen Balzer.

What does it take to start an ARC network in another country? It begins with a team. This is by far the most important and challenging aspect—gathering a team of senior pastors and leaders that has regional or national influence to bring others to the table. These teams invest financially in their ARC networks so couples have the resources to plant life-giving churches. These pastors interface with the ARC United States Lead Team and other global lead teams. Finally, these teams steward the ARC movement with excellence, integrity, and authenticity.

It often takes one to two years to assemble a lead team. During that time, the network is officially organized as a charity or government-approved organization in many countries. Next tasks include establishing bank accounts and funding for the organization; contextualizing the launch model; building the digital infrastructure (website, database, accounting software, and launch dashboard); and working with budgets, funding models, and conferencing.

What does a fully functioning ARC network look like? In most places it includes a leadership team of three to five lead pastors or couples that will underwrite all ARC operational costs in that country while contributing resources to a church-planting pool. It has a funding partner base with a minimum of 10 to 15 existing churches partnering to plant new churches. It reflects a fully contextualized church

planting model applying the principles from the ARC United States Network.

Its financial model effectively funds part of the total cost of the church plant while re-investing money in ARC for the next church planter. Lastly, it looks like an organization that carries ARC's values and DNA: life-giving, generous, empowering, gift-oriented, focused on reaching the unchurched, and powered by prayer. And we have a 35-page manual to help with this process!

Recently ARC United States has begun investing more resources in these global networks. Once a network builds its lead team with giving churches and organizes itself operationally, ARC United States will partner with that network to provide digital resources. The global networks remain autonomous but function a bit like franchises. They are family. As such, ARC United States will provide the digital infrastructure needed, including ARC branding, website, graphics, training modules, and so forth.

**"IT'S A STANDARD
MANTRA IN THE
CHURCH-PLANTING
WORLD: PRAY,
GIVE, AND GO."**

Where are we headed next? There are several opportunities in Europe, including England and Germany. Brazil has been working hard to form a team as well. How can you be involved? It's a standard mantra in the church-planting world: Pray, give, and go. Pray for these leaders and the work they are doing. Give to these growing networks. Some are totally self-sufficient, and others are still getting off the ground. You might consider a one-time missions gift to these up and coming networks.

Finally, go. Don't merely show up, but support a conference by sending a missions team to serve as dream teamers, or go and meet with a lead team or local church staff. These men and women are amazing leaders who often have surpassed ARC United States by growing despite less-than-ideal economic situations and oppression. But like us, they love to learn, be inspired, and see ARC's culture spread throughout the earth! **arc**

ARC IRELAND

ESTABLISHED IN 2014

**JAMIE CORCORAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
4 CHURCHES PLANTED
1 CHURCH SET TO LAUNCH IN 2020**

ARC CANADA

ESTABLISHED IN 2015

**BRENT CANTELON, PRESIDENT
JONATHAN LAMBERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
18 CHURCHES PLANTED AND MULTIPLE
CAMPUSES LAUNCHED
40 PARTNER CHURCHES GIVING TO THE MISSION
3 CHURCHES SET TO LAUNCH IN 2020**

ARC AUSTRALASIA

ESTABLISHED IN 2017

**ROHAN DREDGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
6 CHURCHES PLANTED
TRAINED MULTIPLE CHURCH LEADERS
2 CHURCHES SET TO LAUNCH IN 2020**

ARC SOUTHERN AFRICA

ESTABLISHED IN 2017

**PAUL VAN COLLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
6 CHURCHES PLANTED
2 CHURCHES SET TO LAUNCH IN 2020**

ARC PAKISTAN

ESTABLISHED IN 2020


**MUSHTAQ ANJUM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
HELD FIRST ARC CONFERENCE IN JAN. 2020
WITH OVER 1,100 IN ATTENDANCE**

To learn more about the ARC Global Networks, visit arcchurches.com/global.

THE RELATIONSHIPS

Connect

RELATIONSHIP IS TRULY THE STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH AND OF ANY MINISTRY. WE ENCOURAGE PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO JOIN EACH OTHER AT ARC EVENTS, TRAININGS, AND GATHERINGS AS A WAY TO INTENTIONALLY BUILD RELATIONSHIPS. OUR HOPE IS THAT YOU WILL DRAW STRENGTH AND WISDOM FROM OTHERS, AND PROVIDE IT AS WELL. THAT IS THE JOY OF NOT DOING MINISTRY ALONE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO BE A PART OF ALL YOU CAN AND ADD YOUR UNIQUE STRENGTHS AND GIFTINGS TO THIS BIG FAMILY.



IN THIS SECTION

p50

Many Faces of ARC

The ARC Family consists of a growing network of leaders from all around the globe.

p56

Living a Legacy Life

Legacy isn't our bank accounts, our attendance counts, our follower counts, or our campus counts. It is the lives that are lived well after us and the eternities changed forever.

by David Payne

p62

Clean Water, Pure Hearts

Not only does Liquid Church have a unique name, but it is uniquely meeting the needs of its community, and the world is taking notice.

by Lindsey Hansen with Tim Lucas

p68

What If?

Throughout my life, I've sensed God's clear call to find a need and fill it, to find a hurt and heal it.

by Tommy Barnett



5 Ways to Create a Culture of Encouragement

by Kevin Gerald and Brandon Stewart
teamchurchconference.com

Teams are worth fighting for! Each month on the Team Church Podcast, Kevin Gerald discusses the conversations every team must have. This episode is all about creating a culture of encouragement. Something seemingly so small could be the thing that will take your team to the next level. In this episode you will learn the following:

01. Encouragement is everyone's responsibility.
02. Encouragement won't grow where it's regulated by fairness; encouragement grows where it's free to flow without keeping score.
03. People develop and grow best in a culture of encouragement.
04. Don't encourage only the down and out; encourage the up and coming.
05. Your organization won't get to the next level without encouragement.

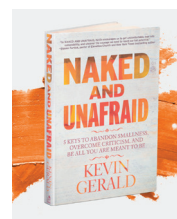
Resources



grow

GROW

growleader.com



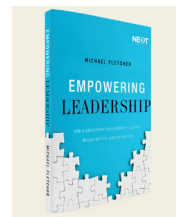
NAKED AND UNAFRAID

by Kevin Gerald



PASTORS COLLECTIVE

pastorscollective.com



EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP

by Michael Fletcher

Renew Church

Miami, Florida
renew.miami

Renew Church may be new, but that hasn't stopped the members from making a significant impact in their community. Treavor and Misty Pound planted Renew Church in Miami, Florida, in January 2019 (ARC church plant number 826). Renew was serving the city of Miami before the church had even launched. One of the church's core values is "we love our city." Treavor says, "We believe that we have to live out the love of God in our words and actions to those in our community."

In late August 2019, Hurricane Dorian was headed for Florida, but the Bahamas took the brunt of the storm. Dorian was the most intense tropical cyclone on record to strike the Bahamas and is regarded as the worst natural disaster in that country's history. "We watched as the storm completely missed Miami and seemingly stopped on top of several islands in the Bahamas," Treavor recalls.

Renew Church immediately responded to the need. Treavor recognized that every family in Miami was stocked with hurricane relief supplies, and he connected with the Church of the Nazarene and the district superintendent to bring supplies to the islands.

Their first shipment contained camping stoves and a generator, followed by food, tarps, bleach, and other supplies. As the floodwaters began to recede, recovery supplies were in high demand. Renew Church's third shipment included much of what their members had collected for their own hurricane preparations plus 1,500 cases of water.

Renew Church did not let its age or size affect its service to the community when disaster struck. The church continues to make an impact by loving Miami and being ready to meet needs that arise in the community.

Treavor says: "We see ourselves as a catalyst of hope and life change for the city of Miami for the glory of God!"

To learn more about Renew Church, visit renew.miami.



Outreach 101

by *Tori Townley*

serveaday.com

- **SEEK GOD'S HEART.** Before you make any moves, seek God's heart. Allow Him to reveal needs to you, download vision in your heart, and direct your steps.
- **CRACK THE CODE.** Every city and community have a unique design. There are diverse demographics, needs, resources, and potential. There is no one-size fits all approach to serving, so we must carefully listen to God and others to "crack the code" of our specific community.
- **SHOW UP.** As we seek to crack the code, we must be faithful by showing up to meet the needs in our path. We may be filling potholes, picking up trash, or painting classrooms, and we'll inevitably discover more opportunities to do good, which in turn will lead us to a world of favor.
- **PARTNER.** Working with others who are reaching the same people we want to reach can exponentially multiply our efforts and make a lasting difference. As we discover needs and think of ideas to make a difference, let's strengthen our efforts by partnering with like-minded organizations and churches.
- **BE CONSISTENT.** We don't have to do the same outreach every week, but we do have to keep showing up. Good things take time, so if we want to make a lasting difference, we must be diligent and consistent.
- **KEEP IT PERSONAL.** It's not about what we are doing; it's about whom we are serving. Ultimately, no matter how big the task or large the event, it's all about #TheOne. Let's take time to think through how we can instill a sense of dignity as we serve, and let's be sure the heroes are those we serve—not us.
- **VOLUNTEERING IS FOR EVERYONE.** As we serve, it's important for everyone to contribute in ways that suit their age, interests, and abilities. For example, enlist youth volunteers and those with creative abilities to help with craft projects; senior volunteers may enjoy assembling hygiene kits for the needy. To the extent possible, design your service opportunities to involve everyone in ways they can make a difference and have fun doing so.
- **CELEBRATE.** After every service opportunity, thank God for the chance to take part in His work. Take time to reflect on the stories, remember the faces, pray for the "ones," and celebrate the wins! Be sure to thank your team and encourage them to be consistent.
- **GIVE NEXT STEPS.** After every service opportunity, offer a next step to those who participated. For example, share the date of your next outreach, give information about how to join a service-oriented small group, or provide resources to help volunteers continue making a difference.



Find Your Family

arcchurches.com

ARC is made up of pastors, churches, and leaders with a vision to see healthy and thriving churches in every community, reaching people with the message of Jesus. We do this through building strong relationships, sharing valuable resources, and planting and multiplying life-giving churches around the globe.

RELATIONSHIPS

True relationship is the strength of the Church and any ministry. By intentionally being engaged in events, gatherings and connection points that ARC creates, you will draw strength from others, and provide it as well. This is the joy of not doing ministry alone. There are ARC events and Meetups going on year-round, across the country.

RESOURCES

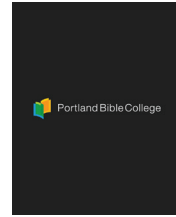
We want to see pastors grow healthier as leaders because we know that is what makes churches thrive. There are tremendous resources to draw from throughout our ARC Family. We curate a wealth of teaching on various subjects relating to ministry and life using digital, print and external partnerships. We aim to cater these resources to the context and the needs of your local church.

MISSION

Together, we have been able to plant over 900 churches since ARC began. Each new church planted through ARC is an extension of your church. We are grateful to each member of the ARC Family for your generosity and investment towards planting and multiplying the local church. 100% of the giving to ARC goes towards planting life-giving churches.

For more information visit arcchurches.com/join.

Resources



**PORTLAND
BIBLE COLLEGE**
portlandbiblecollege.org



RELATE COACHING
myrelate.org



**MOTION STUDENT
CONFERENCE**
July 23-25



YELLOWBOX PODCAST
yellowbox.co



SERVE DAY

REGISTER AT SERVEDAY.COM

07 11 2020
07 11 2020



Churches around the globe will join together to change the world on Serve Day. How do we change the world? *One act of kindness at a time.*

Join with us on July 11, 2020 by serving people anywhere and everywhere with no strings attached. Together we can change lives *and* change the world by showing the love of Jesus through serving.

Register your church online at serveday.com.

Be sure to follow [@servolution](https://twitter.com/servolution) for updates and resources to help you get started making a difference in your city.

#SERVEday20

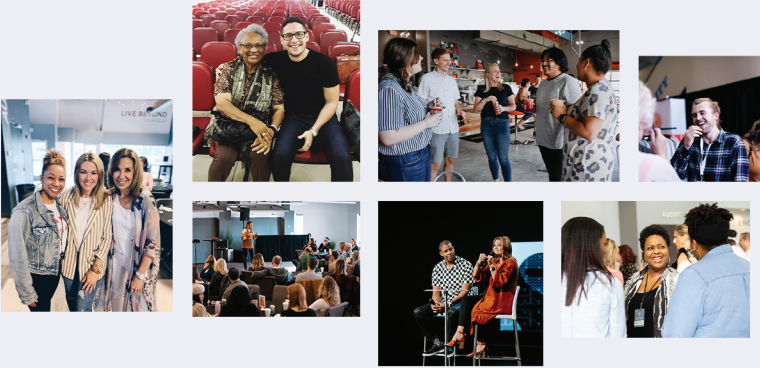
#ServeYourCity



BETTER TOGETHER

CONNECT

arc Association
of Related
Churches



MEETUPS

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & GROWING TOGETHER LOCALLY

ARC Meetups are an easy way to connect and build relationships with other local pastors and couples in your area. Meetups of all shapes and sizes are held across the country, throughout the year. If we truly want to impact our cities, we believe that we need to do it together - working alongside other believers and life-giving churches, to reach more people with the message of Jesus.

FIND THE MEETUP CALENDAR ON OUR WEBSITE
ARCCHURCHES.COM/CONNECT

RELATIONSHIPS

The ARC Family consists of a growing network of leaders from all around the globe.

Each person brings significant value and something unique to the ARC Family and body of Christ. We believe in the strength of relationships, and value each person's wisdom and experience, and we want to share that with you.

FOUNDING AND TEACHING PASTOR
Church on the Move
 TULSA, OK

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 3 WORDS

STABLE
CONFIDENT
GENEROUS

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GO
 BACK AND GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS
 AGO? WHY?

If I could go back to my younger self, I would tell me to celebrate all the little victories that come in life. Big victories rarely occur in a single breakthrough. They come Sunday by Sunday, family by family, and season by season. When I was believing for 50 new families, but only ten came, I was so bummed about the 40 I didn't reach that I failed to rejoice over the ten that did come! God always comes through but never as quickly as we think He should. You're going to make it.

WILLIE

George

PASTOR

Lifestyle Church

ALEXANDRIA, VA

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 3 WORDS

*PASSIONATE
PERSISTENT
PURPOSEFUL*

STEPHANIE Shalobazz

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GO BACK AND GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO? WHY?

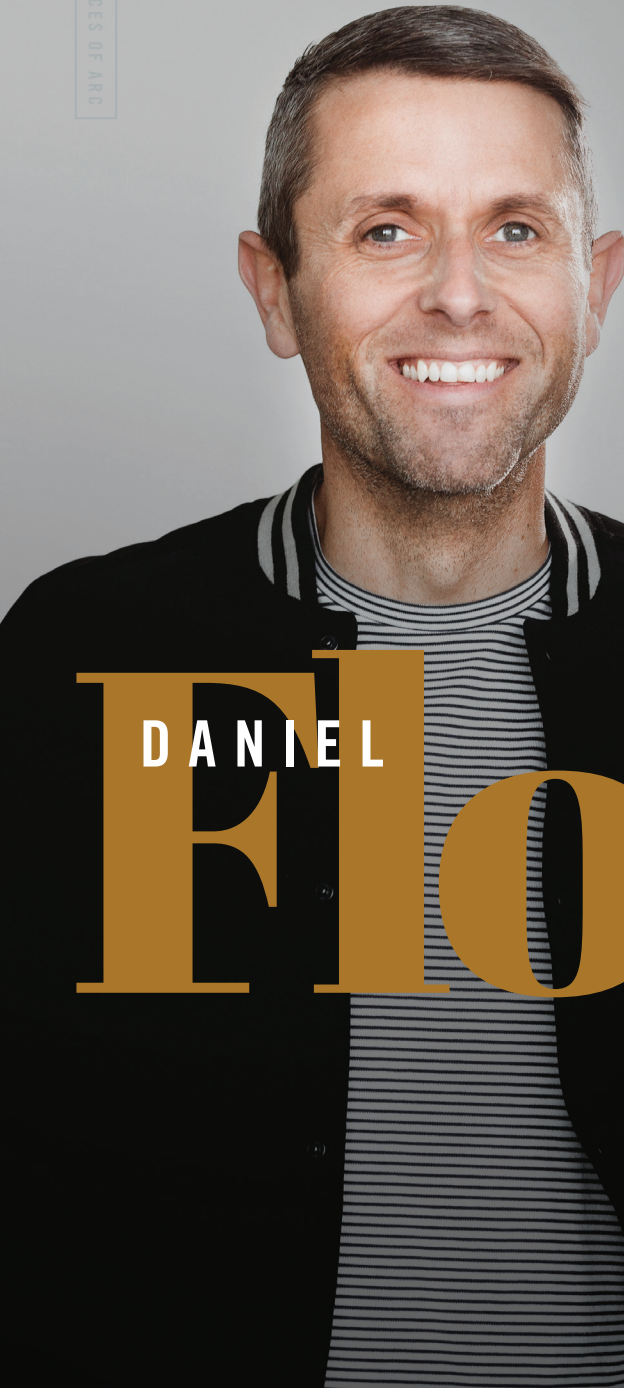
Pursuing the approval of people and things is exhausting. The pursuit of wisdom, knowledge, and greater clarity is always worth it. Playing small does not glorify God. Your willingness to show up, speak up, take up space, and lean in is your faith walk. Your purpose isn't found in one miraculous moment. It is revealed in the mess, the mundane, the uncertain, and the uncomfortable that create who you become. Your gift will make room for you, but your character and consistency will keep you there. Eat that Krispy Kreme donut and rock your sparkle sweater. You'll thank me later.

DO YOUR SPOUSE AND YOU HAVE A "SONG?" WHAT IS IT AND WHY DOES IT DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

Yes, it's "When I First Saw You" from the Dreamgirls movie. My husband arranged for singers and musicians to perform it when he proposed to me!

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR HOPES AND DESIRES FOR YOUR LIFE?

My passion, my purpose, and my heart's greatest desire is to encourage, inspire, and activate everyone I encounter to give God their yes!



LEAD PASTOR
Lifepoint Church
FREDERICKSBURG, VA

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 3 WORDS

*INTROVERTED
KIND
ADVENTUROUS*

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

Two things come to mind when I think about success. First, success is knowing that I am fulfilling everything God has assigned to me while I'm on the earth. Second, success is seeing others step into their callings.

WHAT IS IT LIKE BEHIND THE SCENES ON YOUR AVERAGE MONDAY MORNING?

With four kids, two of whom are in school, I begin Monday by making school lunches, helping the kids get dressed, and then driving them to school. I typically return home from school drop-off most Mondays with dreams of crashing for a few hours. However, usually the two youngest children are awake by then, and the routine of making breakfast and getting dressed begins again.

PASTOR

Relate Church

VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 3 WORDS

*JESUS-LOVER
ENCOURAGER
EXTROVERT*

HELEN

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR HOPES AND DESIRES FOR YOUR LIFE?

Psalm 145:4 is my constant prayer: "Generation after generation will declare more of your greatness and declare more of your glory." I am blessed to be a part of a generation of men and women who loved and served God passionately. The legacy that I walk in today feels like a sacred trustment that I am called to carry and steward for the generations to come.

As John and I planted and pastored Relate Church for 34 years and have been privileged to travel and speak around the world, we are aware that life, marriage, family, and ministry are so much bigger than us. The best is yet to come, and the generations

coming after us must champion this vision into a glorious future as they walk out their callings in Christ.

WHO OR WHAT INSPIRES YOU, AND WHY?

I'm inspired by what I see happening among young people today. I have never observed a greater hunger for truth and mentorship from youth. Although they can ask Google or Siri for quick answers and listen to endless fantastic podcasts, young people are desperate for deep and meaningful conversations with a grandmother like me. It makes me very aware that in a time of brokenness within relationships and families in our world, there is such a hunger for generational connection, and every heart and voice matters.

BURNS

LEAD PASTOR

Motivation Church

RICHMOND, VA

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 3 WORDS

*BRAVE
FOCUSED
RESILIENT*

WHAT INSPIRES YOU AND WHY?

I'm inspired by people who fight. I'm inspired by those who wake up in the morning and choose to persevere when they simply don't feel like it. I'm inspired by people who are making it against all odds.

BRITTANY

For the past six years I have battled bipolar disorder. Mental illness has a way of making you feel defeated and alone. I never know what my mood will be when I wake up in the morning. I remind myself daily that although I have no control over the imbalance in my brain, I do have control of how I conquer my day by the choices I make.

Many people are battling sicknesses of all kinds, yet they wake up and they fight. I want to be the type of person who makes a conscious decision each day to fight by any means necessary. Bipolar is a part of me, but it doesn't have to define me.

LEAD PASTOR
Arise Church
DORADO, PUERTO RICO

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 3 WORDS

*JOYFUL
BORICUA
LÍDER*

JUAN Rodríguez

WHAT IS THE CRAZIEST THING YOU HAVE EVER DONE?

Moving to Puerto Rico to launch Arise with my family is the craziest thing I have ever done. Although both my wife and I are originally from Puerto Rico, we could have picked an easier place to plant. During the pre-launch phase we experienced the following: 14 days of protesting that paralyzed the island and forced the governor to resign, a hurricane that canceled our largest fundraising event, more than 1,000 earthquakes in the southern part of the island, and a shoot-out in front of our building three days prior to launch. But God confirmed our crazy adventure when, on launch day, we packed the house with 262 people, 27 of whom made decisions for Jesus. We love being crazy!


WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GO BACK AND GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO? WHY?

If I could go back 15 years and give myself advice, it would be: Don't take your failures seriously. Many times I would get stuck in the muck of my failure, not seeing how much God was teaching me from it. Now I can look back and see that everything I perceived as a failure has been a springboard to what God is doing now.

Living a Legacy Life



by *David Payne*

 @david_payne_

BIBLICAL GENEALOGIES are fascinating. Reading them bores me to no end, but the concept has always captivated me. Why would someone care about the ancestral recounting of who begat whom? Besides those individuals related in some way to these lineages, why should anyone pay attention?

This “why” has become clear to me through the years. It’s all about legacy. These lists communicate to generations to come that life after life had an impact of consequence—even those lives with a smaller scope than others mattered a lot.

The life of a church leader, particularly a planter, revolves around the accomplishment of a God-breathed dream. This dream is to plant a church that delivers the gospel by engaging not only the five senses or even the soul, but one’s true being—his spirit—with

the Spirit of God. Each day that this divine encounter takes place for someone, a planter’s heart and spirit are enlivened and fulfilled. However, there is a lure for everyone in ministry, and frankly, the same lure is there for the marketplace leader as well: mountaintops.

Mountaintops are beautiful. Mountaintops are majestic. Mountaintops are hard to get to and tough to stand on. Put simply, mountaintops represent the culmination of journeys, the manifestation of intense effort, and the fulfillment of a hard-fought battle. They are achievements, accolades, connections to important people, and broken barriers to growth. From far away the mountaintop seems impossible to summit, but we strive and work and sacrifice and climb. We are all hopeful to see the mountaintop, stand on it, and, of course, take a photo for

Instagram. If we're not careful, however, we'll be deceived into believing that mountaintops are the point. We'll think they are our legacy. But they aren't.

Our legacy is what we occupy in the steps between the mountaintops. Legacy includes the lessons of sacrifice when there wasn't enough in the first place. The grit needed to fight and to trust in God anyway—that's a legacy life.

Legacy is the getting up at 5 a.m. on a Sunday to ensure people who are facing an eternity in hell have a chance to know the risen Christ and move from death to life. A legacy life is not about exchanging the daily experience for recognition, although recognition may come. It is exchanging each day for encounters that make others more generous, servant-hearted, spirit-aware, committed to the marginalized, and surrendered to the Spirit of God. Our legacy is the grandchildren who are raised to know Jesus because we helped save a marriage. It is the legislator who fights for biblical values because you prayed for him as an orphan or adopted child to overcome rejection and discover identity in Christ. Our legacies encompass the lives that we've helped move to their own mountaintops.

"What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others." —Pericles

Legacy isn't our bank accounts, our attendance counts, our follower counts, or our campus counts. It is the lives that are lived well after us and the eternities changed

"Our legacy is what we occupy in the steps between the mountaintops."

forever. Our legacy is experienced in the heavens by us and continued on earth after us.

1 John 2:17 (NCV) says, "The world and everything that people want in it are passing away, but the person who does what God wants lives forever."

May your name be written in others' spiritual genealogy. That's legacy. **arc**

David and Ginelle Payne are the lead pastors of Lifesong Church in Sutton, Massachusetts. They planted Lifesong Church in 2006 (ARC church plant number 32) and are passionate about the local church in New England and around the world. Lifesong has expanded to three campuses that help people grow closer to God, share God's love through missions and outreach, and build leaders through discipleship and training. To learn more, visit lifesongonline.org.

The Way Out of Weariness



by *Claudene Francis*

 @classy1999

FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS I've been the Director of Administration for our church, and I've juggled the roles of pastor's wife and mom. I love what I do, and I am determined to be the best leader I can, but managing all these priorities can cause soul fatigue.

For the past few months I have been feeling a sense of weariness that I don't always successfully resolve with sleep or time off. I'm the type of person who will keep working, putting more time and energy into doing the best I can for others without complaining or murmuring. Persevering is what I do best, but if I'm honest, and when I'm truly self-aware, I realize that working in my own strength takes a partially invisible toll on me.

The weariness I feel zaps my strength, endurance, and vigor. It disrupts my schedule and the healthy rhythms in my life, including my gym time (and if there's anything you don't want to mess with, it's my gym time). Many of you have been where I am, and maybe you're in that place right now. How can we deal with fatigue while balancing the spinning plates in our lives?

As I've been thinking and praying about this season of my life, Jesus's words found in Matthew 11:28-30 have stood out to me in many of my morning devotional times: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am

“God uses our circumstances to draw us closer to Him, to increase our faith in Him and help us to be more Christlike.”

gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Yes, a vacation, day off, or weekend retreat helps steer us away from fatigue and burn-out, but I've come to realize those times away will be truly refreshing only if we experience His Spirit's presence every day. It's when I abandon my self-dependency that I learn my inner strength comes from doing two things: coming to Jesus and casting my cares on Jesus.

What happens when we come to Christ daily? We are strengthened through His supernatural power! God's power doesn't merely increase our energy level or our point of exhaustion; His power is wrapped in a peaceful, calming assurance of His presence that allows us to run without weariness, to press on and remain positive when the pressures of life don't subside.

As we cast our cares on God, He moves in our lives because the very act of casting is an act of trust. When we admit to Him our own insufficiency, we allow God to ease the burdens we so often try to resolve with our

own abilities, especially when we feel our strength is depleted and our faith is burning low. I've been trying to approach God with arms open, ready to receive whatever He has in store for me and have discovered this is the best way to care for my soul.

God uses our circumstances to draw us closer to Him, to increase our faith in Him and help us to be more Christlike. We must daily recognize our dependence on Him. We cannot live and work in our own strength. Taking Jesus at His word by coming to Him and casting our cares on Him puts us in a position to receive His supernatural strength, and in this simplicity we find the solution to what often seems so complex. **ARC**

After a decade of ministry as Authentic Church, in Westchester County, a suburb of New York City, Wayne and Claudene Francis are excited to announce that Authentic Church is now The Life Church New York. The Life Church is pastored by John and Leslie Siebeling and based in Memphis, Tennessee. They believe this is a divine partnership that will have a multi-generational impact. To learn more, visit thelifechurch.com.

More Than Survival



by *Micah McEveven*

© @vaporministries

IT ISN'T LOVE that drives the devotion ... it's survival.

We knew the West African town we were surveying was considered unreached, but we didn't know just how deeply animistic was its culture. Most of the homes we passed lay under the protection of clay-crafted household gods. Upon reaching the city square, we found a female shrine formed from rock standing guard. Wanting to gain an elevated view, I moved to climb a baobab tree but was quickly chided because its spirit would not deal kindly with anyone who dare stand on its branches. In this poverty-stricken community, the voodoo doll and the witch doctor were far from fairy tales; they were community staples.

The most troubling scene, however, occurred near the city center. We watched in dismay

as an emaciated man, ribs nearly cracking his skin, sacrificed his remaining scrawny chicken to a stone masquerading as a god. What would cause precious souls, many who are barely surviving in extreme poverty, to offer the little they had? As my mind spun, a local brother softly whispered into my ear, "They don't love the gods; they fear for their lives." My heart nearly cracked.

In this town one's crops wilt and children get sick because he failed to appease a god. A business falters and a house is pillaged because one didn't counter a spell with the right offering. Living in constant fear, each person walks a daily tight rope, ever trying to hold the gods at bay. It is shocking to watch half-starving people offer much of their goods to the god of the market, before the sale, in hopes that buyers will come their way.

Our hearts yearned for our West African brothers and sisters to experience the love found in the outstretched arms of the true God of the baobab. But how could the gospel penetrate this city where an evangelist was publicly stoned? We knew that words alone would not break the shackles that had long bound lives here, so powered by like-minded churches, we began to build a 16-acre ministry center.

Soon, this city that pre-dates American history, yet still did not have access to clean water, had water flowing in Jesus's name. Not long after, agricultural and food programs funded by like-minded faith families began serving the starving and addressing the chronic food shortage. Then came the child sponsorship program, releasing little girls who had spent their days walking miles for water into academic opportunities. Mortality rates began to drop as critical care grants and disease prevention training took root in the city. Then it happened ...

Mathew 5:16 came off the pages of Scripture and into living color. In this voodoo stronghold, where many say the religion was born, revival broke. Our sports-based disciple-making leagues swelled along with our one known local church partner. Stories of voodoo priests' children, temple servants, and teens walking miles to access the center began to circulate. In this city of eight to 10 thousand people, more than 1000 of them came out of animism and placed their faith in the grace of Jesus Christ, resulting in eight new churches where many of Vapor Ministries' staff now serve as lay pastors.

“But how could the gospel penetrate this city where an evangelist was publicly stoned?”

Even one of the highest-ranking voodoo priests, who served the President, came to faith in Jesus.

I have seen with my own eyes what is possible when churches, moved by the compassion of Jesus, devote themselves to His mission and unleash the love of God in a world that needs more than to merely survive. **ARC**

Micah McElveen is the Founder and CEO of Vapor Ministries. In 1995, Micah broke his neck in a near-fatal surfing accident. During the intense recovery period that followed, God began to reshape Micah and taught him that life is but a vapor. In 2005, he spent time in an African slum among people whose intrinsic poverty rocked him to the core. Vapor Ministries was formed with the understanding that life is incredibly short. Its mission is to establish sustainable centers for alleviating poverty and multiplying disciples in third-world environments. To learn how churches are helping those in extreme poverty do more than survive, visit vaporministries.org.





by Lindsey Hansen with Tim Lucas

Not only does Liquid Church have a unique name, but it is uniquely meeting the needs of its community, and the world is taking notice. Tim Lucas pastors Liquid Church, which has multiple campuses in northern New Jersey, outside of New York City. The church launched in 2007 with the name Liquid because God calls Himself “The Living Water.” Tim never imagined that name would become such a defining theme in the future of the church.

About a year after starting the church, Tim was introduced to an organization that provides clean water to communities around the world. At the time it cost approximately \$5,000 dollars to drill a water well in one of these countries. That was a lot of money to them, but Tim began to share this need with his church in hopes that Liquid could fund one well.

“That Monday, a guy from our church came into the office and laid down a check for \$5,000,” Tim recalls. “He said, ‘I was saving this for my new Harley Davidson Softail, but I can’t live with myself if those kids are drinking muddy water.’”

Tim shared this testimony the following Sunday. From that point on, more and more families from the one-year-old church began giving money toward drilling water wells. “It went viral,” Tim says. “It was viral generosity.”



That year Liquid funded 17 wells. Tim explains: “We never looked back. Clean water became our signature global cause.” Clean water was the catalyst for the outward, community-centered posture Liquid has today.

As Liquid’s congregation rallied behind the need to provide clean water to communities, another need arose. This time the need was local, and Liquid Church was ready to meet it. New Jersey has the highest rate of childhood autism in the United States: one in 35. Not only was this need affecting their community, but it had a significant impact on families within the church.

Suzi Soares began attending Liquid with her son Ethan who has autism and is non-verbal. She wanted to take her son to the children’s

ministry, but Liquid was still a young church and not equipped to take care of Ethan and others like him. Suzi never complained but knew the church could do better.

Liquid began researching curriculums. “Kids with special needs have the absolute ability to understand the Gospel,” says Tim. “It may not be in a familiar language, but they have spiritual capacity.”

Soon Liquid’s Buddy Program took shape. The church began to match every child with special needs to a buddy. Each buddy is trained to handle different situations—for example, if a child has a seizure or can’t speak. Tim explains, “Sixty-eight percent of Jesus’s miracles are on behalf of those with

supported, engage with his peers, and feel a sense of belonging.

Grady is a little boy who was born with Down syndrome. His parents tried to attend their local church with him when he was young, but they felt like they were a burden. Grady had a special set of challenges that made it difficult for him to communicate, and the church considered him a disturbance to other kids. His parents heard about how Liquid Church is making room for kids like Grady. They wanted to attend even though Liquid was an hour-and-a-half drive from their home.

Liquid paired Grady with his buddy, Katie. Katie works as a speech therapist, a special

“The special needs community is dying for the love and grace and lavish attention of people who truly care.”

special needs—those who are blind, crippled, or can’t speak. Jesus had this heart to help. We cast that vision, and it shattered the heart of our church in the best way.”

Millennials were the first to volunteer. “They are the justice generation,” Tim observes. “They’ve grown up in inclusive classrooms and inclusive workplaces. The moment we started telling the story of children who wanted to see Jesus, they were ready.”

Suzi Soares is now the Kids and Special Needs Pastor at Liquid Church. Her goal for the Buddy Program is that every child be

benefit for Grady. A few months after his family began attending Liquid, Grady spoke his first sentence to his mom: “I want go to church, please.” His parents were thrilled.

Grady continues to ask to go to church every week and is so happy to see Katie. Grady’s family has found a home at Liquid Church. It has given them peace of mind to be able to attend service as a couple and know that Grady is in good care.

“The special needs community is dying for the love and grace and lavish attention of people who truly care,” says Tim.



“Our dream is that the Clean Water Café be the happiest place on Earth,”

- Tim Lucas



Today, about 400 families participate in Liquid’s Buddy Program, with more on the waiting list.

Liquid Church brought its passion to provide clean water globally and minister to those with special needs locally together through its launch of the Clean Water Café, located inside the church. It is a full-service coffee-house, operating Monday through Friday and staffed by adults with special needs.

“The café was a natural evolution,” Tim says. “Once children with special needs turn 18, their formal education and most social services stop.” The U.S. Department of Labor reports that 80 percent of adults with disabilities are unemployed. The Clean Water Café will create a path for those with special needs to be accepted, included, and valued in the workplace. All profits from the café will support Liquid’s clean water cause in Africa and Central America.

Robby Brooks has become a familiar face not only at Liquid Church, but at the Clean Water Café. Robby has Down

syndrome. He started volunteering on the greeting team at the church, distributing programs at the door. He also helps take care of volunteers and preps and organizes things behind the scenes. His father, Dave Brooks, is the Executive Pastor at Liquid. Robby’s parents have always wanted him to love Jesus, be productive, and make a difference. In 2020, Robby became the Clean Water Café’s first employee with special needs.

“It may look a little different, but people with special needs have skills and abilities and can contribute,” Tim says. “They’ll probably offer a lot better customer service than most.” The café will provide up to 30 local jobs and create a culture where learning differences are appreciated and celebrated.

Stop by the café each day at 2 o’clock if you want to get in on a little karaoke. “Our dream is that the Clean Water Café be the happiest place on Earth,” Tim explains.

Other churches have contacted Tim and Liquid Church to learn how to grow their





own special needs ministries. Tim recommends starting with a standalone event like Night to Shine. Liquid Church recently hosted its sixth Night to Shine event with the Tim Tebow Foundation. Night to Shine is a fun prom night experience, centered on God's love, for people with special needs ages 14 and older. This year Liquid held two Night to Shines, back-to-back, to accommodate the more than 800 guests with special needs who attended.

A monthly Parent's Night Out, or respite night for parents of children with special needs, could be an intermediate transition to special needs ministry. Liquid offers parents a place to bring their children (from infants to 13-year-olds) for three hours of free childcare. These parents can go out alone while their children enjoy a safe and life-giving environment at church. Tim says, "We want our church to be a blessing to the city. We've

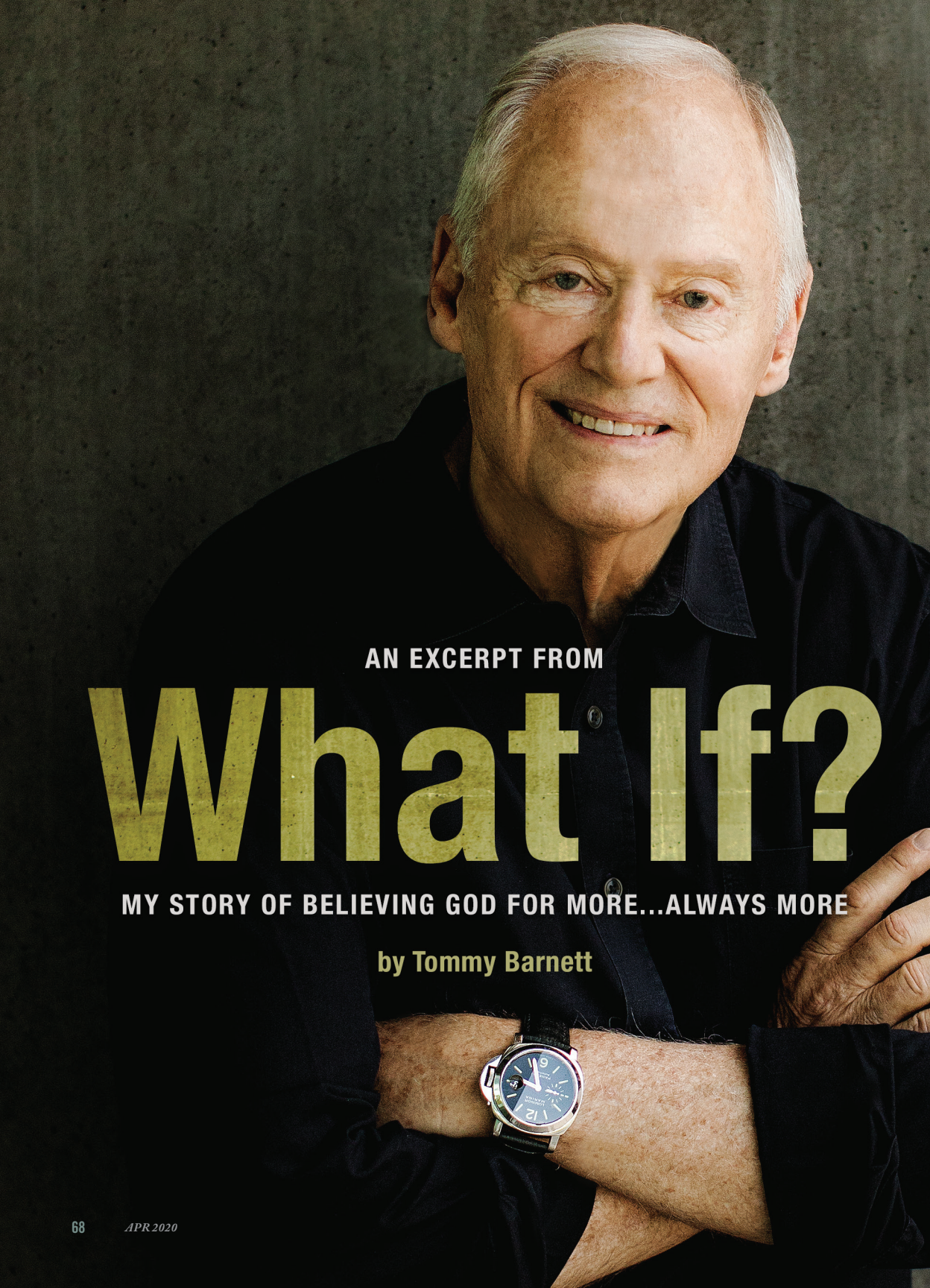
had families whose first attendance wasn't Sunday morning, but a Friday respite night."

Once you have buy-in from your church volunteers, the natural progression is to start a one-on-one program on Sundays. Tim admits that not every program was an instant success; they made mistakes. "When we started we were just trying to get enough volunteers to make Sunday happen," Tim explains. "Most churches have the heart for special needs ministry, but they don't have the manpower in terms of volunteers."

Liquid Church's local passion is special needs ministry, but the focus might be different for other churches. Tim says, "It's our privilege and passion to serve people with special needs. Your church has a unique DNA, and God planted you in a city where there's an underserved people group." Tim encourages pastors to explore the needs in their communities and the heartbeat of their churches, and to understand that volunteers are the ones who make the most impact. **arc**



To learn more about Liquid Church and its programs, visit liquidchurch.com



AN EXCERPT FROM

What If?

MY STORY OF BELIEVING GOD FOR MORE...ALWAYS MORE

by Tommy Barnett

AS I STOOD ON A HIGH PLATFORM IN BANGALORE, INDIA, I LOOKED OVER A SEA OF HUMANITY LIKE NOTHING I'D EVER SEEN BEFORE. AS FAR AS I COULD SEE, THE CROWD OF OVER 400,000 PEOPLE EXTENDED INTO THE NIGHT. THEY HAD COME TO HEAR THE GOSPEL OF JESUS.

Ten years earlier, Joyce Meyer had asked me to be her pastor. When she scheduled her crusade in Bangalore, she invited me to join her and her husband Dave, and she gave me the honor of speaking on one of the nights.

As I stood next to her on the platform, my mind drifted back to my uncle Ted Vassar, who as a young man 100 years before had come to India with his wife to build an orphanage in Pune, a city in the western part of the country. When I was a boy, I loved to hear him tell stories of his adventures in his adopted country. He talked about a boy who had been attacked by a leopard. Uncle Ted heard the screams, grabbed his rifle, and ran to help. The leopard had the boy's leg in its mouth when Uncle Ted shot and killed it. The doctors looked at the mangled leg and planned to amputate, but Uncle Ted and others prayed all night before the operation, and by the next morning, the leg was better and was saved. The boy saw this miracle from God, and his faith was enflamed. He grew up to lead a great revival in Nagaland, India.

My uncle's years at the orphanage were full of joy and tragedy. They reached many children living in poverty and on the streets. On some mornings, he found children who had been left on the doorstep overnight. But two of his own children were buried there. One died in childbirth and the other at thirteen with a ruptured appendix. Both could have been saved if they'd had proper medical attention, but there were no hospitals in the area.

On the platform that night in Bangalore, I turned to Joyce and told her about my missionary uncle who, 100 years earlier, had sown seeds of the gospel that we were joyfully reaping. I said, "Joyce, I wish my Uncle Ted could see this sight. I'm sure he couldn't have fathomed this kind of harvest!"

That night, I preached with a blend of passion and joy. At the end, tens of thousands of people raised their hands to indicate they had trusted in Jesus.

“In every city, I imagine what it would mean to those people to have a gospel-preaching church that cares for their needs.”

I wasn't alone on my trip to Bangalore. Dino Rizzo was with me. During the day, Dino and I taught 20,000 pastors how to follow up with those who had trusted Christ and grow their churches. As I always do when I travel to cities around the world, I opened the window of my hotel room and looked over the sprawling city. I scanned the new office buildings and the slums, the parks and the streets packed with people—mostly people who didn't know Jesus. In every city, I imagine what it would mean to those people to have a gospel-preaching church that cares for their needs.

One night, Dino and I stayed up long past midnight talking about God's heart for the disadvantaged...in Bangalore and in the cities of America where we served. Dino knew my heart is always for the lost to come to faith, but both of us sensed that God wanted us to provide resources—tangible, specific resources that could save or change lives—for people who were overlooked by society. We looked at passages of Scripture, imagined what God might do through our churches, and encouraged each other to “excel still more.” It was a wonderful conversation, one I'll always remember. It wouldn't be our last.

At the time, the Dream Center was just taking shape in Phoenix. We were taking our first steps to create permanent structures that would be a lifeline to the poor, alcoholics and addicts, the sick, the lonely, the immigrants, the outcasts, the victims of human trafficking, and the depressed—the kind of people who were, more than anyone else, the recipients of Jesus' compassion.

Throughout my life, I've sensed God's clear call to find a need and fill it, to find a hurt and heal it. Do

people need the life-changing message of the gospel of grace? More than anything else. Do they need to see God's people, His body, extend their hands to offer genuine help, their feet to meet them where they are, and their hearts to break with theirs? In many cases, receiving tangible expressions of love is the only way they will open their hearts to the message of Jesus.

Now, as I near the end of my ministry journey, I look back at the incredible things God has done, and I'm deeply grateful. I've

only pastored two churches, but as I've preached in cities all over the world, God has consistently impressed me with the dream that I'd one day start a church there. These churches, He assured me, would reach the people I've always been able to reach: the ones nobody else wanted.

Has God fulfilled this vision? Yes, in a big way!

This impact has been one of the greatest blessings of my life, and to be honest, a big surprise. Over many decades, God has used me



FESTIVAL OF LIFE, BANGALORE, INDIA



AT THE PHOENIX PASTORS & LEADERS SCHOOL

in ways I could never have imagined when I started. Through it all, I've tried to be a tool in the hands of God. Availability is the first step toward usefulness.

Do you ever wonder what He wants to do through you?

Of course, you do. That's why I'm writing this book. If God can use a skinny little kid from the oil fields of Texas to build His kingdom, He can certainly use you. I would be nothing without the influence of great godly men and women who have poured so much wisdom into me and the

power of the Holy Spirit who has enabled me to do things way beyond my wildest dreams.

One thing is for sure: Until the Lord returns, we'll never run out of needs to fill and hurts to heal. The question isn't one of their need but of our care. Where does compassion come from? We love because we've experienced the tender love of Jesus, we forgive because we're amazed that He has cleansed us from all sin by His sacrifice on the cross, and we accept those who aren't like us because God in Christ accepted us when

we were nothing like Him. In everything we do, we go back to the cross of Jesus.


Throughout my life, God has continually prodded and prompted me to ask, "What if?"

What if I started preaching? Would anyone come to hear me? Would God use me to touch people's hearts with the gospel? *What if* I buy a huge tent? Will it be empty, or will God fill it? *What if* I answer God's call to a small church in Iowa? Will God bless us there? *What if* I buy a fleet of buses and bring people from miles away to worship with us? Will people come or will those buses become monuments to a failed dream? *What if* I go to a church where I really don't want to go? Can that possibly be His leading? *What if* we build a huge building? Will people come, or will there be only echoes? *What if* God tells me I'll pastor a historic church in Los Angeles? *What if* God puts it on our hearts to create a place where people who have lost hope can renew their dreams? *What if* God multiplies those places of healing all over the world? *What if* the recurring impression to plant churches in every city where I travel is fulfilled by training hundreds

of thousands of pastors to experience God's power and blessing in ministry? *What if* we take bold steps through the door of opportunity that God opens in front of us?

Through all these years, "What if?" has been quickly followed by "Why not?" and then "Wow! God is doing amazing things."

“One thing is for sure: Until the Lord returns, we’ll never run out of needs to fill and hurts to heal.”

This book contains my story, but as you'll see, it's much more than that. It's actually God's story of moving in the hearts and minds of people in our city, across our country, and around the world. Throughout my life, God has given me a clear sense of purpose. He has continually inspired me to dream bigger, reach higher, and trust Him for far more that I could imagine. On every page, I hope you recognize the amazing love in God's heart and His kindness to use someone like me to tell people about the grace I've found—and they can find—in Jesus Christ. 

To purchase, "What If?" visit tommybarnett.com.


Tommy Barnett is the Global Pastor of Dream City Church in Phoenix, Arizona, Founder of the LA Dream Center, as well as the Chancellor of Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida, and the former Chancellor of Grand Canyon University in Phoenix. He began his ministry as an evangelist when he was sixteen. Later, he became the Pastor of Westside Assembly of God in Davenport, Iowa, before becoming the Pastor of Phoenix First Assembly, now Dream City Church.



THE RESOURCES

Equip

THE ARC FAMILY IS FULL OF TREMENDOUS WISDOM AND RESOURCES TO DRAW FROM. WE AIM TO GATHER A WEALTH OF GREAT TEACHING AND TRAINING ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS AROUND MINISTRY AND LIFE. WE HOPE YOU WILL READ AND SHARE! WE LOVE TO SEE PASTORS GROW HEALTHIER AS LEADERS, BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT IS WHAT MAKES CHURCHES THRIVE.



IN THIS SECTION

p90

Healthy Things Grow

While the statement is true, hearing it may not feel helpful, especially if your church is not growing.

by Kenneth Wagner

p94

Sundays Keep Coming

Once you start a church, the Sundays keep on coming. A community and devoted team were growing, but I was the only person on the church staff.

by Jesse Lusko

p96

What I Wish I Knew Then

Leading up to my birthday, I decided to capture some of the lessons I've learned in these forty years. I certainly have not arrived and have so much more to learn, but I wanted to share a few of the things I know now that I wish I knew then.

by Meghan Robinson

p102

Creating a Sending Culture

The struggles of the early church have been repeated throughout church history. It seems we Christians are habitually reluctant to reach beyond our comfort zones, to risk potential conflict and loss in stretching the boundaries of Christianity.

by Michael Fletcher

3 Ways to Make This Your Best Year Ever

by Matt Fry
mattfry.com

01. TAKE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS CAPTIVE

Surround yourself with people who are positive. Spend time with people who will speak potential over you, not negativity. When the devil tries to fill your mind with negative thoughts like “I’m a mistake,” “I’m not good enough,” or “I’m a failure,” take such thoughts captive. God does not say those things about you, and the devil has no power over you!

02. TAKE OFF THE LABELS THE DEVIL PUT ON YOU

Sometimes the devil’s lies take root in our minds, and they become our labels. What label has the devil tried to put on you? You may have heard negative words from a parent, coach, or teacher. Perhaps a former friend or family member spoke disparaging words over you. Don’t let that label stick; take it off and give it to God! He never intended for you to go through your life with negative labels.

03. DECLARE WHO GOD SAYS YOU ARE

Do not get rid of something without replacing it. After we take off negative labels, we must replenish those empty places with powerful statements from God’s Word declaring who we are. Otherwise, the devil will try to put those labels on us again. This year take one declaration every day and speak it over your life, beginning in the morning and continuing throughout the day. As I was studying God’s Word, I found 31 “I am” declarations that were powerful for me. You can download these reminders for free on mattfry.com.

I declare that this is a year of victory for you. Even if your circumstances don’t change, you will experience the most blessed year of your life. You are loved by God, He is with you, and He is for you!

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

LIVE Design Group

livedesigngroup.com

Agape Church (ARC church plant number 155) turned to LIVE Design Group to help convert a historic abandoned building—the old Woolworth building in the town center of Laurel, Mississippi—into a facility that served as a church, a new community center, and a catalyst for urban renewal.

Together in a LIVE Design session, the team developed a renovation concept that captured the personality of the congregation while maintaining the historic façade. The new facility hosts weekly worship services for Agape while also serving as a community center and performance venue for the city of Laurel. The roughly 12,000-square-foot building contains a new lobby space, a small café, and children’s classrooms that double as community meeting spaces.



In 2016, Pastor James Johnson-Hill turned to LIVE Design Group once again to develop phase two of the project, which would create an adult classroom space, a master plan concept for a community outreach space, a 600-plus seat auditorium, a three-story central atrium, a commons area, flex space, catering kitchen, nursery classrooms, children’s classrooms, support spaces, and a future expansion space.

Today, 415 City Centre is the home to Agape’s rapidly growing church, as well as an anchor of revitalization in downtown Laurel.

LIVE Design Group is a resource partner with ARC. Their team of architects and interior designers partner with growing organizations to help build their vision. To learn more, visit livedesigngroup.com.



Worship Playlist

Created by Lauren Song

TITLE

Jesus You Alone
Promises Never Fail
See A Victory
What You Said
Holy Ground
This is a Move
The Goodness of Jesus
New Wine
Hosanna
Valley
Open Over Us
Goodness of God
God of Revival
You're Not Done Yet
Way Maker
Love Like This
King of Kings
Where the Spirit of the Lord is
Nothing Else

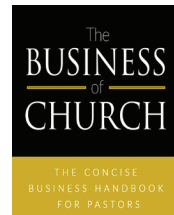
ARTIST

Highlands Worship
Bethel Music
Elevation Worship
Jon Egan
Passion Music
Brandon Lake
CityAlight
Hillsong Worship
The Belonging Co.
Chris McClarney
Meredith Andrews
One Sonic Society
Bethel Music
Vertical Worship
Leeland
The Belonging Co
The Worship Initiative
Life.Church Worship
Cody Carnes

Resources



WOMAN UP
by Lori Champion



THE BUSINESS OF CHURCH
by Stephen D. Lentz, ESQ.



MAKE ROOM WHITEBOARD SESSIONS
johnsiebeling.com



TEAM CHURCH
Aug 3-5

4 Principles that Generate Growth

by Carey Nieuwhof
careynieuwhof.com

- 01. THE STATUS QUO HAS GOT TO GO.** Status quo prevents growth. Why? The status quo (even if it's working for you now) is responsible for your present state, which is producing the results you're currently getting. Smart leaders start challenging the status quo before their growth slows. Average leaders wait until they see momentum wane before rethinking what they're doing. Below-average leaders won't disrupt the present until it becomes stagnant. And by then it's sometimes too late.
- 02. BREAKTHROUGHS ARE OFTEN ACCIDENTAL.** Many leaders spend a lot of time looking for breakthroughs. Few breakthroughs occur when leaders seek them, but a surprising number happen by accident. Multi-site church wasn't a strategy for growth; it was a by-product of overcrowded services that were frustrating church leaders at the time. By regularly trying new approaches, innovating, and experimenting on the side, you'll likely discover some ideas that resonate more than you realize.
- 03. EXECUTION CRUSHES IDEATION.** Leaders love ideas. I talk to many who tell me ideation is one of their chief strengths. Ideation is wonderful, but in the real world, execution crushes ideation. Here's why: The B+ execution of a B+ idea beats an unexecuted A+ idea any day. Execution is hard work, and implementation can be deeply frightening. The only way you will know if your idea works is to do it. Execution requires courage and perseverance. Without action, ideas accomplish nothing. Rarely do viable products beat beautifully structured ideas that never come to fruition.
- 04. QUALITY PRODUCES QUANTITY.** In today's leadership culture, many people are focused on quantity: Double your growth, spike your sales, triple your numbers, and explode your influence. Real leadership—or at least leadership worth following—plays the long game. If you want to be in it for the long-term, focus on quality. If you can provide real value to others, you'll never have much trouble finding people. If you want to increase your quantity, increase your quality.

Best Practices for Social Media

open.life.church

Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest are ideal channels to build community, promote an inviting culture, and reach people using tools familiar to them.

It's important to think of your social media presence as an extension of your ministry. People are online every day. Your team pours energy and intensity into engaging with people throughout the week, and that connection is sacred—even when it's digital. In fact, many people may be more open and vulnerable online than they are face-to-face.

When people comment on your social media platform, remember they're reaching out to your ministry. Try to approach each interaction from that perspective, rather than as a task to complete. You are connecting with people and building relationships!

While the tools change often, our approach to using social media is based on our communication values and the mission to lead people to become fully devoted followers of Christ.

Below are some quick tips to remember when using social media for ministry:

- **REPRESENT CHRIST AND THE CHURCH WELL.**
- **SOCIAL MEDIA SHOULD BE SOCIAL. START CONVERSATIONS.**
- **USE QUALITY IMAGES AND VIDEO TO TELL YOUR STORY.**
- **USE CORRECT SPELLING, GRAMMAR, AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE.**

For more information on choosing essential and optional social platforms, building a team, and setting up a process, visit open.life.church and search for "Social Media Best Practices."



**WESLEYAN
INVESTMENT**
FOUNDATION

317.774.7300 | info@wifonline.com | wifonline.com



**WIF IS MORE THAN A BANK-
THEY'RE ONE OF OUR
MINISTRY PARTNERS.**

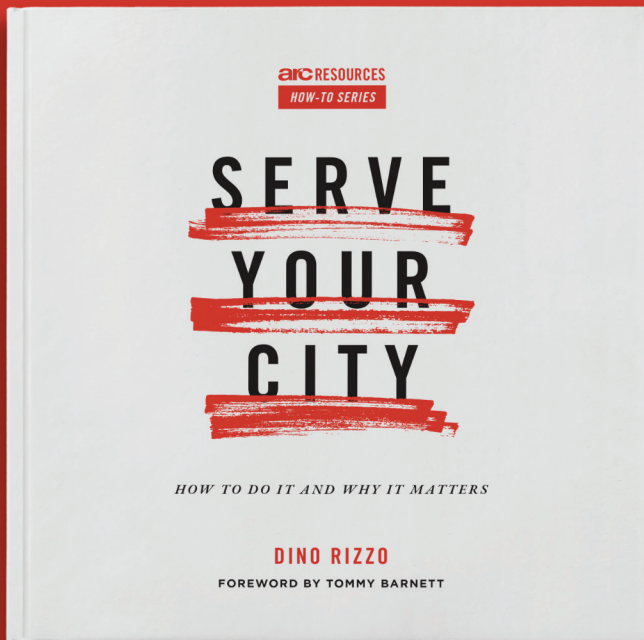
**WHAT A JOY TO KNOW THAT
OUR SAVINGS ON DEPOSIT
YIELDS NOT ONLY A GREAT
RETURN RATE BUT IS ALSO
INVESTED IN LOANS FOR
OTHER CHURCHES.**

**TOGETHER WE'RE
MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**



PASTOR CHRIS HODGES
Church of the Highlands





The practical and proven truths and strategies from ARC churches across the country shared in this book give us hope that we can make a difference. We can go outside our walls to love people the way Jesus loved people in His day...by showing them compassion while telling them about God's great grace.

ARCCHURCHES.COM/EQUIP

Not only do we want to come alongside pastors and leaders relationally, but we also believe in helping equip churches. The ARC Resources “How-To” series books are designed to give you practical tools and teaching from those who have proven that the methods help deliver the message of Jesus.



In this book, Pastor Greg Surratt shares his story of asking himself hard questions...and finding the answers to be both surprising and inspiring. He addresses the crucial topics of limitations, culture, and legacy, but he also dives into harder issues of how to handle heartaches and what actually captures the hearts of the people we lead.

ARCCHURCHES.COM/EQUIP

In 2000, these six pastors met together and discussed the dream of planting thousands of life-giving churches around the world.

ARC's founders had a heart to equip church planters with resources and relationships and build a healthy model for church planting. This catalyst is what started the Association of Related Churches and today has helped to plant more than 900 churches in communities around the world.



1949-2011

Founder, ARC

Billy Hornsby was one of ARC's founders and served as the president of ARC until his death in 2011. Billy was called into the ministry in 1975, and over the next 35 years, saw a span of influence he would have never dreamed. He and his wife Charlene planted their first church in West Monroe, Louisiana. In 1984, they moved their family to Germany to plant new churches and train existing churches in evangelism. In 1989, they moved to the U.S. and planted two churches in Kentucky. In 1990, they moved back to their hometown of Baton Rouge to serve at Bethany World Prayer Center. There, Billy developed the Bethany Cell Church Network and trained thousands of pastors in small group ministry. In 2000, Billy met Greg Surratt, and the story of ARC was born.

Billy's life was full of passion and fun, embodying the Cajun culture of his upbringing. He became known for two things in his life: family and friendships. He was always known as a friend to pastors. His influence grew exponentially as he approached relationships with a sense of worth rather than an agenda. Millions of lives have been and will be impacted by his life and legacy as our ARC Family continues to carry the vision to see a thriving church in every community, reaching people with the message of Jesus.



PRESIDENT, ARC
Seacoast Church
CHARLESTON, SC

WHAT WOULD ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A YOUNG CHURCH PLANTER?

My life's verse is Galatians 6:9, "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." There are some things in that verse that are my responsibility. I'm responsible for doing good. Make doing good repeatable. My responsibility is also not to quit, even in the hard times. Then, God has some responsibilities. His responsibility is the timing and size of the harvest.

As a young church planter, we often think about the harvest. But those are God's responsibilities, not ours. When you take responsibility for something you don't have authority over, that's called stress. We are to do good, make good repeatable, and don't quit. Let God be God, and you be the best version of you, you can be.



LEAD PASTOR

Church of the Highlands

BIRMINGHAM, AL

WHAT WAS THE CHURCH PLANTING PROCESS LIKE FOR YOU?

Twenty years ago, church planting was scary! There was no ARC, no money, no training, no books – I didn't know what I didn't know. I moved to Birmingham 40 days before the launch, that's crazy. We would never recommend that now.

WHY DO WE NEED MORE CHURCHES?

The Local Church is the hope of the world. The Church is the predominant way people find Jesus. The Church is what Jesus is building. Matthew 16:18 says, "upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If that is what Jesus builds, then we should too. The world needs church planters!

CHRIS HOOD



Hor

SCOTT

FOUNDING PASTOR

Fellowship Church

ZACHARY, LA

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT NOT TO BE ISOLATED IN MINISTRY?

I don't see how you can do ministry without friends, people whom you admire. I think there are three people you need in your life: First, you need a doctor who oversees your physical condition. Second, you need a friend who oversees your personal relationships. Finally, you need a pastor who guards your spiritual relationships. When you find these three people, your life is going to be better. You're going to be safer, and you're going to be healthier. And that spiritual friend is worth all the money in the world.

WHAT MAKES ARC UNIQUE?

Our organization is successful because it started with genuine relationships. We share a love among one another that begins with leadership and spills into the group of pastors who are planting churches. The ARC family has strong comradery. We're a team, and we're for each other in all circumstances.



LEAD PASTOR

New Life Church

CONWAY, AR

TELL US ONE THING YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH CHURCH PLANTERS AND YOUNG PASTORS.

I love to remind these gifted young men and women pastors not to build their own platform but build a platform that is about Christ. You can tell that young pastors really want to get this right, but it is more difficult now with social media, and watching other platforms that grow quickly.

The tricky part is how easy it is to make it about us and not Him without even knowing it. Others may see it when we cannot. Watch out for that. You are too gifted and too needed to fall on that side of ministry. I think the solution is to simply stay on your face before your Lord, whom you dearly love. You know Him. He is the one who called you. No one will ever fall while on his or her knees before God.

RICK Bezet



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ARC

Church of the Highlands

BIRMINGHAM, AL

WHY DOES THE WORLD NEED MORE LIFE-GIVING CHURCHES?

There are great churches everywhere, all across the globe. God is doing some amazing things through existing churches. But there are broken and hurting people everywhere. There is something about a new church that attracts people. Across the country, some churches close, populations are growing, so there are many reasons why we need new churches. The church is a lighthouse and an oasis of love to a dry and thirsty world. We must have new churches that are started by those who love God and love their city to really change the world.

RI
DINO
VA

Healthy Things Grow



by *Kenneth Wagner*

📍 @unitedchurchde

YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD this statement in your leadership circles. While the statement is true, hearing it may not feel helpful, especially if your church is not growing. What does it mean if you're not growing? Do you ever feel your team and ministry are healthy but you're not seeing the results you hoped for? Is your staff excited, but you seem to be in a season of plateau? Regardless of where you are, feeling stuck can take its toll.

I know how you feel because I am you. You're a church planter, and so am I. You're passionate about life change, and so am I. We're both passionate about seeing our cities forever changed by the gospel. I understand it's difficult to separate who you are from

what you do. It's hard not to take it personally when things aren't growing. I need this reminder often, and maybe you do, too: God cares so much more about the posture of your heart than the work of your hands. Take a deep breath; you're doing great!

If you feel your church is stuck, consider the following.

WHOM YOU PUT WHERE. I believe leadership development and discipleship can happen simultaneously. As people become more aware of who God created them to be, they become more alive; but only as they fall in love with Jesus do they become leaders worth following. As your church grows, your

challenge will be finding the areas of ministry where your individual leaders can excel, promoting the growth of your church.

If leaders can't find their niche or keep pace, it may be necessary to have some tough conversations along the way. These discussions can be difficult, but sometimes they're necessary to continue infusing life, energy, and growth in your overall ministry. If you are in a season of plateau, ask yourself, "Is our growth out-pacing any of our leaders?"

HOW YOU DO WHAT. We launched UNITED Church in September 2015, with 515 people on the first Sunday. By Christmas 647 people attended, and in January, when we expanded to two experiences, our attendance jumped to 817. People are often shocked by our church's growth, and they ask me how it happened. Of course Jesus drew people to UNITED Church, but I think it's important that we delivered exactly what we promised.

We promised a life-giving atmosphere, and that's what we provided. We promised a safe and fun environment for kids to learn about Jesus on their level, and that's what we provided. We promised world-class worship, and that's what we provided. We promised messages that would connect with people, and that's what we provided. If you are in a season of plateau, consider this question: Where have we over-promised and under-delivered?

WHEN YOU DO WHAT. Every church experiences seasons of growth and plateau throughout the calendar year. Identifying when such natural rhythms occur in your church can help you strategically place sermon series, events, and even a budget that best complements these seasons. If you are

“It’s hard not to take it personally when things aren’t growing.”

in a time of plateau, ask yourself, “Have we tried to gain momentum during a season that is naturally down?”

Don't let plateau discourage you. Keep the posture of your heart open before God and connected to Him. You're doing so much better than you think you are. Keep going! **arc**

Kenneth and Sherry Wagner are the lead pastors of UNITED Church in Dover, Delaware. Kenneth served as a youth pastor at Calvary Wesleyan Church for seven years before stepping out to plant UNITED Church (ARC church plant number 527). In only a few years their church has grown to nearly 2,000 people. Their vision is to “love Delaware until their heart beats like His.” To learn more about UNITED Church, visit unitedchurchde.com.

How to Have a Thriving Marriage in Ministry



by *Tiffany Cooper*

 @mrstiffanycoper

IN FEBRUARY OF 1997 I was an idyllic 19-year-old college freshman who was writing vows of love to my college sweetheart. He consumed my thoughts, my time, and my future plans. Falling in love feels good; it's accompanied by a hopeful optimism that feels easy. However, love is quickly tested after vows are exchanged because committed love doesn't always feel good. Committed love is sacrificial.

When Herbert and I said "I do" in December of 1997, we didn't realize how much we would have to work to experience a thriving marriage. Fast forward five years, and our marriage was tested after we moved to a new city to plant our church. While marriage is good and being married in the ministry is doubly good, it also can be doubly challenging. In our 18 years' pastoring a church together, Herbert and I

have learned valuable qualities for a thriving marriage. While it's easy to teach others about marriage, knowledge alone isn't effective; we must walk the talk to experience the blessings.

Below are three qualities Herbert and I have discovered about a thriving marriage in ministry.

MARRIAGE IS A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP.

A covenant marriage isn't a contract to be completed; it's a commitment through good and bad times. A covenant spouse is committed when you're at your best and at your worst.

Ministry puts people on a pedestal. Such unrealistic expectations can weigh heavily on a person, especially when he's new to ministry. Do all you can to love your spouse just as

he is, not as others, or you, want him to be. Reassure him that you love his whole person, not his ministry role.

Ministry can make people feel alone. Communicate to your spouse that you are a safe person for her to share her pains and frustrations. Be a safe place for her to confide and confess. Extend grace. Listen, and then listen some more. Prove yourself to be a trusted friend. Don't automatically suggest solutions when she shares her heart; instead, extend support and love.

MARRIAGE IS A LIVING RELATIONSHIP.

Living things are in constant flux. They flourish and grow, or they falter and die. If you want your marriage to flourish, you must feed it life-giving nutrients. If we're not careful we can give more power to the frustrations and pressures of ministry than the blessings.

Intentionally feed your spouse words of encouragement. Compliment him. Build him up in private and in public. Be sensitive about when and how to share advice or constructive criticism. Appreciate his acts of kindness, no matter how small. Learn how he feels loved. Serve him. Help lighten his load. Show gratitude. Send a kind text during the day. Surprise him with something he enjoys. Start nurturing your marriage today.

MARRIAGE IS AN ACTIVE RELATIONSHIP.

Your marriage won't thrive simply because you want it to; it will thrive because you spend time with your spouse and seek restoration.

During our early years of church planting, I believed the myth that after a particularly

busy season of ministry ended, I'd have more time. That's false, and it's a trap. There is always more to be done. People's needs never stop, but you should. It's vital that you actively spend regular time with your spouse. Intimacy grows, trust is deepened, and connection is strengthened with time.

Many ministry marriages are hurting due to unforgiveness, emotional and physical exhaustion, and unrealistic expectations. Begin the work of healing your marriage. It might be painful, but you can choose to deal with your pain and find restoration, or you can live in the despair of a declining marriage. Thankfully there is hope and help. Jesus will meet you at your point of need. Many trusted pastors and counselors will feel called to help, too. Act by seeking guidance from Jesus and others so your marriage can thrive!

After 22 years of marriage, Herbert and I continue to grow in all three qualities of a thriving marriage. It takes hard work and humility, but my love for Herbert is greater today than it was as a college freshman. If I were to rewrite my vows, my list would reflect a deeper love that has been tested and remains fully committed. **ARC**

Herbert and Tiffany Cooper are the founding and senior pastors of People's Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. People's Church has become known as a life-giving, diverse, multi-generational, and multi-site church. They serve on the ARC Lead Team and have a passion to plant churches around the world and see people's lives changed by the power of God. To learn more, visit peoples.church.

Sundays Keep Coming

MY JOURNEY WITH MENTAL HEALTH



by *Jesse Lusko*

📍 @jesselusko

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, Bekah and I ventured from the sunny Southwest into the concrete skies of Portland, Oregon, which Huffington Post labeled the most irreligious city in America. Twelve friends followed us into a metro area of 2.5 million strangers. Rapidly we raised over \$70,000 and grew a launch team of 50 locals. ARC coached us all along the way.

In 2016 Reason Church launched in the Bossanova Ballroom, a venue known for death metal concerts and Portland's largest naked dance party. It was the perfect place to broadcast that Jesus is the friend of sinners. We had a standing-room-only crowd, and my wife and her worship band brought the place down. Agnostics and Buddhists came to me in tears saying they had prayed with me to receive salvation. It was electrifying.

Once you start a church, the Sundays keep on coming. A community and devoted team were growing, but I was the only person on the church staff. Housing was difficult to find, and we were living in a tiny apartment with no light fixtures in the bedrooms. The isolation of leadership and the Pacific Northwest rain began to erode my consciousness. Every month the giving was better than the previous month, and we were seeing lives transformed. But ebbs and flows in attendance were driving me into a profound despondency. Bekah would watch me uncontrollably weep as clinical depression turned my brain into a nest of vipers, my every thought pierced with venom. I began visiting a Christian psychologist, eventually hired the second staff member, and found a nice condo for us with a view of the river. Slowly my depression subsided.

“I ended up in a full-blown manic state and crashed my car at a high rate of speed outside of the church.”

We moved into a venue where Nike held its corporate events, and I became more of a collaborative leader. In little over a year, more than 300 people attended our Easter services and a generous couple wrote me a check for \$80,000. Soon our team drove to Washington for a conference, and I had dinner with Judah Smith. I could not sleep that night or the next two nights because I felt like we were on the brink of revival. I ended up in a full-blown manic state and crashed my car at a high rate of speed outside of the church. I was taken in an ambulance, sedated, and diagnosed with bipolar disorder. After much wrestling, my board asked me to resign.


What do you do when following your dreams leads you into nightmare? You either destroy your life through sin and suicide, or you take up your cross and follow Jesus. We relocated to Redlands, California, with pastor Chris Norman. Depression became a pitch-black maze where every turn took me deeper into the darkness. But I kept going, and you can too. You must keep going. Suicide does not end your pain; it transfers your pain to everyone you love.

The Bible depicts us as multi-dimensional beings: physical, social, emotional, and spiritual. If you only address one or two

dimensions, you are drawing stick figures in a 3D world. I am thankful for medication, but as the neuroscientist Eero Castien observed: “Simply taking drugs is not enough. We must also show the brain what the desired connections should be.” Only Scripture and community can transform and renew your mind.

Experts say that cognitive distortions twist reality. I found in my distorted thinking a connection between idolatry and anxiety. My depression said: “You’ll never be successful, so you might as well kill yourself.” My deepest worries revealed what I truly worshipped. If you allow Him, God will use suffering to purify your motives. Standing on the other side of the maze, I am glad I lost my church because when I gave up my power, I learned how to truly love. [ARC](#)

Jesse and Bekah Lusko are campus pastors at Calvary Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They served together in Albuquerque for six years before planting Reason Church in Portland, Oregon. They then returned to California where Jesse taught at Calvary Chapel Bible College. They were honored for the opportunity to be the campus pastors of Calvary Church Westside and part of a vibrant move of God in their home city. Learn more at jesseluko.com.



WHAT I
WISH I
KNEW
THEN

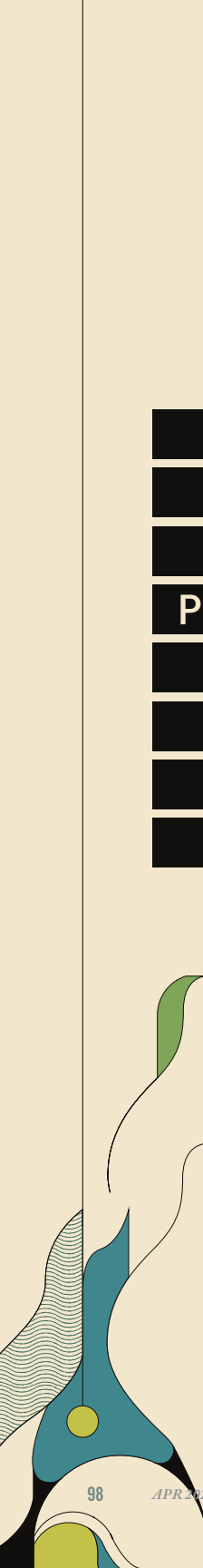
By Meghan Robinson



THIS YEAR I GREW UP.

I've been an adult for a while, but this year it seemed adulthood became even more official because I turned 40. My thirties were amazing, but in so many ways I felt younger than I was. Then 40 came knocking on my door, and I found myself at a doctor's appointment required for 40-plus-year-old women. That's when I realized: This is it—I'm a grown up! Can any of you relate? One thing I am sure of is this: The older I get, the less I know!





**“YOU CAN
TRUST THAT
ALL HIS
PROMISES AND
PLANS FOR
YOU WILL BE
BROUGHT TO
FRUITION.”**

Leading up to my birthday, I decided to capture some of the lessons I've learned in these forty years. I certainly have not arrived and have so much more to learn, but I wanted to share a few of the things I know now that I wish I knew then. Hindsight is always 20-20, so perhaps the lessons I can relay from 20 years of ministry—the serving, leading, pain, and process—may be a tipping point for you.


PASSION TALKS WHILE WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE LISTEN.

My husband and I launched into full-time ministry in our early 20s. I was young, passionate, determined, and ready to change the world. We were youth pastors of a large youth ministry at a megachurch, leading a team of people, most of whom were older than we. I had ideas for everything, and I was pretty convinced my ideas were brilliant. I am grateful for pastors and leaders in my life who saw the fullness of my potential and were patient and empowering.

As I look back on those years, I've learned that passion talks while wisdom and experience listen. I am still passionate about changing the world, but my passion has been tempered with patience. If I could advise my twenty-something-year-old self, I would encourage her to listen more and speak less.

ASK QUESTIONS MORE THAN SHARE IDEAS.

If you are a young leader starting in ministry, we need your ideas and innovative spirit. Your passion and excitement propel us forward, and you need the wisdom of those a few steps ahead in the journey. Don't dismiss their experience. Even while writing this, I know many of you will nod in compliant agreement but run full steam ahead in your heart. I understand because I did that too, but now looking back, I realize I



missed some moments of peace and contentment, made foolish leadership decisions, and caused unnecessary pain in my well-intentioned, passionate pursuit of what I thought should be next.

GOD POSITIONS, GOD PROMOTES, AND GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

God positions. Have you ever thought you should be further along than you are? I imagine we all do in different seasons of life and ministry. Whether you are a senior leader or a crucial member of a team, most likely you struggle with position. Pride thinks, “I should be further along,” and insecurity says, “I don’t belong.” Both are slippery slopes. God has you right where you are for a specific purpose. Don’t miss the moment because of pride or insecurity. Open your eyes to the people around you. Be eager to learn, be humble in relationships, be content with your current story, and be faithful with what is in your hands!

God promotes. We live in a world that is all about self-promotion. Leaders in every arena of life constantly are scrambling for the next best position. With every post on social media or every story shared, some yell: “Look at me, like me, and see how great I am.” Others strive and work overtime to achieve and be noticed through what they can do and how they perform.

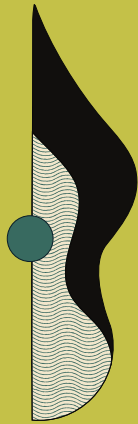
This drive, however, creates an insatiable desire for the next best thing. Remember, God has you in the right place at the right time. Give your best because God is watching, not because others are applauding. Check your heart and your motives. The Bible says, “Let others praise you and not your own mouth.” Share a proud moment, but don’t let a proud moment become a pride moment.



God keeps His promises. Psalm 55 tells us that our God has unchanging faithfulness. You can trust that all His promises and plans for you will be brought to fruition. His timing is perfect. A wise person once told me: “God is never late, and he is never early. He is always right on time.” I hated hearing that! While we would all love to forgo the process and get to the promise, it doesn’t work that way. Remember that God is working in your waiting, and He is the author and fulfiller of all His promises.

SLOWER IS BETTER.

I dislike the expression, “slow and steady wins the race.” I’m a “what’s next” kind of girl who is always ready to hit the target and move on to the next one. Church planting has challenged me to the core. It has been an infinitely slower process than I ever imagined. Although I was taught not to despise the days of small beginnings, I continued to nod my head and race on in my heart, only to be met with the discouragement of unmet expectations.

I work out in a class called Barre3. The instructors consistently remind us that the slower we go, the stronger we become. When exercising, very slow, isolated movement strengthens your core more than heavy weights or quick repetitions. The same applies to your vision for your church or ministry. Slow, focused, intentional movement will produce greater results and less possibility of injury. Far too many leaders






start moving too quickly, and we watch them stumble and fall. Slower is better. You may not see the results as quickly, but over time you are developing a solid, immovable, and firm foundation. Don't be discouraged if your movement seems gradual. Keep the vision alive. Your church will thank you, your family will thank you, and you will thank you!

TOMORROW IS ONLY A DAY AWAY.

The pressure of ministry is real. There is never a shortage of crises or problems. Some may be operational, some personal, and many exist in the lives of the people we are privileged to lead. There are seasons in the life of our church when it seems like everyone I know is walking through challenges. Every day we see struggle and pain. It can be overwhelming.

Part of the role of pastoring people is helping them navigate life. Your responsibility has never been to save someone. Jesus is the Savior, and your job is to point people to Him. There are always problems that people are facing today, so there are some crises that can wait until tomorrow. You do not have to respond to everything now. The weight of the world is not on your shoulders; it is on God's.

If your family or you are struggling and you constantly feel the pull to fix others and sacrifice yourself, you may have a savior complex. Perhaps helping others has replaced the necessary work of helping yourself. Let the Holy Spirit lead you. Some problems need your attention now and others can wait until tomorrow. People will come and go from your ministry and your church, but your spouse and your children are there to stay. Take time to rest and remember that tomorrow is only a day away.





MINISTRY IS NOT WEIGHT TRAINING.

I used to think that ministry was like weight training and every pressing problem counted as lifting another five to 10 pounds. I was convinced that the more I learned to carry, the stronger I would become. When I finally hit a moment when my knees began buckling under the pressure, I felt the Holy Spirit remind me that ministry is not about how much you can carry but how much you can lay down.

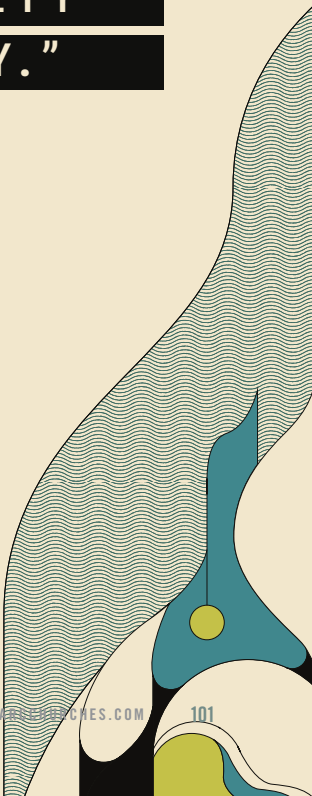
1 Peter 5:7 (AMP) says: “Cast all your cares (all your anxieties, all your worries, and all your concerns, once and for all) on Him, for he cares about you (with deepest affection and watches over you very carefully).”

Ministry is not weight training; it's marathon running. To run this race we must throw off the weight that so easily pulls us down. This is God's church, these are His people, and He is in control of every detail of your life and mine. Could you practice what you preach and stop picking up weight that was never yours to carry? Trust Jesus and keep running. We need you in the race, and I'm cheering you on! **arc**

Meghan Robinson is a dynamic and authentic communicator with Texas roots and a California heart. Meghan and her husband Carey pastor The Movement Church in Orange County, California (ARC church plant number 273). They have been in ministry for the past 20 years as youth pastors, associate pastors, and now senior pastors. Meghan is a wife, mom to two beautiful girls, church planter, and author of the devotional, Hey Babe. To learn more about The Movement Church or to order your copy of Hey Babe, visit theocmovement.com.



**“SLOW, FOCUSED,
INTENTIONAL
MOVEMENT WILL
PRODUCE
GREATER
RESULTS
AND LESS
POSSIBILITY
OF INJURY.”**






CREATING A SENDING CULTURE

Start with culture. Add some vision. Stir.

BY MICHAEL FLETCHER

The background is a complex, abstract composition of geometric shapes and lines. It features a variety of colors including teal, orange, yellow, and dark blue, all set against a white background. The shapes include circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles, some of which are partially cut off by the edges of the page. Lines of varying thicknesses connect these shapes, creating a sense of movement and structure. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

IT SEEMS LIKE WE REALLY DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE. WE WEREN'T EVEN CONSIDERED IN THE CONVERSATION. IN FACT, IT WASN'T A CONVERSATION AT ALL. IT WAS A SHORT MONOLOGUE, A SOLILOQUY, THE CENTRAL IDEAS OF WHICH ARE LOCATED IN ALL FOUR GOSPELS AND ACTS. MOST CALL IT A COMMISSION, THE "GREAT COMMISSION" TO BE PRECISE. WE'RE TAUGHT TO GO MAKE DISCIPLES ALL OVER THE PLANET (MATTHEW AND MARK) AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY PEOPLE GROUP (LUKE). WE'RE TOLD THAT WE'RE SENT JUST LIKE THE FATHER SENT HIM (JOHN) AND THAT WE HAVE POWER TO TAKE THIS MESSAGE TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH (ACTS). THE COMMISSION ISN'T "GATHER AND KEEP." IT'S "TRAIN AND SEND."

After hearing the command to go, the first New Testament church effectively sat on its hands. The gospel remained locked up in and around Jerusalem for three years after Jesus's resurrection, until a persecution broke out led by a Pharisee named Saul (later to become the Apostle Paul). Even then, the church's leaders, the apostles, remained home while the church members scattered and took the gospel with them, preaching it as they went. The result? A church was planted in Antioch, seemingly by accident, among the Gentiles, and the gospel began its trek to the ends of the earth. (It's interesting that Paul, before he was a believer, did more to spread the gospel among the peoples of the earth than all the apostles in Jerusalem put together.)

Before long the church in Antioch became the key church on the planet although it had no superstars, none of the men Jesus had personally disciplined. It was a collection of "no names." During these years, the church in Jerusalem sank slowly into legalism while the Holy Spirit called the church in Antioch to send its two best men, Barnabas and Paul, to go and plant churches. "They laid their hands on them and sent them off" (Acts 13:3 ESV). (Remember, not "gather and keep," but "train and send.")

To be fair, by Acts 21 the original 11 apostles had departed Jerusalem on church planting expeditions of their own. History records that each of them, except John, died a martyr's death!

The struggles of the early church have been repeated throughout church history. It seems we Christians are habitually reluctant to reach beyond our comfort zones, to

risk potential conflict and loss in stretching the boundaries of Christianity. (Read the classic article by Ralph D. Winter, "The Kingdom Strikes Back: The Ten Epochs of Redemptive History" in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*.)

This is why I love the ARC. ARC is a family of churches given to the study and practice of church planting with a common passion to multiply churches. And the success rate is phenomenal!

It's not enough to plant a few churches and go back to "church as usual," as if church planting was an addendum to the call of God. The New Testament church existed to plant other churches; replication was part of its DNA. Paul traveled to key cities and planted churches, and their missions were to plant other churches that, in turn, would plant other churches. The goal then was church multiplication, and church multiplication is still the goal today. We must elevate our thinking from "addition" to "multiplication," and to do so we need three ingredients: Start with culture, add some vision, and stir.

START WITH CULTURE

There's truth to the expression, "culture trumps vision," and it seems reasonable that we must go beyond a "send vision" and develop a "send culture." A culture is more than a belief system or set of shared ideals; it's how people behave, how they act, what they do, and what they consider normal. Culture is not merely part of your DNA; it is your DNA. It's what you think church ought to be. If church planting is done in the dark or viewed as a line item in the budget, then it isn't part of your church's culture.

A sending culture includes three foundational ideas:

1. **Every believer is already sent.** How many people read the fine print when they signed up for an Amazon account? I don't know anyone who plowed through this minutia, no matter how important. Instead, most peo-

and embrace the reality that he has already been sent.

2. **Every church is called and created to plant other churches.** Disciples are made in the context of community (the local church), so to make disciples all over the world, we must plant churches all over the world. Not

“...NOT GATHER AND KEEP, BUT TRAIN AND SEND.”

ple scrolled to the bottom of the page and clicked the all-important “I agree” box so they could start shopping.

The same thing happened when we were born again. Before the altar call, we didn't grab a Bible to read the New Testament and consider everything we were getting into before committing our lives to Christ. Instead, most people thrust their hands in the air to say “I agree” because they couldn't wait to find the one true pathway to everlasting forgiveness. We figured we'd get a handle on the fine print later.

Make no mistake; there is fine print, and lots of it. Die to self. Walk by faith, not by sight. Serve others ahead of yourself, and so on. And don't forget this one: As soon as you signed up, you were sent. Everyone has a calling from God. Everyone has a place on the team. Everyone is loaded with gifts. Everyone is sent. The main ingredient in a send culture is for every believer to recognize

every church may be led by a pastor with an apostolic calling, but every church is birthed with an apostolic seed at its core. This is not optional, so it should be a visible part of who we are as a church, as much as worship, small groups, and Easter and Christmas are.

3. **Multiplying churches requires that every church plants other churches, which plant churches.** Adding is good, but multiplying is better. The early church; the church that arose during times of historical revivals; and the modern day churches in China, Nepal, the Middle East, Africa, and parts of South America are all multiplying. The secular media recently reported that the fastest growing church in the world is an underground, persecuted Christian movement led mostly by women in a country known for exporting terrorism—Iran.

My prayer is simply, “Lord, if then, why not now? If there, why not here?” While it can happen here and now, we must trade our

addition mindset for a multiplication approach. We learned this in third grade. Multiplication happens when all the additions add—when every church plants multiple churches that plant multiple churches. This is where vision enters.

“LORD, IF THEN, WHY NOT NOW? IF THERE, WHY NOT HERE?”

ADD SOME VISION

Culture is who we are. Vision is a picture of a preferred future; it is what we are going to do. Our vision should give legs to our culture. Vision requires action, and if it is compelling enough, it mobilizes people. But we must move from a posture of “we’d like to include you in this” to one that announces “we can’t do this without you.”

To accomplish this, we must build a compelling vision that scares us and feels overwhelming, one that will not succeed without God’s direction and involvement. I’m speaking of an ambitious church multiplication vision that spans throughout the valley, touches every city in the state, or reaches every college campus in the country.

We are located near Fort Bragg, the largest United States military base. Our constituency is 70 percent military, so our vision is to plant a version of Manna Church near every U.S. military base in the world—all 273 of them. This vision can’t be accomplished as another church program; it will take the entire church to achieve it.

STIR

Below are a handful of ideas about how to feed a send culture.

1. **We become what we celebrate.** Tell church planting stories. Include video from churches you have planted and celebrate what is happening there. Talk about potential church plant locations. Reference your former plants and the things they are doing to change the world in their community.

2. **Send your best.** Eagles don't flock, and if your "eagles" can't rise to their potential, they may leave. Sadly, they may leave our family of believers in addition to your church. Don't let them leave! Instead, send them. Get behind them and provide resources. Send others with them and be their biggest fan. Build a family of churches that becomes a band of brothers, all conspiring to not only plant but also multiply churches.

3. **Train leaders who will be part of your church planting strategy.** I lead a group of about 35 leaders who fall into three groups: potential planters, potential staff who will replace the planters, and staff to send with the planters. Make sure your most committed, gifted visionaries are involved. It's the best hour of my work week!

We can do this. We must do this. And we don't really have a choice because we already have been sent. arc



*Michael Fletcher and his wife Laura have served as the senior pastors of Manna Church for more than 30 years. The Fletchers' church has worked to create a culture that advances the Kingdom of God across the street and around the globe (actively engaged in 63 countries). Michael's heart is to see God's people equipped to change the world and to plant churches with the same world-changing vision. Manna has helped to plant more than 100 churches to-date and is currently planting a version of Manna Church near every U.S. military base in the world. Michael has authored several books and most recently, *Empowering Leadership: How a Leadership Development Culture Builds Leaders Faster*. To learn more, visit michaelfletcher.tv.*

Dear ARC Family,

YOU ARE INCREDIBLE. Just a few weeks ago, our world turned upside down. Sickness plagued our communities, people lost their jobs, and churches were forced to meet online. But that didn't stop you. We are amazed at how quickly you adapted and were the first to ask, "How can we help?" Thank you for stepping up and helping meet the needs of your community as well as the needs of other local churches.

In this season and beyond, we want to provide you with resources to equip you and your church to thrive. This magazine is full of wisdom and experience from around the ARC Family. A huge thank you to each of our contributors. We hope it inspires you and gives you new ideas for what's to come. We can't wait to be together with you again.

THE ARC TEAM

If your church has immediate needs due to the Coronavirus, please let us know at covid19.arcchurches.com.

If you have a story of God's faithfulness or provision, please share it with us at arcchurches.com/shareyourstory.



There is no us without you.

A CONFERENCE FOR CHURCH PLANTERS, PASTORS, & LEADERS.



For dates and locations

VISIT OUR WEBSITE / [ARCCONFERENCE.COM](https://arconference.com)



LAUNCHING, CONNECTING, & EQUIPPING THE LOCAL CHURCH

arc Association
of Related
Churches

ARCCHURCHES.COM

🐦 @ARCCHURCHES 📍 /WEPLANTLIFE