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ASSIMILATING NEW MEMBERS BY CONNECTING THEM WITH  
SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES AT NOONDAY BAPTIST CHURCH  
MARIETTA, GEORGIA

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A Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

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by  
Yancey Jay Worthington

May 2014

**APPROVAL SHEET**

ASSIMILATING NEW MEMBERS BY CONNECTING THEM WITH  
SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES AT NOONDAY BAPTIST CHURCH

MARIETTA, GEORGIA

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To Frances,  
the most beautiful bride, the best helpmate,  
the strongest believer I know,  
who has sacrificed so much for me,  
and only ever asks for fresh flowers in return.  
To Anli, Virginia, Khristopher, Skye, and Joseph,  
who make their daddy's world a much better place.

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## PREFACE

When I first felt led to pursue my Doctorate of Ministry, I knew that it would not be easy. I anticipated there would need to be great sacrifices of my time, money, and effort, and I was right. Completing this project required more effort than any other academic challenge I have faced. Going into this project, one thing I did not realize, was how much would be required of others, in order for me to complete the task. It is said that it takes a village to raise a child. It seems it also takes one to complete a higher education degree.

I am thankful to the congregation of Noonday Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia. This sweet church family not only played guinea pig to all my surveys, classes, and focus groups, but they were an amazing support outside the project. Their support was beyond what a congregation should give to a pastoral staff member; it was much more like the support of a family. Beyond everything, the prayers and encouragement of many members has sustained me through these years of study. The office support staff also went the extra mile. I am blessed to have a group of ministry assistants who proofed and reproofed page after page of my writing.

My family deserves the greatest appreciation; of any group, they have sacrificed more and more often than any other. My parents have encouraged and supported every level of my education, including this degree. My children have spent dozens of nights only seeing their dad on FaceTime. Above all, my amazing wife has given and given and given in support of my efforts. She has sacrificed from our budget,



from our time together, and most of all in enduring my stress over deadlines and assignments. I could not have done it without her. I am humbled to be able to share my life with her and happy to have shared this experience with her as well.

Even though the sacrifice has been great, the reward has also been great. God has truly blessed every step of this project. I have learned so much about God, about His church, and about myself. God deserves all the glory. All the sacrifices that have been made pale in comparison to the sacrifice God made for me when He sent His son Jesus Christ to die on a cross for my sins. It is my prayer that the time spent in this project will enable me to better equip God's people to advance His kingdom.

Jay Worthington

Marietta, Georgia  
May 2014

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to increase the retention of new members of Noonday Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia by helping them identify and become active in service opportunities in the church.

#### **Goals**

Five goals helped evaluate whether this project accomplished its main goal. The first was to increase new members' knowledge about their personal spiritual gifts and abilities. A training course was used to help new members identify not only their spiritual gifts, but also how their personalities, passions and past experiences help shape where they are designed to serve in the church. New members must know how they are gifted by the Spirit if they are to find an appropriate place of service in the church.

The second goal of the project was a change in attitude among new members. The goal was to lower new members' anxiety of serving while increasing their desire to get involved in volunteer positions within the church. This study assumes that many new members do not get involved because they are fearful that they are not qualified to serve in the body. This goal was accomplished through the previously mentioned class as well as mentorship in the first few weeks of their first service opportunity.

The next was a skills goal. The third goal was to increase the number of hours each new member volunteers in a church program. It was the hypothesis of this study that as members become more involved they will feel more ownership in the church and thus

would be integrated faster and deeper than they would without the service. The best way to measure this goal was by calculating how many man-hours each new member was spending in service each month.

The fourth goal was to decrease the amount of time between members joining and starting in a volunteer position. It was not only important that new members volunteer, but that they got into a volunteer position quickly. The shorter the time between joining and service the quicker new members can begin to build relationships and feel ownership in the church body.

The final goal was a personal goal. It was my desire through the course of this project to become a better motivator to members to get involved in serving within the church. It is the pastor's job in the body to equip believers for works of service. As I increase my proficiency in motivation, specifically toward new members, the church will be able to grow in number and health as new members serve more and stay active longer.

### **Ministry Context**

The project was conducted as part of the ongoing ministry of Noonday Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia. Noonday is located in the greater Atlanta area, north of the city proper, a few miles outside of Interstate 285, which encircles Atlanta. Noonday's campus is located on two sides of a five-lane highway and is unique in that each side of the road is in a different city. The older west campus is in Marietta, while the newer east campus has a Kennesaw address. Within four miles of the church campus there are 111,000 residents including high percentages of both retired families and young professional couples.<sup>1</sup> The surrounding communities have seen a high growth rate in the past ten years, a rate that is predicted to continue.

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<sup>1</sup>“Missional Zipcode Report for 30066,” Intercultural Institute for Contextual Ministry, accessed November 1, 2009, <http://www.missionalzipcode.org>.

Noonday Baptist Church was founded in 1835 by twelve charter members in a rural area about a half-day's buggy drive from downtown Atlanta. The church experienced great growth in the first few decades, passing 100 members within the first ten years. The growth then waned to a slow increase over the next 120 years.<sup>2</sup>

The church achieved its highest attendance during the first part of the 2000s when it broke the 500 barrier in worship and had to move into the gym.<sup>3</sup> At this point the church elected to build a new facility and purchased land across a five-lane highway across the street from the current campus with a vision to utilize both sides of the road. While the church was able to raise cash for the land, they had to borrow 6.7 million dollars for the construction of the building and parking lot. Construction was completed in 2007.

Upon moving into the new facility, the church experienced significant growth in the first year in both additions and average worship attendance as seen in Table 1.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, small groups did not see the same growth. In the first year, the church averaged less than half its worship attendance in small groups. Over the next five years, growth fell off systematically in all areas.

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<sup>2</sup>George Barnett, *Heritage and Hope: A Sesquicentennial History of Noonday Baptist Church Marietta, Georgia* (Marietta, GA: Published in house at Noonday Baptist Church, 1985), 1-75.

<sup>3</sup>Annual Church Profile, Noonday Baptist Church, 2000.

<sup>4</sup>Annual Church Profiles, Noonday Baptist Church, 2005-2010.

### Five-year growth

| Year | Total Additions | Baptisms | Worship Attendance | Small Group Attendance |
|------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 2006 | 75              | 30       | 501                | 200                    |
| 2007 | 86              | 41       | 573                | 223                    |
| 2008 | 114             | 40       | 504                | 290                    |
| 2009 | 64              | 24       | 508                | 335                    |
| 2010 | 49              | 13       | 450                | 305                    |
| 2011 | 46              | 19       | 444                | 281                    |

Analysis of the numbers and other data revealed some factors that led to the quick growth but equally sudden decline. The single largest strength during this time was location. The campus is on a high traffic road in the suburbs of Atlanta. The high volume of traffic, along with the new building, created a sense of heightened curiosity within the community and brought many visitors to the new facility in the first two years. This large surge of visitors and new members quickly declined because of several weaknesses.

One weakness that limited growth was an over estimation of what the actual growth would be. This over estimation caused the leadership to start three morning worship services in the new building on launch day. Having a larger capacity sanctuary with additional services spread the members too thin. This spreading led to a decreased sense of energy in the services and a decreased sense of accomplishment as some services saw few of the new members join in their time slot.

The biggest weakness for the church in the four years after the completion of the new building was in the area of assimilation. Several factors contributed to this problem and prevented the church from integrating new members into the overall ministry of the church body. During the first two years in the new building, Noonday had over 200 additions but saw growth in small group attendance of only 70 people. By not

connecting the new growth with small groups or tying them into the body through ministry, the people came but fell through the cracks. The main issues that prevented the small groups from keeping up with the worship growth were a lack of emphasis on small groups, a lack of small groups leaders, and a lack of small group space. The pastoral leadership figured out the importance of small groups too late in the transition. The main issues that prevented the members from getting involved in ministry were lack of emphasis on service, lack of an affective new members' class, and lack of promotion of volunteer positions. Without a small group or a place of service many of the new members moved on to other churches.

Despite these weaknesses, the church has seen significant growth in specific age ranges even through the declining periods. The largest segment of growth has been in the area of young families.<sup>5</sup> The families that have been reached are typically white-collar couples with preschoolers or babies. Most have had some church involvement in their past, mostly as teenagers or in their own childhood. They came back to church as a couple shortly after having children with a desire to lay a spiritual foundation for their family. Two factors primarily contributed to this growth. First, this group was the fastest growing demographic segment within the community around the church.<sup>6</sup> Annual demographic research has shown that the enterprising couples segment was one of the fastest growing. The second factor was the quality and security of the children's area in the new building. Effort and resources were poured into the design and construction of the children's area. State-of-the-art security features were included to ensure that parents felt at ease when leaving their children.

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<sup>5</sup>Data retrieved from Noonday's attendance and membership database program ACS.

<sup>6</sup>Missonal Zipcode Report.

The large amount of growth in this group has presented unique challenges for the church. As many of the couples had little church experience, they had no familiarity with common church protocols. Concepts like membership, a new members' class, volunteer leadership, and stewardship were unfamiliar to the group.

During the first four years in the new building the church as a whole had few organized evangelistic strategies for reaching the community. Evangelism became a passive activity for the body. This passive attitude was because of an overemphasis on the new building. In the years prior to building and moving into the new facility the senior staff frequently said, "If we build it they will come," with the "they" being the lost of the community. So, most of the resources, money, and volunteer hours of the church were poured into the building until completion. Then, for a short time after the completion of the building, visitors did come. As stated previously, the location of the new building on a high visibility road did attract many new people from the community. However, the church did not realize that this honeymoon stage would soon fade and after a short time people would drive by the building and not notice it. A spirit of evangelistic complacency spread among the church. After twelve months, the steady flow of visitors and new members began to fade.

This complacency allowed the church's focus to be taken from personal evangelism to what seemed a more urgent dilemma: the building debt. Several factors contributed to the building debt becoming a crisis. First, the building cost got out of hand during construction, causing the church to spend almost 50 percent more on the building than was projected. Second, the burden of paying the loan was put in the hands of future growth, leaving no way for the church to cover the financial pressure of a loan. The church had to have many new members and new givers in order to be able to carry the weight of the full loan. Finally, within twelve months of the building completion, the American economy entered the recession. All of these factors created a situation of desperation among church leaders. This anxiety spread to the general church populace

and caused many new members and established leaders to leave the body for other local congregations.

After being in the building for four years the senior pastor resigned to take a position at another church. The church called an interim pastor who became the new senior pastor ten months later. The new pastor spent the previous four years of his ministry as a traveling evangelist and therefore has a strong passion for evangelism. This emphasis on evangelism has brought a new energy to the congregation. However a shortage of leaders still exists due to the member loss of the previous two years.

To summarize, at the time of the project, Noonday was a church that experienced a surge of growth five years ago, but had allowed that growth to turn into decline. The church had several weaknesses. One of the largest was its unmanageable debt burden. The church was still under a construction loan because it did not have the funds to secure a permanent loan. The annual interest and principle payment on the current amount would be over half of the overall church budget. Another weakness was the shortage of volunteers in the body. Every major program in the church has a shortage of key leaders and volunteers. The church had several strengths at the time of the project. Key among these was the new pastoral leadership. The new pastor was bringing a stronger focus on evangelism and a new excitement for the future of the church. These two factors are leading the church to a large increase in the number of additions and baptisms in the current year. If the church was going to break through the 500 barrier in worship it will need to find a way to assimilate these new members and new believers quickly and get them involved in service.

My position in the church is the Executive Pastor. I have direct responsibilities in leading the areas of staff development, direction of the personnel and finance teams, Adult Education, Preschool Ministries, and Children's Ministries. I have a supervisory role over the Student Pastor, who leads the Middle School, High School and College Ministries. In addition, I oversee other supporting ministries such as our greeter ministry



and evangelism ministry. I have been at the church for five years and am the longest tenured senior staff. My positions give me direct leadership to all areas of this project including new member assimilation, volunteer training and volunteer placement.

### **Rationale**

In light of the current situation at Noonday this project was needed. If Noonday was going to continue to grow, its greatest need was in the area of additional volunteers. As the church approaches the 500 attendance barrier, the need for additional volunteers was being felt through the church's core ministries such as greeters, children and youth. To break through the barrier Noonday needed to assimilate more new members; however, to attract and keep these new members, Noonday needed more volunteers to expand the capacity of each core program. This dichotomy, however, creates a "catch twenty-two" scenario. As the church integrates more new members it needs more volunteers, but to get more volunteers the church needs more new members. The simple answer, and the goal of this project, was to turn new members into volunteers immediately.

Being on the verge of 500 in average attendance means that the current volunteer base of the church was stretched thin. Many of the older established members already have volunteer positions in the church and its ministries. This fact means that new members must fill new and vacant positions. All these details came together to create a great time for this project because Noonday was experiencing rapid growth in the area of new members for the first time in five years. The last surge of new members occurred when the new building was built. The surge brought more than enough new members to help the church push through the 500 barrier; however, because the members were not assimilated the average attendance fell further back instead of breaking through 500. The project would allow the church to improve its member retention over the influx of new members from five years ago.

Two main benefits were expected from this project. Both benefits address the paradox of the needs of new members versus those of volunteers. The first benefit was to improve new member assimilation. By getting new members involved in volunteer opportunities within the church the member was more likely to stay involved over the first year of membership. This involvement would be the result of increased relationships that came from working closely with other volunteers and an increase in the member's sense of ownership as they became connected to a specific area of the church.

The second benefit was an increase in the number of volunteers in the church. New members are the largest pool of potential volunteers in the church. The trend at Noonday had been that it takes new members about a year to get involved in a volunteer position in a ministry in the church. By decreasing this time through the processes outlined in this project, new members are in volunteer positions within just a few months. This quick turnaround assures that the number of volunteers grows at a proportionate rate to the number of new members. This proportionate growth in turn improves future assimilation, as ministries are always ready for more growth.

Assimilation of new members and increasing the number of volunteers were two needs at Noonday that were matched to improve each other. As stated, each has the potential to meet the others needs. Creating a project that allows Noonday to combine the two areas was critical for the growth and health of the church at a critical point in its growth.

### **Definitions**

The purpose of this project was to tie together assimilation of new members and volunteer leadership positions in the church. It is therefore necessary to define assimilation, spiritual gifts, and gifted as they are used throughout the project.

Assimilation has become a common topic among churches in the last few years. Rick Warren has defined *assimilation* as “the task of moving people from an

awareness of your church to attendance at your church to active membership in your church.”<sup>7</sup> While this definition was good, it was too broad for the focus of this project, as the project will deal with those who are already members. A better definition for this project is that of Truman Brown and James E. Hightower, authors of *After They Join: 10 Ways to Assimilate New Members*, who define *assimilation* as "the meaningful incorporation of individuals into the body of Christ so that they have a sense of belonging and are thus involved in the ministry of that community."<sup>8</sup>

Spiritual Gifts is another term that is common among evangelical churches. Because it is so commonly used it has taken on very different meanings in different context and with different groups. The best definition for this project is that of Peter Wagner who defines spiritual gifts as, “a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ according to God’s grace for use within the context of the Body.”<sup>9</sup> Spiritual gifts will be used as part of the process for placing new members into service positions. It is important to note here that while spiritual gifts will be used as a part of the process they are not seen in this project as the sole indicator of optimum placement in the body. Throughout the project the term *gifted* will be used. Gifted will be defined in this project as being a broader concept than just spiritual gifts. Gifted will be defined as how God as formed the total person and designed them for specific ministry in the body. This giftedness may be spiritual gifts, but it may also be education, family upbringing or personal passions.

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<sup>7</sup>Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 309.

<sup>8</sup>Truman Brown and James E. Hightower, *After They Join: 10 Ways to Assimilate New Members* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1994), 9.

<sup>9</sup>Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2012), 47.

## **Limitations**

The only limitation that was applied to this project was a fifteen-week time limit. A delimitation placed on the project was a focus on members that have joined in the eighteen months prior to the project. Because of the size of Noonday, there would not be enough new members to make a valid sample size if only those who joined inside the fifteen weeks were used. Eighteen months gave a large enough sample size to focus on. Existing members were not used, with the exception of a survey given to all members in order to obtain a baseline for attitudes about ministry involvement.

## **Research Methodology**

Five goals helped evaluate whether this project accomplished its main goal. Surveys and focus groups were the two main research methods used to measure the five goals. The first goal was to increase the knowledge in new members about their spiritual gifts. A survey was given to see to what level new member knowledge was increased. The survey questioned basic knowledge of their own spiritual gifts as well as knowledge of a biblical understanding of service. The survey was given twice, once at the beginning of the project and once at the end to see how much knowledge increased. The initial survey also included questions about the level of anxiety that the participant had towards volunteering. This information was used with the second goal.

The second goal was to lower new members' anxiety of serving while increasing their desire to get involved in volunteer positions within the church. A survey was given to each new member at the end of their first few weeks of service to identify if they felt more comfortable in service. These results were compared to those obtained in the initial survey. The hope was to see that through the process of the project new members had a higher motivation to get involved and had fewer worries to prevent them from becoming involved in service.

The third goal was to increase the number of hours each new member volunteers at a church program. The increase was measured by calculating the average number of weekly volunteer hours for every member who had joined in the previous eighteen months. The results was compared to an identical calculation taken at the end of the project as well as to one taken of the general church populace.

The fourth goal was to decrease the amount of time between members joining and starting in a volunteer position. The change was measured by conducting a survey of existing members to see how long, on average, they were members before getting involved in service. Then the new members involved in the project were questioned at the end of the project to see if their time was less than the average from the general church.

My personal goal through the course of this project was to become a better motivator to members to get involved in serving within the church. The change in motivation was measured by conducting a focus group discussion at the end of the project with those involved to gain their input on my abilities. The focus group met twice during the course of the project, once midway through, so that I could make adjustments as needed, and once at the end to obtain final data.

### **Summary of Chapters**

Chapter 1 is a broad introduction to the project. The main purpose and subsequent goals are explained in detail. The ministry context of Noonday Baptist Church is covered in detail. The context includes a brief look at the long history of Noonday with a closer look on the previous five years. The large back door and inability for Noonday to push through the 500 attendance barrier show that it is a prime candidate for the focus of this project.

Chapter 2 examines the biblical and theological support for using assimilation to integrate new members into the church body. In the Old Testament God's people were a nation and its members were born into it. While individual Christians were still saved

by faith, assimilation into the community of faith had a nationalistic focus. The nationalistic focus differs from this project that attempts to integrate members into the New Testament church. For this reason only an overview of the book of Nehemiah is used from the Old Testament. Matthew 20:26-28, Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 4:7-13, and 1 Corinthians 12:1-30 are all examined from the New Testament. These passages focus on the need for believers to be serving the body of Christ with the natural conclusion being that churches should help their members fulfill these commands to serve.

Chapter 3 considers some theoretical and sociological support for the project. Research is examined to show that a sense of ownership and belonging are vital for a person to feel connected to any organization. Then, service in the church is presented as the best way to increase these two qualities in members. The chapter concludes with a survey of key principles that make volunteer organizations successful and a look at how these principles affect assimilating new members through service.

Chapter 4 is a step-by-step description of the entire project. Ample detail is given to allow someone in another church context the ability to duplicate the project in their setting. The chapter is structured as a week-by-week timeline of the project with explanations of what happens in each week.

The final chapter is a critical evaluation of the project. Information from surveys and focus groups is used to identify strengths and weaknesses of the project. Each goal is examined to see to what degree it was met. The chapter concludes with personal reflections from the author on the full scope of the project.

## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT

The purpose of this project is to increase the retention of new members of Noonday Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia by helping them identify and become active in service opportunities in the church. As with any aspect of church life, it is important to examine the biblical and theological support for church membership and service to the local church. In the modern American church, these two concepts need a renewed emphasis. Many of the aspects of modern church life have become ritual and lack clear biblical precedent; they are simply done because they have always been done. Membership and service are chief among these rituals, not to say they do not have a biblical foundation, only that the scriptural integrity of them has been overshadowed by the ritualistic aspect. Most members and attendees of churches today cannot give a solid biblical foundation for membership and service to the body of Christ. Jonathan Leeman says of most believers,

They have a vague sense that Christians should be involved with a local church. But they would also say it's not the most important thing in the world, so we shouldn't make too big a deal about it. If Christians spend several years hopping from church to church, or if they decide to attend one church indefinitely without joining, that's okay, too.<sup>1</sup>

Believers do not know why they should join or serve a church, only that they are constantly told they should. This chapter will look at some key passages related to church membership and service in order to establish a strong biblical foundation for the two. Membership will be addressed briefly with the bulk of the chapter focusing on service.

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<sup>1</sup>Jonathan Leeman, *Building Healthy Churches: Church Membership* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 18.

## Membership

Membership will have an abbreviated focus for two reasons. First, membership is not the primary purpose of this project. While the project uses new members as a focus group, the goal is to assimilate them into the church, as opposed to motivating attenders to become new members. Second, the issue of local church membership is not directly discussed in Scripture. This absence of a direct passage requires a deeper look at a wider range of Scripture passages, which would exceed the limitations of space in this chapter.

To infer that because the Bible does not directly address local church membership means that membership is not biblical or legitimate would be utilizing a negative hermeneutic and false logic. Aubrey Malphurs addresses this false logic when he admits, “Just because a certain church practice isn’t found in the Scriptures doesn’t mean the church didn’t do it. Absence of proof isn’t proof of absence. Common sense tells us some, if not most, of the practices of the New Testament churches aren’t mentioned.”<sup>2</sup> To see New Testament teachings on membership, one must look between the lines at obvious inferences of early church practices.

For example the presence of church membership can be seen in 1 Corinthians. Paul says, “For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church that you are to judge?” (1 Cor 5:12-13 ESV).<sup>3</sup> The only way for there to be an “inside” and an “outside” is for there to be some form of formal membership. This membership was something important to each member, something to be cherished. This value on membership is clear in Jesus’ teaching about how to handle sin among Christians. Matthew records the words of Jesus as he explains the process for addressing sin. The climax of this process is that the unrepentant Christian is to be excluded from the church

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<sup>2</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *New Kind of Church: Understanding Models of Ministry for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 48.

<sup>3</sup>Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.



(Matt 18:15-17). First, this passage shows the presence of church membership because if there was no membership, there would be nothing to be excluded from. Second, this text shows the value members placed on their membership because if there was no value, there would be no effect from exclusion.

This brief look at membership reveals its validity as well as some of its value. Modern church membership, therefore, is something that should not be abandoned, but pursued and elevated in value. The bulk of this project will deal with how to get those members involved in service within the body. The bulk of this chapter will deal with biblical teaching on service, starting with the Old Testament.

### **Service In The Old Testament**

A look at how service pertains to membership in the Old Testament raises some unique issues. Chief among these issues is that in the Old Testament there was no church. The church as we know it is completely a New Testament structure; therefore, any discussion about church membership is absent from Old Testament Scripture. This absence of direct discussion does not mean the Old Testament has nothing to say to modern believers about church membership or, specifically, volunteer service from church members. The absence requires an examination of themes that apply to membership and service rather than a direct look at church membership.

The New Testament church is a gathering of God's people into a fellowship. In the Old Testament, God's people were gathered into a fellowship, but it was a national fellowship in the nation of Israel. Though often misapplied in the modern age, the word "church" does not refer to a building. The "church" is a gathering of God's people together. After Jesus, this gathering was called a church; before Jesus the gathering was called a nation. In the New Testament the most common word for church is ἐκκλησία

(*ekklesia*) which means “called-out.”<sup>4</sup> In the Septuagint the “congregation” of Israel is referred to by the same Greek word, ἐκκλησία, especially when gathered before the Lord as in Deuteronomy 31:30.<sup>5</sup> The nation of Israel was not the same as the church, but it was a “divine institution to prepare the way” for the New Testament church.<sup>6</sup>

The fact that the nation of Israel foreshadowed the church rather than equated to it requires that principles be examined rather than focusing on specific verses from the Old Testament. The relationship between nation and church, however, does allow for a reader to use events from Israel’s history as case studies on membership, service, or both. One event that offers several principles is the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah in the Old Testament.

### **Nehemiah as a Case Study**

The book of Nehemiah offers a case study for principles related to volunteer service within the church. Nehemiah returned from captivity and accomplished the extensive task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem by organizing the people of Israel to accomplish the work. Three main principles will be examined here. First, God used a leader to start the process of organizing volunteers; second, God uses all kinds of his people to accomplish his work; and third, leaders have to motivate volunteers.

When God’s sovereign judgment decreed that it was time for Jerusalem’s wall to be rebuilt the process could have begun in different ways. In the events of the book of Nehemiah, God used leaders to start the process of organizing volunteers and rebuilding the walls. Mervin Breneman points out, “Often the hardest part of a project is getting

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<sup>4</sup>Merrill C. Tenney, *The Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), s.v. “church.”

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Philip Schaff, *Apostolic Christianity A.D. 1-100, History of the Christian Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1910), 66.

started. Someone must take the initiative.”<sup>7</sup> He goes on to point out Jeshua, Zerubbabel and Nehemiah took the initiative and started the process of rebuilding the walls. The fact that the process began with leaders is no accident. In the modern church, pastors and leaders must be the catalyst for organizing volunteer church members to accomplish the work of the church. Alan Redpath saw Nehemiah as such a catalyst when he remarked, “Nehemiah, having faced the magnitude of the task, realized the absolute necessity of securing other people to help him.”<sup>8</sup> Today’s pastors must see the need to organize their people into service if the church is to make an impact for Christ. The people of the church must do the work of the church, but its leaders must start the work.

The second principle to see in Nehemiah is that God uses different kinds of people to accomplish his work. The list of volunteers in Nehemiah reveals a wide variety of people (Neh 3:1-32). Owen White says, “These who have been named were not all builders by trade. Some of them perhaps had some skill and experience; many found themselves entirely out of their usual field of service.”<sup>9</sup> Derek Kidner comments that this heterogeneous mix of groups has “all the marks of a shared enthusiasm, as some worked as family units, others by towns, crafts, trades and callings.”<sup>10</sup> This great variety of people shows God’s desire to not only accomplish great things but to do them through extraordinary means. God’s accomplishment of rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls was magnified by the fact that it was done with such an eclectic assortment of inexperienced

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<sup>7</sup>Mervin Breneman, *Ezra Nehemiah & Esther*, The New American Commentary, vol. 10 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 90.

<sup>8</sup>Alan Redpath, *Victorious Christian Service: Studies in the Book of Nehemiah* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1958), 46.

<sup>9</sup>Owen White, *Nehemiah Speaks Again* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1964), 33.

<sup>10</sup>Derek Kidner, *Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downer Grove: IL, Inter-Varsity, 1979), 84.

builders. In the modern church this same principle still applies to volunteers. God's desire is still to accomplish his work through a variety of his people. The work of the church is not just for the trained and paid pastor, but also for all the laity of the church.

The final principle from this Old Testament account is leaders must motivate the people to service. This principle can be seen clearly when Nehemiah tells the people not to be afraid (Neh 4:13-14). In this section of the narrative, the pressure of the build, along with the stress of attack, is taking its toll on the people. Jacob Myers remarked, "The job was too much for them, the carping and menacing opposition was overwhelmingly discouraging."<sup>11</sup> The people were discouraged and needed leadership to keep them motivated, and they received that from Nehemiah. Cyril Barber reveals the power of Nehemiah's motivation when he declared,

Nehemiah's handling of the situation in Jerusalem illustrates for us the essence of good motivation. The significance of what he accomplished may be seen from the fact that for ninety years the people had been saying, "It can't be done!" Now they are united and eager to begin the work of rebuilding the defenses of their city.<sup>12</sup>

Clearly the people of Jerusalem needed motivation from Nehemiah, and today God's people still need motivation from their leaders. Pastors must be willing to engage church members in volunteer service, as well as continue to encourage them in their service. Leaders cannot simply point church members in the direction of volunteer sign up lists. Personal interaction and encouragement is needed to achieve the level of success achieved by Nehemiah.

Principles for service among church members can be seen throughout the Old Testament, as revealed here in Nehemiah. The principles must be extracted and applied to

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<sup>11</sup>Jacob M. Myers, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, The Anchor Bible Commentary, vol. 14 (New York: Doubleday, 1965), 126.

<sup>12</sup>Cyril J. Barber, *Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Effective Leadership* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1976), 42.

the New Testament church model. An examination of the New Testament, however, offers more directly applicable passages. The next section will examine three general passages and one primary text on service in the church.

### **General New Testament Passages**

The New Testament is rich with passages dealing with service and the need for God’s children to work in and for the church. Of these passages, four will be examined here; three general passages and one primary text. In this section the focus will be on the three general texts and their teachings on service. The first text is Matthew 20:26-28; it shows that service is at the heart of the gospel and the fact that all God’s people should be serving one another. The second passage is Ephesians 4:7-13 which shows that the church and its leaders are responsible for equipping believers for service. The final Scripture is 1 Peter 4:10-11 which shows the importance of individual believers using their gifts to serve the church.

#### **Matthew 20:26-28**

Matthew 20 is the first passage to be examined because it deals with the gospel and how it relates to service in the church. The story of redemption, through the gospel of Jesus Christ, is the central story of the Bible. The gospel is the lens through which all other doctrines and principles must be viewed. Graeme Goldsworthy clarifies by saying “while not all scripture is the gospel, all scripture is related to the gospel that it is central.”<sup>13</sup> Christ’s work on the cross is the pinnacle of teaching and the framework on which all other aspects of the Christian life, including service, must be overlaid. C. H. Spurgeon observed in a sermon on this passage that the gospel “is one of the most

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<sup>13</sup>Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation* (Dowers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 63.

important doctrines of the system of faith. A mistake on this point will inevitably lead to a mistake through the entire system of our belief.”<sup>14</sup> Christ is the ultimate example for all believers. His life is the benchmark for behavior; therefore, his life is the benchmark for service within the church. Church members need look no further than Christ to identify the goals of their own behavior. John MacArthur asserted in short, “Christ, then, is the pattern for all to follow in being servant leaders.”<sup>15</sup>

Matthew 20 contains the account of a conversation between Jesus and his disciples on service. In short, it is a debate on who will serve and who will be served. James and John begin the dialog by asking if they can be the greatest in God’s kingdom, but Jesus ends the dialog by elevating his coming death on the cross as a model for serving others. What started as a conversation on status, ended with an emphasis on service. Craig Keener summed it up when he said, “The world’s models of status differ from those in God’s kingdom; because honor ultimately belongs to God alone, disciples should seek to serve.”<sup>16</sup>

Jesus is reversing the definition of who is “great” by contrasting the view of the world with the view of God. This reversal would have been shocking to Jesus’ disciples. Theodore Robinson explains in his commentary the view of “great” the disciples would have had:

In the East the “great” person is marked by the fact that he gives orders to all and obeys none, and by the service that all are bound to render him. His status is judged

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<sup>14</sup>Charles H. Spurgeon, *Matthew to Luke XV, The Treasure of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 290.

<sup>15</sup>John MacArthur, *Matthew 16-23, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1988), 246.

<sup>16</sup>Craig S. Keener, *The Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 486.

by the number of people who serve him, and if he is really great he will never expect to do anything for himself.<sup>17</sup>

Jesus revealed, “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant” (Matt 20:27). The greatest among church members are those who are serving the body. Pastors and leaders in the church have to realize that if they want their parishioners to become great in the kingdom of God, then they must provide them with opportunities and motivation to serve. Service is the greatest reflection of the gospel in the lives of believers. This truth is seen again when Jesus mirrors service to his redemption of the lost on the cross (Matt 20:28).

Craig Keener explains how Jesus uses “a standard Jewish ‘how much more’ argument: if their master served, how much more ought they to do so.”<sup>18</sup> Jesus served; therefore, his people must also serve. John Calvin noted it this way in his commentary on this passage: “It is as if He said, ‘Your unique greatness, excellence and dignity is to submit yourselves to your brethren.’ Let your primacy consist in being the servants of all.”<sup>19</sup> That which is good in a believer’s life comes from walking out the gospel by serving others.

### **Ephesians 4:7-13**

The second passage to be examined is Ephesians 4:7-13. This passage is important in the context of this project because of the focus on leaders in the church equipping others for ministry. The passage shows that God has given gifts to leaders

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<sup>17</sup>Theodore H. Robinson, *The Gospel of Matthew* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1928), 166.

<sup>18</sup>Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 100.

<sup>19</sup>John Calvin, *The Harmony of the Gospels: Mathew, Mark and Luke*, ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. T. H. L. Parker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 276.

within the church so they might in turn “equip the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph 4:12). At the heart of this project is the thesis that pastors, by getting church members more involved in service, can have an impact on how long a member stays a member and how much that person will invest in the church while they are present.

Paul teaches the concept that leaders are to equip the saints in his epistle to the Ephesians. Lack of volunteers is a problem across almost all of American churches. Pastors want and need their congregations to step up and take on the role of minister. Only in this way can a church hope to have a gospel impact on their community and around the world. Kent Hughes indicated in his commentary on the passage, the gifts are given because God “expects us to use them to bring power and victory to the church.”<sup>20</sup> It is not enough, however, for a pastor to hope his people will take up their calling; he must be willing to take up his call, that of equipper. God’s children are his work force, but God has chosen specific leaders to train and equip the masses for ministry. Pastors cannot ignore their responsibility to help train and mobilize people for ministry; it is their primary purpose.

Some translations, including the Revised Standard Version of Ephesians 4:12, suggest that pastors have been gifted for three reasons; one – to equip the saints, two – for ministry, and three – for building up the body. However, a closer look at the Greek reveals a single purpose with two desired outcomes. The primary purpose of leaders is to equip the saints. This purpose is done so the equipped saints can then do the work of ministry and also build up the body of Christ.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Kent Hughes, *Ephesians: The Mystery of the Body of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990), 132.

<sup>21</sup>Dale Moody, *Christ and the Church: An Exposition of Ephesians with Special Application to Some Present Issues* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 94.



Simply stated, the pastors do the equipping and the lay Christians do the ministry. Herschel Hobbs pronounced it plainly when he wrote the four types of leaders in the passage “are not to do all these things. They are to prepare the saints and direct them in doing them.”<sup>22</sup> For this reason it is critical to help new church members understand that part of their calling is service. American churches have developed a spectator Christian mentality among many people that sit in the pews week after week, yet never invest in the church through service. Part of the equipping role of pastors is to help their congregations see the biblical model of ministry laid out here in Ephesians, every member in ministry.

This role of equipper does not elevate the pastor to a higher level of status over the laity, but rather makes him a servant to them. Markus Barth expounded on the role of pastor when he wrote, “Their place is not above but below the great number of saints who are not adorned by resounding titles. He is a pastor of God’s flock, who understands himself as a minister to ministers.”<sup>23</sup> This distinction is not just applicable to status, but to function as well. The teaching here does not excuse pastors from serving. Pastors are leaders who have a special gift and, therefore, are expected to equip believers. A pastor is also a believer himself and, therefore, is expected to work along side his flock.

Both pastor in equipping and believer in working are unified in their goal, to build up the body so it can attain the “measure of the status of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:14). Homer Kent clarifies that “although the idea of numerical growth may be involved, the emphasis in the passage seems to be on spiritual life and its development.”<sup>24</sup> The

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<sup>22</sup>Herschel H. Hobbs, *Studies in Ephesians: New Men in Christ* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1974), 80.

<sup>23</sup>Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Translation and Commentary on Chapters 4-6*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 34A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), 481.

<sup>24</sup>Homer A. Kent, *Ephesians: The Glory of the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 1971), 72.

pastor must always keep in perspective that the equipping of the saints is not for the building of his own personal kingdom through the expansion of his church roster and budget. The ultimate purpose is so those saints can build each other up to become more like Christ. Christ is the measure of perfection in the Christian life, the ultimate goal, the highest benchmark, and the supreme example. He is the goal to be sought after, and every pastor must keep Christ as the focus, for himself and for his congregation as they serve.

### **1 Peter 4:10-11**

The final general passage to be examined here is 1 Peter 4:10-11. This passage is important to the overall context of service because of its focus on the individual believer. The passage just discussed from Ephesians discusses the issue of service with an emphasis on the role of the leader or pastor. The passage in 1 Peter focuses again on the issue of service but emphasizes the role of the individual believer. An examination of the passage reveals that every believer has been given a gift so they can serve others and, therefore, glorify God.

The first words of this passage, “as each has received a gift,” point to the truth that God has gifted all believers with a special ability (1 Pet 4:10). Though some believers have been called to greater functions within the body, all have been gifted. The previous passage in Ephesians pointed out some of those greater functions, specifically in the context of this project, pastors. While pastors have been given a function of wider scope to equip other believers, all believers have been given one ability. Alan Stibbs calls these abilities endowments when he proposed, “God thus equips each one of His family or household for service, and makes him responsible as a steward to use his endowment in the service of his brethren.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Alan M. Stibbs, *The First Epistle General of Peter*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 156.

Stibbs' quote draws out the concept of stewardship in relation to these abilities. Individual Christians have these abilities to use as resources to advance the cause of Christ, and these resources must be stewarded. For this reason the inclusion of service in the new member class at Noonday is a must. If every believer truly has a gift, and if every believer must be a steward of those gifts, then it stands to reason that a church must help believers to identify and apply those gifts. Spiritual gifts surveys and training on service should not be postponed to some advanced level of discipleship to be undertaken by believers once they have been members for a year or two. The basic biblical teachings on service and gifting need to be taught as soon as possible in the life of a believer, whether that is a new believer or just a new addition to the church body. The sooner new members understand these concepts, the sooner they can begin to serve others through their gifts; that service is the intended application of those gifts.

Peter goes on to explain that the reason each believer is given a gift is so they can, "use it to serve one another" (1 Pet 4:10). Believers are not given the gifts for themselves or for their own glory. The gifts are given so others can be served and edified. J. Nieboer reminds believers, "These gifts are not given to us for any selfish reasons. They are given to us to be used for the benefit of others."<sup>26</sup>

The church is the best context for believers to be able to serve one another. The local church is a community of believers worshiping and growing together. This community is where believers are consistently around other believers and, therefore, within this community is the best place to apply gifts in service of others. This priority on service to fellow believers does not mean gifts should only be used toward other believers inside the walls of the church. The Bible makes clear that believers are to advance the gospel beyond the walls of their churches even to the "ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). But

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<sup>26</sup>J. Nieboer, *Practical Exposition of 1 Peter* (Erie, PA: Our Daily Walk, 1958), 263.

even these applications of gifts beyond the church should find their foundation inside the local church. International missions are a great example of this principle. While believers are called to take the gospel around the planet, this calling is much more effectively done when a local church trains and mobilizes believers for that endeavor.

Training and mobilizing believers in service is too important to leave to chance by expecting members to find their own places of service. The best model is for churches to be proactive from the very beginning of membership to help congregates identify their gifting and, from that gifting, their best fit for service within the local body. When believers find their ideal place of service and begin to exercise their God given gifts to serve others, God will be most glorified.

Glorifying God is the ultimate purpose of serving others through gifts. Peter goes on to explain the reason individuals are gifted, and the reason those gifts should be used to serve others is so, “in everything, God may be glorified” (1 Pet 4:11). Every believer has a gift, and those gifts are to be used to serve others, but neither the believer nor those being served are the objects of glory; Christ alone is. The bestowing of gifts does not make the recipient worthy of glory, and the receiving of service from others does not make the one served worthy of glory. Ultimately, it is the one who is the giver of the gift, who enables the service to his children, who is worthy of all the glory.

Manford Gutzke maintained that “there is no room for personal prestige; no credit to self.”<sup>27</sup> For many Christians, however, the draw to glorify self is a natural outcome of the act of serving others. As a believer sacrifices of self and gives to others, their sinful nature strokes their pride into thinking that because they are doing the serving they are worthy of the glory for the service. The bend toward self can only be rectified

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<sup>27</sup>Manford G. Gutzke, *Plain Talk on Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 90.

through the power of the Spirit and the teaching of the word. J. C. Wand shows that the 1 Peter passage “quite clearly asserts that the glory belongs to Jesus Christ.”<sup>28</sup>

If new church members are to be ushered quickly into service they must be given a solid biblical foundation on the fact that all the glory of any service goes to God. God enables all service through the giving of gifts. This teaching should be done in a new member class with a focus on service. These principles and teachings have been included in the new member class designed for this project.

### **Focal New Testament Passage**

Now that we have examined some general passages in the New Testament that focus on service, the remainder of the chapter will be spent studying one larger text that has much to say about serving within the body of Christ. The passage is 1 Corinthians 12. In this chapter Paul is teaching the believers at Corinth about spiritual gifts. Four main truths in this text that apply directly to the project at hand will be examined. The first is that every believer has an expectation to be serving in his or her unique place within the body of Christ. The second is that though there are many different gifts, because the same Spirit gives them all, the diverse gifting should breed unity within the body. Next, all believers, and therefore all service positions, are important within the church. The church must help believers get plugged into those positions no matter how large or small. Finally, the text makes clear that love is the primary motivation for all service. Therefore, by connecting new believers to their best fitting service opportunity, a church can help free them from serving out of guilt and empower them to serve out of love.

Paul wrote the letter of 1 Corinthians from Ephesus during his third missionary journey. While in Ephesus, Paul received word that there was some conflict within the

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<sup>28</sup>John W. C. Wand, *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (London: Methuen, 1934), 116.

Corinthian church. In addition, Paul received a letter from the church asking for clarification on several different issues both inside and outside the church (1 Cor 7:1). Identifying these specific questions is easily done throughout the letter. John Polhill points out that “when picking up on the questions raised in their letter he [Paul] used a sort of shorthand, the phrase ‘now concerning.’”<sup>29</sup> This phrase begins our focal text, showing that Paul was addressing a specific question raised by the Corinthians (1 Cor 12:1). The subject of service within the body and the details of what that looked like was so important to the church at Corinth that they listed it among the few questions they wanted Paul to answer. Similarly, today the subject must be of vital importance to churches. In Paul’s answer to the Corinthians, today’s churches can find truths about the subject.

The first truth to be examined here is the fact that every believer must be serving in his unique place within the body of Christ. This truth presupposes that each believer has a spiritual gift through which they can serve. First Corinthians teaches that each believer does, in fact, have a unique gifting. Paul says that “each” believer is given a gift (1 Cor 12:7). C. K. Barrett asserts that the point of this verse is that “each member of the church has one appropriate manifestation to himself.”<sup>30</sup> Paul emphasizes this point again at the end of the same thought by adding the word “individual,” to “each one” (1 Cor 12:11). It is important that church members, especially new church members, understand that they were given something unique and special by God when they were bestowed a spiritual gift. This gift, however, is not for the sole pleasure of the receiver; it is for “the common good” (1 Cor 12:7).

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<sup>29</sup>John B. Polhill, *Paul & His Letters* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 232.

<sup>30</sup>C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1968), 284.

Spiritual gifts are not keepsakes. God given abilities are not something to be put on a shelf and admired, or a collector's piece whose value is in the possessing. Spiritual gifts are tools. The very fact that every believer receives a gift is proof that every believer is expected to serve within the body of Christ. If someone is invited to the rebuilding of a home, and then given a hammer, the clear expectation is that the hammer would be used to drive nails. The same is true with spiritual gifts. Believers are invited into the body of Christ and given a specific tool. That tool is to be used for its purpose, which is for "building up the body" (Eph 4:12).

This truth ties directly back into the passage in Ephesians 4 that has already been examined; it states that pastors are to equip church members. Paul makes it clear in 1 Corinthians that each believer has a gift and that the purpose of that gift is for the benefit of the entire body. The logical progress of combining the truths from 1 Corinthians and Ephesians is that if each believer has a gift, and if that gift is for the common good, then pastors and churches should be ready to help believers identify their gifts and put them to work.

The second truth evident in the focal passage is, though there are many different gifts and because the same Spirit gives them all, the diverse gifting should breed unity within the body. It is this diversity that leads to unity as the many members come together. Joseph Fitzmyer emphasizes the point when he said "The unity of Christ, as of the human body, is his [Paul's] starting point. He then proceeds to show that the body cannot in fact consist only of 'one member', but must be 'many'."<sup>31</sup> The sinful mind of man would initially believe that diversity of giftedness would lead to disunity or conflict within the church. Sinful attitudes such as jealousy and pride could cause members with one gift to look at other members who have different gifts and despise them. Despising

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<sup>31</sup>Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Yale Bible, vol. 1 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 477.

can come from two directions: from jealousy as one member sees another member's gifts as better than theirs, or from pride as one member sees another member's gift as inferior to theirs.

Inevitably, when members begin to despise one another, unity is compromised. Disunity sometimes becomes a very real problem for modern churches, just as it had become a very real problem for the Corinthian church. Paul responds to their problem by reminding them that the focus should not be on the diversity of gifts, but the unity of the gift giver. Six times in the passage Paul refers to the "same Lord," "same God," or "same Spirit," as the giver of gifts (1 Cor 12:4-11).

Paul is teaching that it is not uniformity in gifting that brings unity, but a oneness in Spirit. Spiros Zodhiates reasoned that "in Christ is our unity, not in uniformity among ourselves. We do violence to the unity of Christ by seeking to achieve it through making all His members uniform."<sup>32</sup> Zodhiates' point is well made; when Christians try to all be the same they are actually harming unity, rather than promoting it.

The health of a church is tied closely to the unity among its members. Therefore, one of the best things a church can do to secure unity is to help its members learn and function within their gifting. As members identify their gifts and begin to utilize them, they will gain a greater appreciation for the giver of the gifts and a harmony will grow between them. The reality is that diversity among gifts does not just allow for unity, but it secures it. Charles Erdman identifies this truth when he says, "The wide diversity of gifts granted to its members was consistent with the unity of the church; in fact it secured unity; for each gift was designed to contribute something which was necessary to the common life and growth."<sup>33</sup> The distinctive gifting among believers

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<sup>32</sup>Spiros Zodhiates, *1 Corinthians 12*, (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1983), 2:32.

<sup>33</sup>Charles R. Erdman, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*



necessitates that they work together in unity, just as “all the members of the body are one body” (1 Cor 12:12).

Every part of the body no matter how large or small, no matter how visible or hidden away, must do its part for the whole to thrive. Similarly, every person in the church no matter how young or old, no matter how mature or immature, no matter how visible or hidden away, must do their part for the whole to thrive. This truth is the third point from the focal passage; that all believers, and therefore all service positions, are important within the church and the church must help believers get plugged into those positions no matter how large or small. Paul skillfully uses the analogy of a body to make this point clear (1 Cor 12:14-26). The strength of this analogy is it emphasizes a unity that comes through diversity. Gordon Fee shows “the need for diversity if there is to be a true body and not a monstrosity. By its very nature the analogy shifts focus from the gifts per se to the diversity of people.”<sup>34</sup> All the people in the community are needed. Clearly, no one part of the body can say to another, “I have no need of you” (1 Cor 12:21). Each part is interdependent on every other part. A person who has a hand without an eye would be, by definition, handicapped. When even one person in a local church fellowship is not doing his part, not fulfilling his function, the church is likewise handicapped.

This truth is a difficult one for new members to grasp. Often they feel unimportant as new members and see their places of service as insignificant. New members are commonly, and in many ways appropriately, given smaller service roles as they become acquainted with and vested in the church body. Serving in smaller, less prominent roles can lead to feelings of discouragement and insignificance on the part of those fulfilling the task. Paul makes clear that “on the contrary, the parts of the body that

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(Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1928), 112.

<sup>34</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 583.

seem to be weaker are indispensable” (1 Cor 12:22). It is clear that God’s economy is very different from man’s economy. Where man sees parts that are “less honorable,” God “bestows the greater honor” (1 Cor 12:23).

Spiros Zodhiates sums up this section of Paul’s letter by saying, “One comforting conclusion is that no Christian, however insignificant his position may be, need feel useless or inferior. He is a member of the body, and the body would be incomplete without him.”<sup>35</sup> New members must be taught that the church would be incomplete without them serving. They must see their place of service, no matter how small, as important to the overall ministry of the church. When members are able to get a vision of how their role supports the overall actions of the church, their feelings of uselessness and inferiority will be replaced with a sense of importance. A feeling of importance will help better assimilate them into the church.

The final point to be pulled from the focal passage is that love must be the primary motivation for all service. At the end of chapter 12 Paul transitions his discussion from an external earmark of true spiritual service to an internal earmark. On the outside, true spiritual service is noted by the unity it fosters among believers. Paul next looks to the inside of the believer, specifically at his motivation for serving. He makes clear that this internal earmark is more important than the external when he uses the phrase “and now I will show you a more excellent way” to transition into the next section (1 Cor 12:31).

The next section of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians deals with love. Paul lists many of the gifts already discussed in chapter 12, but says that if they are not done with love, they are “nothing” (1 Cor 13:1-3). No matter how many gifts are exhibited by a believer, or how much work is done for the church, if the motivation is wrong the work

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<sup>35</sup>Spiros Zodhiates, *1 Corinthians 12*, (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1983), 1:91.

amounts to nothing. The actions themselves add no benefit to the church, or to the believer. Fredrick Robertson takes the point a step further when he says, “He who treads the brilliant road of the highest accomplishments is, as a man, inferior to him who treads the path of Love.”<sup>36</sup>

The woman who keeps the nursery at church out of guilt is actually inferior to the one who teaches the same children out of love. Yet so often, it is with guilt that many churches attempt to recruit members to service. Statements like, “If we do not get five more volunteers for the nursery we are going to have to shut the program down,” do not play to love, but to guilt as their motivator. A church can not expect those recruited through guilt to suddenly change their motivation to love upon arrival to class. Church members who are drawn into service by guilt are destined to serve there out of guilt.

These guilt-ridden recruiting tactics have robbed many churches of their vitality. Alice Twilley poetically states this fact when she remarked,

So much of what we call religion is without vitality – inane, colorless, bloodless. We have been inclined to place our emphasis on externals, such as entertaining programs, feasts, pictures, forms and ceremonies, beautiful ritualistic services. The result has been a spiritual anemia and hearts filled with depressing doubt. Yet the way is plain as set by Jesus.<sup>37</sup>

In her assessment she also points to the answer, which is Jesus Christ. Jesus is the ultimate example for Christian service, especially for the motivation of Christian service being love.

When the Bible says, “God is love,” it is making a fundamental statement about Jesus (1 John 4:8). As part of the trinity, Jesus, like God, is love. Love is a foundational quality of Jesus and therefore, every action he takes is motivated by it, because by definition, love is what he is. The cross is the ultimate expression of service

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<sup>36</sup>Frederick W. Robertson, *Expository Lectures on St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians: Delivered at Brighton* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1876), 175.

<sup>37</sup>Alice C. Twilley, *Except Ye Have Love* (Nashville: Tidings, 1965), 12.

through love. As Christ died on the cross, it was motivated by love, the greatest form of love (1 John 15:13). Believers must model themselves after Christ's example and serve their fellow Christians out of a sense of love. This love is the "greater way" that Paul taught the Corinthians (1 Cor 12:31). When church leaders help connect new members to their best fitting service opportunities, they help free them from frustration and empower them to serve in love.

By studying Paul's letter to the Corinthians, we have seen four main truths in the text that apply directly to the project at hand. The first is every believer has an expectation to be serving in his or her unique place within the body of Christ. The second is though there are many different gifts, because the same Spirit gives them all, the diverse gifting should breed unity within the body. Third is all believers, and therefore all service positions, are important within the church and the church must help believers get plugged into those positions no matter how large or small. Finally, the text makes clear that love is the primary motivation for all service. These principles and teachings have been included in the new member class designed for this project.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this project was to increase the retention of new members of Noonday Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia, by helping them identify and become active in service opportunities in the church. Because membership, as we understand it today, is predominately an extra-biblical topic, we have looked at principles and themes within scripture to guide the project. Service, on the other hand, is a concept that is prevalent throughout Scripture. The truths found from studying both topics emphasize the importance of having a system in place that will allow churches to more effectively match members with service so that those members would have longer and more productive church lives.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THEORETICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Now that we have examined the biblical and theological issues pertinent to increasing retention of new members at Noonday Baptist Church, we will turn our attention to theoretical and sociological issues. As with any aspect of church life, it is important to examine the biblical and theological support for church membership and service to the local church first. However, theoretical and sociological issues should not be ignored. Scripture must always carry the primary position of authority; but there are truths that can be found within the sociological arena, even the secular sociological arena, that amplify the impact of this project.

Throughout this chapter many concepts are examined, with many authors and works cited. Some of the authors are Christian authors, writing within the context of Christian culture. These Christian authors use the church and its growth as the primary object of their research and as the primary application of their principles. The principles they present are from a Christian worldview and are valuable for application to the project at hand. Other authors cited in this chapter are secular authors who use secular organizations, like theater groups, as the primary object of their research. The principles they present are not from a Christian worldview yet are valuable for application to the project at hand. A secular worldview does not discredit all the principles from application within the church context of this project.

The secular world and the Christian world have many differences between them. However, because the focus of this project is people and their volunteer habits, beneficial information can be gained by examining secular principles of volunteering. As

God created all of mankind in his image, there are similarities all humans share, whether they are saved or lost. This means many of the techniques used by secular organizations to improve their volunteer retention can be applied, with equal power, to assimilating new members by connecting them with service opportunities at Noonday Baptist Church.

For this project the goal is to increase member assimilation. The means through which that goal is obtained is volunteer opportunities. One of the first issues that must be accepted for the principles in this project to work, at Noonday or any other church, is that the church has responsibility in the loss of volunteers. Too often, when churches do not have enough volunteers, or cannot get new members involved, the complete fault in the situation is placed at the feet of the members. The assumption is made that something is wrong in the heart or in the life of the member. If this assumption were true, the principles in this project would be useless because only a change in the member would affect change. Studies however have shown otherwise.

A UPS Foundation study in 1998 revealed that “two-fifths of volunteers had stopped volunteering for an organization at one time because of one or more poor volunteer management practices.”<sup>1</sup> The study went on to show that “poor volunteer management practices result in more lost volunteers than people losing interest because of changing personal or family needs.”<sup>2</sup> While the members do hold some responsibility, the church can affect a great deal of change by adjusting the approach to volunteer positions. Most of the issues addressed in the rest of this chapter are changes that were made within Noonday and can be made within other churches that desire to increase assimilation through volunteer opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew Liao-Troth, *Challenges in Volunteer Management* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2008), 10.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Even though most of the issues address changes within the church, the majority of these internal changes have as a desired result a change within the mind, heart or life of the member. Ultimately, it is the member who decides if they are going to volunteer or if they are going to stay an active member. This is a challenge within a “me” centered culture.

American culture is becoming more and more selfish. Members of the community are asking what can they get out of something rather than what they can contribute to something. The same attitudes are becoming pervasive among church volunteers as well. Roy Oswald calls this mindset “the new religious volunteerism,” and he goes on to say that it “means individuals are more likely to stand back from churches and ask what these institutions can do for them.”<sup>3</sup> He goes on to explain that this philosophy believes, “religious institutions should serve individuals and not vice versa.”<sup>4</sup> This frame of mind is something a church must be aware of and address in its volunteer recruitment and retention process and, therefore, is a key focus throughout the principles addressed in this chapter.

One final principle needs to be addressed before we examine primary and secondary theoretical and sociological issues that concern the project. As already stated, there is a balance to be found between a church taking responsibility for member service and helping the individual members to take responsibility for their service. However, throughout the process it is vital to remember that more work is not the primary goal. The decisive goal of this project is discipleship through long-term membership, not increased work through long volunteer hours. The spiritual truth is that churches are not called to get work out of members for the simple sake of work, but to call members to service for

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<sup>3</sup>Roy Oswald and Speed Leas, *The Inviting Church* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 1991), 6.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

the sake of their own spiritual growth. David Winter makes this point clear when he reminds his readers, “Service is more to be valued for the fact that it is service than for any actual worth of what is done.”<sup>5</sup> There exists a paradox in Christian service that does set it apart from the secular field. The paradox is that service to God in the church is equally beneficial to the church, the individual servant and to the Kingdom of God. With these introductory principles in mind let us now focus on two primary issues concerning assimilation through volunteer opportunities.

### **Primary Issues**

Studies of the theoretical and sociological issues that apply to the project reveal many principles that will assist in assimilating new members into the church through volunteer opportunities. Though many issues are of value to the project, two stand out above the rest. For service to increase a member’s connection to the church, and consequently their level of assimilation, the act of service must increase that individual’s sense of ownership in the church and their sense of belonging to the church. These two primary issues will be addressed in this section and the remaining secondary issues will be addressed in the next section.

Both ownership and belonging increase a member’s sense of connection to their church. The more connected a member is to a church, the better assimilated into it they will become. Once assimilated deeply, members will be more willing to stay with a church through tough times; they will be more sacrificial in their investment of time, energy, and finances; they will be more motivated to bring others into the church; and they will be more open to receive ministry and teaching from the church. Serving in volunteer positions in the church is a primary avenue for increasing a sense of connectedness by increasing both ownership and belonging.

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<sup>5</sup>David B. Winter, *A Christian’s Guide to Church Membership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 42.



First, we will focus on the need to increase ownership in order to maximize the impact of volunteer service on assimilation. While both ownership and belonging increase a member's connection to their church, they do so through two different avenues. A sense of belonging increases a person's connection through their perception of the value they have to the organization. A sense of ownership increases a person's connection through their perception of the amount of influence they have in the organization. Individuals want to know they have the power to change the outcome of a given situation, and to influence the destination.

The value of increased ownership can be seen in the analogy of a sporting event, for example, a college football game. The difference between a member with low ownership and one with high ownership is the difference between a spectator and a player. Each position has some level of ownership. Even the spectator has invested something in purchasing a ticket for the game, and their cheering can impact the performance of the team to some extent. This level of ownership is minuscule in comparison to the level of ownership that a player has. Because a player has a more direct impact on the game and is able to make personal decisions in each play, they feel a deeper connection than does the average fan. Because of this deeper level of ownership, the players work harder during the week practicing and working out than does a spectator who simply shows up. Especially during tough times, the level of ownership impacts the results. If the team has a streak of losing games, spectators are more likely to get up and leave the game early, while players stay until the end and rarely transfer or quit during a season.

In a church there are spectators, the attender that only show up on Sunday mornings, and players, those that work in volunteer positions. Again, each has some level of ownership. Even the attender has invested his or her time to attend and may even put some money in the offering plate. This level of ownership is still minuscule in comparison to the church member who is active in some level of service. Because

volunteers have more of a direct impact on the ministry of the church they feel a deeper connection than does the person who only attends. This deeper level of ownership is more likely to cause the volunteer to work harder and invest more in the church as compared to the attender who simply shows up. Especially during tough times, if the church is going through a leadership change or a time of decline, attenders are more likely to leave the church while volunteers will stay.

Every volunteer position and service opportunity within the church has an innate level of increased ownership. Several things can be done to increase the sense of ownership for each volunteer position. One of the keys to increasing ownership is to increase responsibility. Nelson Searcy recognizes this correlation has great potential for impacting assimilation, noting, “The interdependence of responsibility and ownership works in favor of your assimilation system. When your regular attenders begin to take on responsibility they will quickly start to feel a sense of ownership.”<sup>6</sup> It is not just the volunteer position that increases ownership, but the level of responsibility in that position. This also can be seen in the analogy of the football team. The starting quarterback would feel more ownership than the third string place kicker because there is a greater responsibility placed on the quarterback than on the backup kicker.

Any assimilation system that is going to be effective in using volunteer positions as a channel for connecting new members to the congregation must be willing to put the new members in a position that has responsibility associated with it. Often the common logic says that the church should shield new members from volunteer positions. Jim Wideman lists a six-month membership as one of twelve qualifications for all new

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<sup>6</sup>Nelson Searcy, *Fusion: Turning First-Time Guests into Fully-Engaged Members of your Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007), 133.

volunteers in any church.<sup>7</sup> Some churches have a delay period of up to a year before new members can be involved in volunteer positions. Churches can be paralyzed by the fear that by asking too much, too soon, new members will be run off, especially younger new members. The opposite is more the reality. Phillip Richer and Leslie Francis surveyed young people who had left the church and found that “young people whom we interviewed often wanted to take a more active role in their church.”<sup>8</sup> By not asking, and by not giving some level of responsibility, new members have no ownership and therefore lose their connection to the church. Simply stated, not asking people to become active is running off more members than asking too much of them.

This principle does not mean a new member should be asked to teach a Sunday school or small group class during their first week of membership. Wisdom and discernment should be used in connecting new members to appropriate volunteer positions that match both their giftedness and level of spiritual maturity. Luckily, the sense of ownership that is desired to increase assimilation is not limited to upper tier leadership positions. Nancy Sakaduski confirms this when she said, “Try to structure any volunteer task or positions so that the volunteer has some sense of “turf,” or ownership. Most people perform better and have a greater sense of reward when they are taking care of something of their own. This is true even for smaller tasks.”<sup>9</sup> Even entry-level volunteer positions can be structured in a way that allows for feelings of ownership to develop. The key is to set expectations early and match new members to volunteer positions intentionally and strategically.

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<sup>7</sup>Jim Wideman, *Children’s Ministry Leadership: The You-Can-Do-It Guide* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2003), 108.

<sup>8</sup>Philip Richter and Leslie Francis, *Gone But Not Forgotten: Church Leaving and Returning* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1998), 127.

<sup>9</sup>Nancy Sakaduski, *Managing Volunteers: How to Maximize Your Most Valuable Resource* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2013), 38.

A class for new members is a great place to teach about the expectations a church has for members. Raising expectations and giving new members more ownership increases both assimilation and church health. Thom Rainer's research showed that "A church that communicates no expectation or commitment levels is much more likely to lose members than a high expectation church."<sup>10</sup> Assimilation is improved as new members feel a deeper personal connection to the church and their area of service. Church health is improved as new members gain more of an understanding of how God has gifted and called them to serve in the church. Church growth is about more than just growth in numbers; it is about growth in church health as well. John Powers expresses this in the context of assimilation when he says, "One reason the back door of a church remains wide open is that we place very low demands upon members. We have been duped into thinking a crowd is a church."<sup>11</sup> Increasing a level of ownership for each new member is a powerful way to close the back door while also improving church health.

The second primary issue is the need to increase a sense of belonging in each new member. New members will develop a stronger connection to the church when they feel they truly belong to the organization. Increasing a perception of ownership in a new member is important because it gives them some stake in the organization; it helps them to care about the organization and its future. Belonging is the other side of that same coin. While ownership helps the individual care for the organization, a sense of belonging is created when the member feels the organization cares for them as an individual.

Fostering a bond between the new member and church is the key to true belonging. Nancy Sakaduski believes volunteers are a church's most valuable resource.

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<sup>10</sup>Thom Rainer, *High Expectations: The Remarkable Secret of Keeping People in Your Church* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 106.

<sup>11</sup>John Powers, *Redefining Church Membership: From Myth to Ministry* (Nashville: Lifeway, 2001), 40.

She says, “One of the best ways to prevent volunteer drop-off is through bonding. When people feel that they are a part of the group, they are much more likely to stay with it, remain active, and donate their time and even money to it.”<sup>12</sup> This bond is created when there is a mutual value established between the member and church. The church has value to the new member and the new member has value to the church.

Belonging is about more than just value; it is about where the member sees the value being placed. True belonging occurs when a member feels they are something of value and not just a means to something of value. This difference is subtle but it is critical to assimilating members into the church. New members feel a deeper connection to the church when they sense they, personally, are an object of value. They will have an equal, but opposite, reaction if they sense it is only what they can provide that is of value to the organization. Members who perceive that the church only cares about their money or volunteer efforts will become disconnected from the church. No one likes to feel used by another person or organization. If new members perceive they are being used, they will develop feelings of bitterness rather than connection in regards to the church. Feelings of “you don’t love me, you just love what I do here,” are dangerous and will ultimately repel the new member. Emily Morrison says volunteers need “a sense of belonging that comes from feelings that they are honestly needed for themselves, not just for their hands, their money, or to make the group larger.”<sup>13</sup> Without such a belonging, over time, even the strongest church will begin to fail in its assimilation. Willow Creek Community Church experienced this kind of failure in assimilation.

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<sup>12</sup>Nancy Sakaduski, *Managing Volunteers: How to Maximize Your Most Valuable Resource* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2013), 49.

<sup>13</sup>Emily Morrison, *Skills for Leadership: Working with Volunteers* (Tucson, AZ: Jordan Press, 1983), 77.

Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois was one of the first nationally known mega-churches. Under the leadership of senior pastor Bill Hybles, the church grew from 100 members meeting in a movie theater to a Sunday morning attendance of 15,000 in twenty years.<sup>14</sup> However, around sixteen years into that twenty years the church began to experience mass volunteer loss. Don Cousins was a founding leader of Willow Creek and an associate pastor at the time of the mass loss. Don was tasked with identifying the problem and then wrote about his findings in his book *Leadershift*. Cousins said,

I could summarize [the problem] in a single sentence: People felt used. They saw themselves as a means to an end. They put out more than they took in. There was a feeling among too many of them that their leaders were simply “using” them to accomplish ministry objectives.<sup>15</sup>

Volunteers at Willow Creek perceived they were not valued and this feeling undermined their sense of belonging. Because the members felt used, they began to drop out of service and out of the church. Leadership at the church was able to quickly identify the problem and make corrections to reverse the feelings of being used and turn them back into a sense of belonging. The church was then able to reverse the momentary decline and continue its incredible growth trend.

The two primary principles that improve assimilation are increasing a sense of belonging and a sense of ownership. In a healthy assimilation system both feelings can be increased at the same time. However, if the assimilation system is not balanced increasing ownership can actually diminish a sense of belonging. Avoiding feelings of being used can be difficult, while at the same time, trying to increase expectations and

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<sup>14</sup>Bill Hybles and Lynne Hybles, *Rediscovering Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995)

<sup>15</sup>Don Cousins, *Experiencing Leadershift: Letting Go of Leadership Heresies* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2008), 95.

ownership. Ownership is increased as members are given leadership over volunteer positions and tasks. However, to increase belonging members must see they are valued, not just the positions or task they are “owning.” It is a delicate balance to assign tasks to new members while making it apparent they themselves are of the utmost value and not the task they are accomplishing.

The answer to finding this balance is in authenticity and biblical teaching. First, leaders have to authentically care for the new members as individual, not just the work they do for the church. This authentic concern requires each pastor and leader to spend time in prayer and soul searching. It is easy for leaders to get caught up in the work of the church and elevate the task over the people. Christ did not come so that his followers could accomplish tasks or run programs; he came so that Christians could change the lives of individuals through the power of the cross.

Teaching a good biblical foundation for service works hand in hand with authentic concern. Once a leader has developed authentic concern for his volunteers, he must also teach those volunteers what the Bible has to say about service. When a new member truly understands the biblical mandate for believers to serve other believers and assist in discipling other believers, they will start to see value in their service. James Estep says, “When Christians read and study Scripture and grasp its meaning, they can be confident that they are adequately equipped for every god work.”<sup>16</sup> If new members do not have a clear understanding of what service in the church does to mature them as a believer, they will be prone to see volunteering as only having value for others. If new members are taught they are benefitting spiritually from their service, they will see that leaders are caring for them by encouraging them to serve. For this reason a well-

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<sup>16</sup>James Estep, Michael Anthony, and Gregg Allison, *A Theology for Christian Education* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 91.

developed new member's class is important, especially one that takes time to teach the biblical foundation of service.

For service to increase a member's connection to the church, and consequently his level of assimilation, the act of service must increase that individual's sense of ownership in the church and also his sense of belonging to the church. The theory and sociology of volunteering reveals that these are the two primary principles that will assist in assimilating new members into the church through volunteer opportunities. These are the two primary issues, but there are several secondary issues that benefit assimilation as well. Some of the secondary issues will be addressed in the next section.

### **Secondary Issues**

Ownership and belonging play the primary roles in benefiting assimilation through service. Many other secondary principles can have a great effect on the goal of this project as well. While the benefit of these secondary principles is not as great as the primary, they are too influential to leave out completely. Because they are secondary, several of the principles overlap, affect, or increase the impact of the two primary principles. For example, the first secondary principle is to move quickly, but carefully, to assign new members to service. This directly affects the primary principle of ownership as a new member cannot begin to develop a sense of ownership until they are connected to a service opportunity.

The first of the secondary principles to be examined requires a balance between two elements: moving quickly and moving carefully. When new members join a church it is vital that the church move quickly to get them involved in service. It is equally important that the church works carefully to place the new member into a service opportunity that is best suited for their unique personality and giftedness. These two principles thus require some balance. The church cannot move so fast in placement that it is careless where it involves new members. Likewise, it cannot be so careful in its



evaluation of the new member and their giftedness that the church wastes time getting the member involved. These two needs are not mutually exclusive; moving fast does not necessitate being careless, and being careful does not required extended time periods.

Churches need to move quickly because the first six months of a person's membership are critical. Chuck Lawless identifies this vital time when he says, "Over 80 percent of the people who leave a church do so within the first six months of their membership."<sup>17</sup> He goes on to tie this trend to a lack of relationships and responsibilities that come from not being involved. Getting a person to join does not fully "close the deal" on assimilation. The church must connect new members to ministry, and they must do it quickly.

Finding the balance between moving fast, but not too fast, is not easy. It is helpful to think of the relationship between the church and new member in terms of other significant relationships: for example, a dating relationship. Thomas and Jonathan McKee elaborate on this analogy when they remark, "The effective recruiter recognizes that getting someone to volunteer is like the dating process. The goal is to get to know each other before you "pop the question" and ask the person to join your volunteer team. This means that you can't rush to close the deal."<sup>18</sup> Just as in a dating relationship, personal interaction is the key to quickly, yet carefully, placing new members in service. A new member's class that includes times of personal interaction between new members and trained mentors will maximize the potential of this secondary principle.

In addition to connecting a new member to service quickly, a church must connect them intentionally. Careful placement is the next secondary issue to be

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<sup>17</sup>Chuck Lawless, *Membership Matters: Insights from Effective Churches on New Member Classes and Assimilation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 45.

<sup>18</sup>Jonathan McKee and Thomas McKee, *The New Breed: Understanding and Equipping the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century volunteer* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2007), 26.

examined. It is not enough for new member to simply begin serving somewhere; they must be serving in a position that has maximum benefit for them and maximum benefit for the church. Jim Collins used the analogy of a bus to communicate this principle in his book *Good to Great*.<sup>19</sup> Collins compared a business to a bus and informed leaders that great organizations not only have the right people on the bus, but have them in the right seats on the bus. Having great church members will not make a church more effective, unless those members are serving in carefully matched volunteer positions.

Careful placement ensures a new member will not become either board or overwhelmed with their service. When a new member is disillusioned about their area of service it has the same effect as not serving at all. By carefully evaluating a new member's abilities and passions, a church can strategically place them into an area of service that will quicken their faith and encourage them in their Christian walk. Marlene Wilson identifies "careful placement as one of the four keys to encouraging your volunteers."<sup>20</sup> Taking extra time to make good placements will ultimately benefit everyone involved.

The leaders of the church must take responsibility for careful placement. New members are not familiar enough with the vision or the ministries of the church to place themselves into effective service opportunities. This means a set of sign up sheets is not an effective avenue for careful placement. Allowing new members to identify their area of service without the help and guidance of a leader will be ineffective. Effective leaders must take on the primary role of placement. Morgan and Stevens reiterate this point when they say, "Effective leader(s) must help people find their core purpose and match them to a ministry role in which they feel valued. They must help volunteers find and pursue their

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<sup>19</sup>Jim Collins, *Good to Great* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 41.

<sup>20</sup>Marlene Wilson, *Volunteer Encouragement, Accountability and Evaluation* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2003), 83.

unique calling.”<sup>21</sup> Leaders become the matchmaker between new members and great service opportunities.

It is important to note that careful placement does not end on the day a new member clocks his first volunteer hour. Front-end work is very important. New members should be screened, evaluated and interview so that a good placement can be made. However, ongoing evaluation is just as critical. Robert Herman identifies ongoing evaluations as one of the keys to an organized volunteer program. He contends that volunteers “should be evaluated to assess the efficacy of their placement for themselves as well as for the organization.”<sup>22</sup> Volunteer organizations, like churches, have too many moving parts, too little volunteer interaction, and too many different personalities to know for sure that a new member will fit well into a given position. Careful placement requires leaders to follow up with new volunteers in the first few weeks and months of their service to evaluate the situation to ensure it is benefiting everyone.

The third secondary principle is the power of personal invitation. Face to face interactions are the best method to ensure careful placement. The ineffectiveness of sign-up sheet based placement has already been briefly discussed. A commonly used approach to volunteer placement is to make an announcement in service and drive people to a list of open positions where people can sign themselves up. This approach to placement is weak. First, it completely removes the wisdom and insight of leaders from the equation. A simple posting of positions does not allow leaders to prioritize needs for the overall church. It removes the leader from making decisions that are critical to the organization. A second area of weakness is the lack of personal discipleship. A church’s ultimate goal

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<sup>21</sup>Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers: Empowering People for Ministry* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2005), 47.

<sup>22</sup>Robert Herman, *The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership and Management* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 279.

is not providing programs. The ultimate goal is discipling believers into more mature Christians. Discipleship requires personal interaction between leaders and disciples. Impersonal recruiting prevents leaders from interacting with people in order to assess their ministry goals and help to identify how they can mature in order to achieve those goals.

A third and final reason this method is feeble is that it goes against human nature. Jonathan and Thomas McKee attested to this fact when they wrote,

If you desire a lot of turnover with your volunteers, rely on the announcement method. The announcement method won't bring in many volunteers and even if it does bring a few, it won't always bring in the right people for the job. Volunteer managers need to realize that most people don't want to volunteer. Instead they want to be asked.<sup>23</sup>

People want to be asked; they want to be needed. Impersonal recruitment removes the asking; it communicates people are not needed, just the filled positions are needed.

Personal invitation overcomes all of these pitfalls. First, it allows the leader to be intimately involved in the placement process. Personally asking volunteers allows leaders to evaluate the overall needs of the church and the needs of the volunteers in an ongoing fashion. Leaders can then make decisions about what positions are more important and where people will be best utilized. Second, personal invitation fosters discipleship. When leaders sit down with potential volunteers one-on-one, they can offer encouragement and direction for their spiritual lives. For example, if a potential volunteer has a strong desire to teach but has not been a believer long enough to handle such a position, a leader could offer a plan for spiritual development that would allow the ministry goal of teaching to one day be fulfilled. Finally, personal invitation allows leaders to give potential volunteers what they desire, a sense of belonging that comes from a personal invitation. When a leader approaches a member and is able to say,

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<sup>23</sup>Jonathan McKee and Thomas McKee, *The New Breed: Understanding and Equipping the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Volunteer* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2007), 35.

“Because of what I know of this position, and what I know of you, I believe you have something to offer here that no one else at church does.” The member then knows that they are personally needed. Marlene Wilson summarizes by saying simply, “Asking is the best way to recruit volunteers.”<sup>24</sup>

The next secondary issue to be examined is the need for volunteers to see the vision for their area of service. Service can be an effective tool for assimilating new members when they are able to see the vision for their area of service and how that vision fits into the overall vision of the church. Volunteers will quickly lose heart for a ministry if they do not see how that ministry is propelling the overall church to meet its goals. For volunteers to stay engaged and passionate about their ministry area, they need to have a firm understanding of both the vision for the overall church and the vision for the individual ministry area.

Leaders carry the burden of developing and communicating these visions. A vision cannot be communicated if there is no vision present to communicate. Before a leader can explain the purpose of an organization or ministry area, they must first come to grips with that vision themselves. The overall vision for any church should be clearly grounded in scripture. The secondary vision of any ministry area should be clearly adding value to the overall vision. Once a leader has fully developed the vision God has for the church only half the work has been done. Being able to clearly communicate the vision is just as important as developing a vision. Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens stated, “Leaders of volunteers must be able to communicate a compelling vision and effectively focus ministry efforts toward fulfilling that vision.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Marlene Wilson, *Volunteer Recruitment, Interviewing and Placement* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2003), 21.

<sup>25</sup>Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers: Empowering People for Ministry* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2005), 47.

Before a new member gets involved in a ministry position, it is vital he understand the vision for the church. In addition, he should be able to see how the ministry area they are working in supports that vision. These two pieces fit together and allow the volunteer to have a sense that what they are doing is making a difference in their specific ministry area and in the overall ministry of the church.

Making a difference is the next secondary principle to be examined. Improving assimilation through service opportunities is enhanced when volunteers can clearly see how those volunteer tasks are making a positive impact on people. As stated, it is important for volunteers to understand the vision for their area, but they must also see that vision working itself out in the benefit of others. While vision and impact are connected they are not the same. It is possible for a ministry area to have a great vision, but still lack the ability to fulfill that vision. Volunteers will not stay with an organization if they do not see how their labor is making a difference, no matter how compelling the vision.

For volunteers to be able to see they are making a difference, two components must be present. First is the ability to make a difference through their efforts, and second is the presence of an avenue to see that difference. The first component is the ability to make a difference. This component should be present in any volunteer position. Unfortunately, it is sometimes the case that churches will hang onto programs and positions out of tradition, even when those programs are virtually ineffective for ministry. Times change and culture changes, but churches do not always change. Leaders must be sure every volunteer position has the capability to make a true difference for the organization. If a position no longer has potential, then it should not be filled, and definitely should not be filled with a new member. The second component is the presence of an avenue for volunteers to see the difference they are making. The larger an organization the harder this can sometimes become. As churches grow, positions become more specialized, and some positions become removed for the final ministry outcome.

For example, a children’s department in a church may grow to the size that someone is needed to run copies of worksheets for the department. This position could free up teachers for more tasks and consolidate a considerable amount of work and equipment, but it would be disconnected from the children who are truly benefiting from the efforts of that work. This is where the leader must assure there are avenues built in for workers to see the results of their labor. In this example something as simple as having the volunteer deliver the copies to each class, allowing them to see the children benefitting, would create such an avenue.

The need to make a difference is not just unique to the church environment. John Kendrick, writing about amateur theatricals, highlights this same point by noting, “People will usually stay motivated on their own. The one proviso is that the folks in charge must avoid letting the rank and file feel as if their time is being wasted. A sense of accomplishment will keep them coming back to do more.”<sup>26</sup> All volunteers, in any organization, want to see they are accomplishing something. In church most volunteers want to see what they are doing is making a difference in another person’s life. A church is not a building; it is God’s people gathered together, and church volunteers want to see their impact on other people. When new members get involved in volunteer positions where they can clearly see an investment in others, they will become self motivated to continue service in new and deeper ways. Nelson Searcy observed this with his statement, “People are motivated to serve and continue serving when they see how their service is impacting others for good.”<sup>27</sup> Leaders cannot just assume volunteers are seeing the impact their ministry is having on people; leaders must establish ongoing feedback to

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<sup>26</sup>John Kendrick, *The Complete Idiots Guide to Amateur Theatricals* (New York: Penguin Group, 2006), 127.

<sup>27</sup>Nelson Searcy, *Connect: How to Double Your Number of Volunteers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012), 153.

ensure this is accomplished.

Creating an atmosphere of ongoing feedback is the final secondary principle we will examine. Volunteer longevity and productivity are increased when there is continuous feedback about their jobs. The kind of feedback that is most helpful is bidirectional and multifaceted. Feedback should be bidirectional; it should allow for leaders to continually communicate with volunteers about their effectiveness while also allowing volunteers to continually communicate with leaders about their level of fulfillment. Bidirectional feedback is crucial to increase new member's feelings of ownership and belonging. If feedback is only one way, from the leader down, then volunteers can develop a sense they are only being used for the leaders gain. However, when communication is fostered from both directions, volunteers understand that their input is important and their ownership in the task increases as they begin to make adjustments from the bottom up.

Feedback must also be multifaceted to be effective. Sometimes in ministry things can become so busy all a leader seems to do is put out fires. The old adage of the squeaky wheel gets the grease becomes a reality. Only focusing on the problems will eventually create a negative atmosphere among volunteers. Whenever they see a leader coming, they know it is going to be bad news. By developing a multifaceted feedback atmosphere, leaders can become a volunteer's greatest cheerleader. Jonathan and Thomas McKee share that it is critical for leaders to "provide regular and frequent feedback. Your volunteers need encouragement, thank yous, and even a little constructive criticism at times. Without feedback volunteers don't know where they stand."<sup>28</sup>

Knowing where they stand builds confidence in volunteers, especially new volunteers. New members have not been apart of the church long enough to be comfortable with how things work. They are unfamiliar with church protocol, ministry

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<sup>28</sup>McKee, *The New Breed*, 70.



areas, and even their new volunteer positions. This uncertainty can stimulate insecurity for the new members and cause them to be hesitant in their service. When leaders provide ongoing feedback, a new volunteer's confidence is inspired. This inspiration will draw them into a deeper connection with their ministry task, ministry area and even the church as a whole.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter we have examined theoretical and sociological issues that apply to the project. These principles will assist in assimilating new members into the church through volunteer opportunities. Though several secondary issues were explored there are two primary ones. The two primary issues reveal the truths that for service to increase the member's connection to the church, the act of service must increase the individual's sense of ownership in the church and their sense of belonging to the church. Both ownership and belonging increase a member's sense of connection to their church, which in turn enhances assimilation. Service opportunities will foster both of these principles.

The second half of the chapter overviewed six secondary principles that do not stand on their own but have the potential to greatly enhance the two primary ones. Because they are secondary, the principles overlap, affect, or increase the impact of the two primary principles. With the biblical foundation laid and the supporting pillars of belonging and ownership erected, we will now turn our attention to the project. The next chapter follows the fifteen-week process of increasing assimilation through volunteer opportunities.

## CHAPTER 4

### DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

In April 2013, I began my ministry project to improve the assimilation of new members at Noonday Baptist Church by connecting them with service opportunities. The fifteen-week project was broken down into five phases. The first phase was research and evaluation. This phase consisted of surveys conducted with the entire church as well as the focus group of new members. The survey was given at the beginning and again at the end of the fifteen-week project. The second phase was the development of the curriculum used to connect new members with their best-suited volunteer position. The third phase was conducting the new class with all members who had joined in the previous nine months. The next phase was conducting of the class, which concluded with pairing each new member with one or more specific service positions. The final phase was evaluation of the new members as they began working in their volunteer area.

#### **Church Wide Survey**

On Sunday, April 7, 2013, a survey was given to every adult over the age of eighteen in both morning worship services at Noonday. The complete survey is included as Appendix 1. The surveys were given out at the end of the service after the invitation. The attenders were allowed to complete the survey during the announcement time. Conducting the survey at this time in the service allowed participants who needed more time to stay a few moments after the service was dismissed to complete their surveys. The survey consisted of sixteen questions. The main goal of the survey was to evaluate the church at large in regard to their volunteering at the church. The questions focused on three main areas. The first

focused on practical issues such as how long they had been a member and how many hours per month they currently volunteered. The second focused on emotional issues such as how comfortable they felt in their volunteer positions. The final area examined theological issues to see how well they understood the biblical concepts of spiritual gifts and service.

Including students and children, 317 individuals were present in the two worship services that morning. When the surveys were collected, 204 adults over 18 had participated and completed the survey. Over the next three days the survey results were tabulated and compiled by Carrie Jenkins, Ministry Assistant to the Executive Pastor at Noonday Baptist Church. The full results of the survey are listed in Appendix 4. The survey revealed 80 percent of the survey participants were members of the church. Of those members, 64 percent waited six months or longer to get involved in their first volunteer position. The survey also revealed the average volunteer served 2.5 hours per month at the church. Only 53 percent of the participants knew their spiritual gift. In addition to this information, the survey indicated most volunteers were fearful of their first volunteer position, but the fear quickly faded once they started in the position. Overall, the participants' scores showed there was a good understanding of the biblical call for all Christians to be in service.

### **Development of Curriculum**

On Tuesday, April 16, 2013, time was set-aside during the senior staff meeting at Noonday Baptist Church to discuss the survey results and how they would impact the curriculum to be written for new members. Those present in the discussion were Senior Pastor, Richard Holden, Student Pastor, Jeremy Brummel, Director of Operations, Bud Blissitt and myself. The purpose of the discussion was to examine the survey results and to use the information to develop a framework for the new member class, specifically related to getting new members involved in service. The meeting lasted two and a half hours.

The survey revealed that 64 percent of members had waited over six months to get involved in a volunteer ministry. This fact changed the direction of the training course. Originally, the idea was to have a stand-alone training course that new members would take about six months after they became members. After the survey, the decision was made to incorporate the training material into the existing new member class. Noonday already had a required class for new members. The class lasted three hours one Sunday morning and covered church history, affiliations and basic beliefs. The staff decided a more effective model than two separate classes; a new member and a volunteer orientation, would be to incorporate the material on service and volunteering into the existing new member class. This would get new members the material earlier and allow them to become involved faster. This combining will necessitate a redesign of the existing new member class and will force it to become a two to three week class.

The survey showed that two of the top three reasons people did not serve in the church were that they did not feel qualified and had not been personally asked. The group determined the training material must incorporate some information on what is required for specific volunteer positions so new members would see how their qualifications matched existing volunteer positions. The second reason revealed to the group was that the class should end with a time for staff to sit down one-on-one with new members and match them to volunteer positions. During the class, the new members will develop a ministry profile that lists their strengths and experience. The staff member would then use this information to match them to existing ministry positions. The group consensus was that this would be a more effective model than simply leaving the decision up to new members to get involved, or even having a sign-up sheet for ministries that would again put the burden on the new members to proceed. This method would help new members feel they had been personally asked to serve.

The fact that only 53 percent of the participants in the survey knew their spiritual gift made it obvious to the discussion group that a spiritual gift survey and explanations should be included in the training material. The survey revealed the majority of the participants felt that service in the church was only meant for the spiritually mature. The staff discussed the need to have a section in the curriculum that examines what the Bible has to say about service and its place in the life of believers.

Finally, the survey showed that most people serving in the church were moderately to very anxious about serving in their first volunteer position. The survey showed that after serving for a short time, this anxiety decreased greatly. The group agreed that there was no way to completely alleviate anxiety, but by giving new members more information about what to expect in their first volunteer position, their anxiety would be reduced and fade away faster. The staff decided it would be best to connect new members not only to a ministry, but also to a mentor within that ministry. The mentor would be responsible for helping the new member get acquainted with and settled into their volunteer position. This concluded the staff's discussion of the survey and how it shaped the development of the training materials for new members.

The week of April 21, 2013, began by recruiting lay leaders who would be willing to help refine the materials for training new members for volunteer service. I emailed the Sunday morning Adult LIFE Group leaders and explained that I needed an hour of their time for feedback on a new class I was developing. The class would teach new members about their spiritual gifts and help get them involved in service. I set up a meeting for the following Sunday afternoon during our normal monthly teacher's meeting.

In addition, I spent about two to three hours each day of that week compiling materials to use in the service portion of the updated new member class. On Monday, I reviewed the existing new member class content to identify any materials already included in the class on service. The material contained a section that taught how every member was

expected to serve somewhere within the church. The section examined several scriptures that supported the premise. While this section was good, its scope was too narrow to accomplish all the staff had determined the week before. It would, however, be adequate as a biblical foundation for the additional materials on service and spiritual gifts.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, I pulled from old files some materials that had previously been used to train volunteers at Noonday. Some of the materials, such as an old training manual for service in the children's area and a ten-year-old Sunday School lesson on volunteering, were not useful and were discarded. One very useful source was found in the process. Six years ago the church conducted a one-day conference on service entitled "Ignite." A portion of the material was well written and can be used word for word in the new curriculum. The "Ignite" conference was divided into four sections. The opening section covered the biblical foundation for volunteering in church. The next three sections helped the participants to identify their spiritual gifts, personality, and passions and to see how they help direct them in service. The spiritual gifts section was well written and used a simple seventy-two question test to identify spiritual gifts. This section will be used as-is in the new materials. The section on personality was helpful, but was too long to be used directly in the new curriculum. As an evaluation tool, the section used a simple personality test developed by Gary Smalley.<sup>1</sup> The test was quick and used a unique animal based scoring, ranking personalities as lions, otters, beavers or golden retrievers. Even though the teaching portion of the personality section of "Ignite" was not useful, the personality test and teaching will be saved and used in the final curriculum. The final section of the "Ignite" seminar on passions was not useful and will not be adapted or reused.

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<sup>1</sup>Gary Smalley, *Making Love Last Forever* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), 159-176.

On Thursday, I researched potential ministry profiles to be used in the curriculum. The “Ignite” seminar covered spiritual gifts, personalities and passions, but did not unify them well into a profile. After searching, I found two main profiles to present to the group of lay leaders to get their input on which to use in the curriculum. The first was the S.H.A.P.E. profile popularized by Pastor Rick Warren of Saddleback Church in Southern California in his book *The Purpose Driven Church*.<sup>2</sup> The profile is explained in detail in the book *S.H.A.P.E.: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*, written by one of the associate pastors at Saddleback Church.<sup>3</sup> The profile uses the acrostic S.H.A.P.E. to identify Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experience. Together these form a great profile to be used in matching new members to their ideal ministry position. The second profile was developed by Wayne Kordero and used the acrostic D.E.S.I.G.N. to accomplish the same purpose.<sup>4</sup> The D.E.S.I.G.N. profile evaluates Desires, Experiences, Spiritual gifts, Individual styles, Growth phase, and Natural abilities. This profile is basically the same as S.H.A.P.E. with the addition of the growth phase. This section offers a quick way to evaluate the spiritual maturity of the potential volunteer.

At this point there was sufficient material to construct an outline for the class (Appendix 7). The first section of the updated new member class is the original new member class. I took the outline for this class and recorded the time each section typically took to teach during sessions. I then listed all the sections of the service portion of the updated class I had researched and compiled. The service portion of the new class will follow the

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<sup>2</sup>Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 369-375.

<sup>3</sup>Erik Rees, *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling your Unique Purpose for Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006)

<sup>4</sup>Wayne Kordero, *Doing Church as a Team* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2001)

D.E.S.I.G.N. outline. Each letter of the acrostic will be taught with additional introductory and closing sections. I wrote a brief description of what would be taught in each section, including specific instruments to be used, and listed an approximate teaching time for each. After adding the times and factoring in time for fellowship and staff introductions, the new class was broken down into three, two and a half hour sessions. This plan will be presented to the lay leadership team for further input.

On Sunday April 28, 2013, I met with some of the teachers of our Sunday morning adult Bible studies in order to review the new curriculum outline. The review of the material took place during our normal monthly leader meeting. Six leaders were present: Bobby Carr, David Mahaffey, Matthew Aderholt, Brian Fulghum, Matt Mercer and Richard Walden.

After opening in prayer, I briefly explained the scope and purpose of my overall project and how the newly rebuilt members class fit into that scope. I then quickly reviewed the results of the church wide survey, stopping to share insights the senior staff had made during their review the previous week. After further discussion on the survey, I presented the new class to the group. Because the leader meeting was limited to one hour, the curriculum was not taught in full, but was covered in an outline form. When the presentation was finished, the floor was opened for discussion and comments on the curriculum.

All the initial comments were very positive. The group was able to see correlation between the results of the church wide survey and the design of specific aspects of the class. Overall, the group expressed a positive view of the D.E.S.I.G.N. profile, feeling it covered a balanced array of information that would help match members to ideal service opportunities. Two leaders shared that they had done the S.H.A.P.E. profile over a decade ago at Noonday Baptist Church. I shared why I had chosen the D.E.S.I.G.N. profile over the S.H.A.P.E. profile, highlighting the “growth phase” section of D.E.S.I.G.N. that gave a quick picture of spiritual maturity.



The only concern the group as a whole shared was the overall length of the class. Everyone agreed three weeks for two and a half hours per week was a long time. They felt it would be difficult for people to attend three weeks of classes in a row. I agreed with their concerns and asked them to look back at the outline and suggest what sections could be cut from the material to shorten the duration. After a brief discussion, it was agreed it would be difficult to cut any single section, and all the sections were vital to the overall class.

One final suggestion was made: find a way to include the existing LIFE Groups in the class to provide a connection point for new members. The best suggestion presented was to have existing LIFE groups rotate catering and hosting the snack and fellowship time at the end of each session. This would give new members a chance to interact with teachers and for the teachers and class leaders to personally invite new members to their class.

On Tuesday, following my discussion, with the lay leaders in the church, I thought some more about the consensus that three weeks was too long for the class. As the leaders agreed there was no section that could easily be completely cut, I began to look through the materials again to see if sections could be shortened to eliminate a week, while still maintaining all the sections. While reviewing the materials, I realized a lot of time had been allotted for filling out components, such as the spiritual gifts test and personality test. At this point I decided if new members were sent home with the test after the first week as home work, enough time would be saved to trim the class to two weeks. I rewrote the outline (Appendix 8) to represent the new format and presented it to my ministry assistant and two senior staff. All agreed this shorter, two week format was better.

Monday May 6, 2013, was focused on identifying and contacting individuals who had joined the church in the last eighteen months but had not yet taken a new member class. The Senior Pastor's Assistant, Judy Walden, is the support staff member tasked with tracking new members. She pulled two lists from the database; one identifying those who had joined since the last new member class had been offered and another identifying those who had

joined prior to that who had missed the new member class when previously offered. Forty-one adults were identified as pending members needing to attend the new member class.

I had my ministry assistant, Carrie Jenkins, personally call every family on the list. She informed them of the changes that had been made to the new member class and gave them the dates and times of the two-week class. I also had her explain that the new class was part of my doctoral study and I would personally appreciate their involvement in the class. Each family was reminded that attendance at a new member class is a requirement for membership at Noonday.

At Noonday, the new member class has always been promoted as a class for new and prospective members. While the class is required for all those who have indicated a desire to join, it is also a great way for those who are still deciding about membership to get a full picture of who the church is and what membership is about. For this reason, in addition to the personal calls, the new class was promoted in the church bulletin and preservice announcement slides.

On Tuesday and Wednesday of the same week, I gave substance and detail to the previously developed material to create a full teaching outline. This had already been done for the first half of the class but was needed for the new addition to the class involving the emphasis on service. For each section of the outline I added illustrations, supporting verses and interactive questions. This took about three hours each day. The full teaching outline for the service portion of the class is in Appendix 9. On Thursday, I took the new teaching plan and created a power point slide presentation to help class participants follow the curriculum more easily.

Week 6 began with another call to all the candidates for the class. Another ministry assistant in the office, Lori Arnold, was tasked with this set of calls so the candidates would hear a new voice. She called all 41 members, and was able to personally talk with 9, and left messages for 18.

On Monday and Thursday afternoons, I spent about two hours each day compiling a homework packet for each participant. The homework packet can be found in Appendix 10. As previously mentioned, in order to shorten the class from three weeks to two weeks, participants are going to be asked to complete all the D.E.S.I.G.N. assessment tools outside of class. This requires a packet for each participant to take home that clearly explains, in simple details, how to take each test and grade it. Compiling the assessment tools was easy. Creating written instructions for each that clearly communicated the different processes was not. I used the support staff in the office as test subjects giving them the homework packet and asking them to complete it. I asked them to make notes in the packet of what was unclear. Once they finished, we gathered in the conference room and reviewed the packets. They shared what was unclear to them and we worked as a group to rewrite the weaker areas. I also looked over their tests and self scores to be sure they were done correctly. After making the changes, the homework packet was ready.

### **New Member's Class**

Sunday, May 19, 2013, was the day of the first half of the two-part new member class. On Sunday morning I had four people, two individuals and one couple, approach me to tell me they were not going to be at the class that evening. All had a last minute change of plans and would not be able to come. They wanted to know if they should attend the second half of the class anyway and take the first half the next time the class was offered, or if they should just wait and take the classes in order the next time they were offered. Since the second half of the class was the focus of this project, and I wanted to have as many involved in it as possible, I told them to take the second half the following week. I gave each of them the homework packet so that they would be prepared for the following week's class.

That evening, the class began at 5:00pm and was scheduled to run until 7:00pm with an additional thirty-minute fellowship time to follow. Six people attended, one couple

and four individuals. At the beginning of the class the new members were given a survey similar to the one given to the church at large at the beginning of the project. The survey is Appendix 2 and the results are posted in Appendix 5. The class time went very well; everyone was in good spirits and there was good interaction between the attenders and me. I had to really rush the last thirty minutes to get in all the material, but was able to cover everything as planned. After the main material, I passed out and explained the homework packets. Overall everyone seemed genuinely excited about discovering his or her spiritual gifts and personalities. The class time concluded with our Senior Pastor taking about fifteen minutes to address the group and answer questions.

On Wednesday and Thursday, I took four hours each morning to go back through the curriculum for the second half of the class to develop student listening sheets. I included most of the key content and only left blanks for key scriptures in each section. Once complete, the content was formatted to match the already existing book for the first half of the new member class, which previously stood alone. Once the listening sheets were complete, I used them and the curriculum outline to develop a slide presentation to use as a visual aid during the class.

On Wednesday morning of the same week, my assistant called the people who had attended the class the previous week. She also called the four people who did not attend the first class but had expressed their intent to attend the second. The purpose of the call was to remind the members about the second half of the class and to remind them to complete their homework packets. Everyone said they were having no trouble completing their homework and all but one confirmed they would be at the second half of the class. One lady had a family birthday party for her grandson and would not be able to attend.

Sunday, May 26, 2013, was the second half of the two-part new member class. This class contained the material that dealt directly with the topics pertinent to this project. Seven new members were present. Four had taken the first half of the class the previous

week. The other three knew they would miss the first week but obtained their homework so they would be ready for the second half. The class lasted two and a half hours. Two hours were spent working through the teaching material and homework packets. The next fifteen minutes were used to allow two of Noonday's associate pastors to introduce themselves and their area of ministry. The final fifteen minutes were planned for a fellowship time.

The teaching time was well received, there was a lot of interaction from participants and every member had completely and accurately completed their homework assignments. At the conclusion of the teaching time, every participant turned in a copy of his or her D.E.S.I.G.N. profile and scheduled a time to connect with me during the following week. The class members enjoyed the class and topics so much, that even though only fifteen minutes was planned for the fellowship time at the end, everyone stayed for close to an hour.

During the remainder of the week I had one-on-one meetings with all of the class participants with the exception of two. One couple had a medical emergency arise and was not able to meet for two weeks. Each meeting lasted about thirty minutes. In order to make the meeting as convenient as possible for each new member, they were conducted in a variety of ways. Some were done in person in my office, some were done in person before or after regular church services and some were done over the phone. The goal of each meeting was to review the member's D.E.S.I.G.N. profile and present them some options for service within the church that most closely matched their profile. The meetings were very interactive with good discussion about their ministry interests and abilities. I would begin by presenting an idea of a service opportunity I felt matched their profile and then we would discuss their feelings about the opportunity. This back and forth conversation continued until we agreed on a volunteer position for them to pursue. Each meeting closed by establishing an action plan for getting the new member connected with the ministry leader of the area they desired to pursue.

The meeting I had with one of the new members, I will call her Sarah, was typical of all the meetings. I meet with Sarah the Tuesday afternoon after the class in my office. Sarah had been a believer for a long time but had never been discipled and was very new to attending a church. She came to our church through a relationship with a coworker who sang in our choir. Because of that relationship, Sarah was already involved in the choir when she took the new member class. Sarah's D.E.S.I.G.N. profile showed that she had a passion for music, a take-charge and detail oriented personality and the spiritual gift of administration. Sarah felt a strong relational connection to the choir and was hesitant about taking a position outside of the circle of friends she had built there. I knew the choir was about to take a break for the summer in order to rest and organize for the fall. I talked with Sarah and suggested her organizational abilities might be a perfect match for helping the worship staff organize the music library in preparation for the fall relaunch of choir. She was very excited about the opportunity, and at the close of the meeting I sent an email to her and to the choir director to get them connected and establish the first steps of the ministry position.

### **Evaluating New Members in Service**

The next phase of the project was focused on evaluating and supporting each new member in their chosen area of service. During the six-week period from June 2 through July 14, I followed up with each new member about every two weeks. These contacts were to ensure that they were getting plugged into the agreed upon volunteer positions, and that they were getting the support and training they needed to get started. The contacts were not only to ensure they were following through with their commitments, but also to ensure that ministry team leaders were doing their part to integrate the new members into their areas.

Over the previous four weeks, including the class sessions and personal interviews, all of the new members' interactions had been with me. After the interviews, however, many of the new members were passed off to other staff or lay ministry team leader within the

church. On several occasions during the evaluation period I discovered the new members had done their part to get involved but were waiting on call backs, information, or details from other staff or lay team leaders. In these instances I had to follow up with those supervisors to explain the importance of getting the new members involved quickly into service. I was surprised to find out that there was only one case where the new member was the cause of a delay. For the most part, all the new members were very eager to get plugged into ministry.

In addition to working out communication and logistical issues, the latter part of the six-week period was focused on helping the new members evaluate their volunteer involvement to be sure it was what they were expecting and that it was something they were truly passionate about. In one instance a change needed to be made halfway through the period. After connecting one of the new members with a niche age group within the church, it was realized, by both parties, that the pairing was not a good match. Once this was realized I looked back through my notes from his personal interview and identified the secondary ministry position we had identified. I contacted the new member and redirected him toward the new volunteer position.

### **Focus Group Feedback**

In the fifteenth and final week of the project, all the new members, with the exception of two, who attended the second week of the new member class on service were active in a volunteer position. All had found service positions, but one of the couples in the class had recently moved to Georgia from the Northwest and spent three months back there each year. They left for their trip during week thirteen of the project. For this reason they were not active at the conclusion of the project. On Sunday July 14, I gathered the remaining new members for a time of feedback on their experience with the class and initial ministry involvement.

Two methods of feedback were used: an individual survey and a group discussion. The survey was a condensed version of the initial survey taken before the class began. The final new member survey can be found in Appendix 3, and the results are listed in Appendix 6. In all areas, the survey results had improved over the initial survey. For example, the number of participants who knew their spiritual gift went from 29 percent to 100 percent. In addition to knowledge about their gifting, the survey showed the knowledge of biblical teaching on serving had improved as well. New members also had a greater sense of support from the church in their volunteer positions. Questions about receiving enough training, support and encouragement increased from an average of 6 to an average of 9 out of 10 possible points. Overall the results from the survey showed an overall increase in all desired areas.

The second avenue for feedback was group discussion. The overall tone of the discussion was very positive. All those present shared they were really enjoying their new volunteer positions. Discussion revealed that each person had more individual personal connections with existing church members than they had before the new member class. Feedback concerning the class itself was very positive. Most expressed that the class was a very enjoyable experience. Several shared that they had even encouraged some long time church members to come back and take the course even though they weren't new members. On the personal side, the group shared that they thought I had done a great job facilitating the class, making it fun, interactive and helpful. The conclusion of the meeting marked the end of this fifteen-week project.



## CHAPTER 5

### EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

In this final chapter an evaluation of the project will be conducted. With the project completed, I will critically examine key areas. Reflection will be offered on seven aspects. First, I will present and evaluate the overall purpose. Second, I will restate and evaluate the five project goals. The third and fourth sections will identify strengths and weaknesses in the project. These will then be used in the fourth part of the evaluation to determine ways the project could be strengthened in the future. The fifth section will be a theological reflection of what I learned about God, His church and His word through the project. Finally, I will share how this project affected me personally as a leader.

#### **Evaluation of the Project's Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to increase the retention of new members of Noonday Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia by helping them identify and become active in service opportunities in the church. This purpose was achieved within the context of the project. I say “within the context of this project,” because true retention is a long-term situation and the time limits of this project prevent long-term analysis. A true evaluation of member retention would require following up with members one year, two years and even five years after they joined to see if they were still actively attending and serving. The fifteen-week limitation of this project prevents such examination.

At its most basic level, the purpose was clearly achieved. The means identified in the purpose was to help members identify and become active in service. At the end of the fifteen-week project, all seven new members who participated in the project were serving

weekly in a volunteer position in the church. The new members were spending between one and four hours per week in service. This simple criterion points to the success of the project, but ignores the deeper purpose of retention. To say that the project's purpose was a success because all seven new members were retained after fifteen weeks is not the best criterion for evaluation. However, within the time limits of the project, other forms of evaluation point to the success of the project's purpose.

Survey analysis, new member focus groups, and personal reflection all show evidence that the purpose of the project was achieved. Three surveys were given throughout the course of the project; one was given to all adults attending morning worship, one was given to all new members before attending the new member's class, and one was given to all new members after they attended the new member's class. Comparisons of these survey results give confirmation to a successful purpose. First, the surveys showed 100 percent of the new members knew their spiritual gift at the end of the project. This result was an increase from 29 percent before the project and an increase over the 53 percent of the congregation-at-large who knew their spiritual gift. This knowledge is important for retention because it is an indicator the members were better equipped to select service opportunities that would be a better long-term fit for how they had been gifted. Second, the surveys revealed the new members were more comfortable in their volunteer positions than the general congregation. When the new members were asked if they were receiving adequate training, support and encouragement for their volunteer positions, they averaged a 9 out of 10 for strongly agree. This score is well above the average of 7 the general congregation reported. This data shows the new members were more comfortable and connected to their volunteer positions than an average existing church member. A better connection is an indicator of better long-term retention.

The second form of evaluation is the feedback given in focus groups. Five of the seven new members participated in the focus group. Discussion in the focus group indicated

that all new members showed signs of increased potential for long-term retention. These signs included a deeper emotional connection to the church, a strong commitment to their volunteer position, an increase in personal relationships within the church body, and a sense that they were making a difference in the church. First, the group indicated a deeper emotional connection to the church than they felt before the project. The fact that they had joined proved that there was already a connection; but through the course of the project, each said they felt a deeper appreciation and love for Noonday. Second, each new member communicated a deep commitment to his or her new volunteer position. Even though the volunteers had only been serving in their positions for a few weeks, each one indicated that the level of personalization that was used to place them in their positions was crucial. They already felt very connected to, and therefore committed to, their area of service. Part of this connection was due to the personal meeting I had with each new member to individually ask him or her to be a part of a ministry custom-selected for them based on their ministry profile. In their initial survey, the number one reason the new members indicated for not getting involved in service was “Have not been personally asked.” The personal touch resonated with the new members.

Next, the group indicated they had made new friendships during the course of, and as a result of, their involvement in the project. New friendships were made among the new members because of the time spent together during the new member class and time spent with other volunteers in their service area. One new member indicated the choir now felt just like family to her. One final sign of increased potential for long-term retention shown by the group was they each felt like they were making a difference in their area of service. The new members did not see their service only as something they were doing for the church; they felt like their involvement was really making a difference in the lives of other people in the church. One new member shared that each week she loved her time of service in the children’s area because of the impact she saw in the lives of the children she taught.

In addition to survey analysis and new member focus groups, personal reflection also shows evidence that the purpose of the project was attained. As I write, several months have passed since the end of the project. Even now, I see the seven participants in the project strongly committed to attendance and service. Six of the seven are still very active in their initial service area. The seventh found that the first position was not a good fit, but he is actively seeking a new area of service. I have also noticed a deeper personal connection between each of these seven new members and myself. Two of the individuals have approached me with personal concerns since the project ended. They said they did not know where else to turn but felt comfortable sharing with me. This staff connection is an important indicator of connection to the church that was achieved through the project. These personal reflections, along with the surveys and focus group, all give evidence of a realized purpose.

### **Evaluation of the Project's Goals**

The project had five stated goals. Each goal will now be evaluated using the same criteria as the main purpose; survey results, focus groups and personal reflection. The first goal was to increase new members' knowledge about their personal spiritual gifts and abilities. This knowledge was important for new members to have because it allows them to find an appropriate place of service in the church. Half of the new member class curriculum was rewritten to include a time of teaching on spiritual gifts.

The time also included a spiritual gifts inventory for each new member to complete. The results of this goal were very successful. The church-wide survey showed that, of the congregation at large, only 59 percent indicated that they knew what their spiritual gifts were. The initial new member survey indicated only 29 percent knew what their spiritual gifts were. After the completion of the project, every new member knew what his or her spiritual gift was. The increase was significant compared to the initial new member survey, and was more than double the percentage of the congregation at large. Focus group

interaction also indicated successful results. New members shared in the discussion they not only knew the gift they had, but they understood how to best apply that gift in the church. Some of the new members who were among the 29 percent who already knew their spiritual gift, shared that through the class, they had a better understanding of the gift than before the class.

The second goal of the project desired a change in attitude among the new members. The specific goal was to lower new members' anxiety of serving while increasing their desire to get involved in volunteer positions within the church. The avenues used to accomplish this goal were the redesigned new member class curriculum and mentoring in the first few weeks of their new service positions.

Several strong indicators reveal this attitude was changed in the new members. First, the survey results showed a drop in anxiety from before the project to after. In the final survey, new members were asked if their anxiety decreased "greatly" after serving in their position for a few months. Participants scored a 7.3 out of 10 on the question, indicating they "agreed" to "strongly agreed" with the question. Surveys also indicated that ongoing mentoring had an impact on the decrease. When asked in the survey about receiving enough training, support and encouragement in their volunteer positions, new members scored an average of 9 out of 10, with 10 being the best possible score. Focus group discussion gave additional evidence of lower anxiety. New members shared that they were more willing to stay involved, or become involved in additional responsibilities, because they had very little anxiety about serving. All factors marked a significant change in attitude as desired by this goal.

The third goal was a skills goal. The intention was to increase the number of hours each new member volunteered in a church program. The motivation for this goal was the principle that, by becoming more involved, members would feel more ownership in the church and thus would be more deeply connected to the church. The deeper connection

would then lead to better assimilation. Average service hours per month was used as a basis of comparison.

In the survey given to the congregation at large, participants marked that in an average month they served 2.5 hours in volunteer positions at church. This average was then used as a baseline to measure the success of the new member initiative. At the completion of the project, the new members were surveyed to determine how many hours per month they were volunteering. When all the hours were added and divided among the new members, it was found they were serving over 10 hours each in volunteer positions. In addition to this average, it was found that all the new members were serving and the least amount of time served by an individual was 4.25 hours per month. The final average hours served by the new members was over four times that of the congregation at large. The dramatic increase reveals that the goal was achieved.

The next goal was to decrease the amount of time between members joining and starting in a volunteer position. The purpose of this goal was to increase assimilation into the church by encouraging new members to build relationships and feel ownership in the church body more quickly. The goal was accomplished by having a personal interview with each new member after the completion of the new member class in order to quickly place them into an ideal service opportunity.

As with the previous goal, the congregation-at-large survey was used to calculate a baseline for new members. Upon examination of the congregation-at-large, it was reported that 22 percent of the participants had never served in a volunteer position. Of the 78 percent that had served, it took an average of over a year to take on their first volunteer position. Before reporting the new member results, it should be noted that a change in church policy makes exact calculation a little cumbersome. A few years before the project, a change was made in the church policy that completion of a new member class was required before prospects could officially become members. Prior to that time, a prospect became a member

the day they indicated a desire to join. Because the new member class is only offered quarterly, there is a three to six month gap (as some prospects can not attend the first class offered) between initial indication and official membership. Focus group conversation revealed that 100 percent of the new members were serving in volunteer positions within six weeks of completing the new member class. These numbers mark a great improvement over the congregational results. Even if a gap existed between the original date the prospect indicated a desire to join and completion of the member class, all were serving in less than a year. The new member's time before service shows a significant improvement over the congregation-at-large. All the data shows a reduction in time between members joining and serving, and thus an accomplished goal.

The final goal for the project was a personal one. It was my desire to become a better motivator for members to get involved in serving within the church. As a pastor, I feel it is my job to equip church members for works of service. New members are a great group to motivate; they represent the greatest untapped potential in the church. Through focus group feedback and personal reflection, I feel the goal was realized.

During focus group discussion, new members shared they really enjoyed my teaching style and approach to the material. They also articulated they felt a personal connection with me, especially during the one-on-one interviews. I count these as indicators of motivation potential. When asked directly if they thought I was a good motivator for ministry, all indicated a resounding yes. The feedback, however, has to be taken with caution. First, the focus group was led by me and did not offer an environment for honest feedback. Second, while the group could offer an opinion of their experience, none had known me prior to their attendance at Noonday, and therefore they could not offer any feedback toward a level of improvement as they lacked a baseline for comparison. Upon personal reflection however, I do feel the goal was accomplished. Through the project, I gained a great deal of knowledge about serving and volunteering I was able to directly use

with the new members. I also made several mistakes I was able to correct and learn from. Overall, I sense an improvement in my ability to facilitate service among congregates.

There were five main goals proposed for this project. Each goal was strategic by focusing on different areas of the project that were essential to achieve the overall purpose. In this section data from surveys, focus groups and individual feedback has shown evidence that all five goals were fulfilled adequately.

### **Strengths of the Project**

Several strengths of the project became evident through the implementation. Some of the strengths occurred directly within the various aspects of the project while others occurred outside the direct scope of the project. The three main strengths that occurred within the project were the development of the new member class, the use of the DESIGN profile, and the personal interviews.

One of the positive aspects of the project was the development of the new member class curriculum. Redesigning the church's new member class was not originally part of the plan for the project. After reviewing the desired outcomes for the project, it became evident the best place to accomplish the goals would be in the new member class. Noonday already had a new member class prior to the project, however, the format of the class after the project was stronger than the original. The previous rendition of the class curriculum included church history, beliefs, and programs. In short, it was one sided because it was all about the church and not about the new member. Per the needs of the project, an entirely new section was added to the class that focused on service. The section brought a new emphasis to the class that focused on the giftedness of the new member. The new version of the class was more balanced in that it spent time focusing on the church and time focusing on the new members.



The second strength of the project developed as a part of the redesign of the new member class. The use of the DESIGN profile was a strong element in the new member class that rose to the top as an overall strength. The original desire was for new members to identify their spiritual gifts. However, after looking at the desired outcome of placing them in the most custom positions possible, it became evident that a simple spiritual gift score was inadequate and limited in scope. After comparing several different options that were being used in churches around the nation, the DESIGN profile was chosen. Like many other profiles the DESIGN goes beyond simple spiritual gifts to include personal style, passions and vocational history. Unlike many other profiles, the DESIGN includes a section on spiritual maturity. The section sets the DESIGN profile apart from its counterparts. All of these elements enabled a more personalized volunteer placement when using the DESIGN profile. At the end of the project a decision was made to input the DESIGN profile information into a database that could be referenced over time. The database would allow for ministers and program leaders to identify specifically gifted or interested members when a specialized need arose or new ministry was started. Because of these components, the DESIGN profile was one of the great strengths in the project.

Of the three strengths within the project, the final was the use of a one-on-one placement interview with each new member. After the new member class and the completion of the DESIGN profile, new members had to be assigned to volunteer positions. In the past, potential volunteers were given a list of available positions they could read through and then volunteer for. The process proved to be ineffective. New volunteers were too timid to initiate service. After reviewing the old process, it became apparent that if a more personalized placement was desired, a more personalized process was needed. The new member placement interview was created and implemented as the new process. Every new member sat down one-on-one or as a couple with me. During the interview, their profile was combined with my knowledge of volunteer positions and their real-time feedback to custom

fit them into a volunteer position. The two-way interaction was a great strength because it increased the chance of a first time placement match. Because the new members and I were able to discuss potential positions and compare them to their DESIGN profile, we were able to work together to find a position everyone felt good about. In addition, the interview allowed for the development of new ministry positions. The old system bottlenecked the possibilities to those that already existed in the church. The new interview allowed for the creation of new positions and, in some cases, new ministries because of the skill set, passion and experience of the new member. All three of these strengths were within the project and all three aided in creating a more personalized experience for each new member.

As the previously mentioned, three strengths were within the project; three additional strengths occurred outside the direct scope of the project. I developed the first three strengths during the course of the project as a result of the needs of the project. The next three strengths developed organically, outside the scope of the project. The first of the outside strengths was the ongoing effect the project will have on the church. Even though the course and placement process were developed for the project, they have all become ongoing additions to our new member process. Only one class of new members went through the process during the project, but since that time two additional classes have completed the same process. The ongoing training and personalized placement are beneficial for the church. More new members are being placed into customized positions within the first few months of their membership. The DESIGN profile database is also growing with each new class. As the database grows, it becomes a beneficial reference tool for pastors and ministry leaders.

A second strength outside the project was a leadership ripple effect that occurred among existing ministry leaders. As the placement interviews were completed, I contacted ministry leaders to get them in touch with the new members. The information let the leaders know what skills and abilities the new members were bringing to the ministry area and had an unexpected effect on leaders. Because they were given profile information on their new

volunteers, several of the ministry leaders began to look critically at their ministry area. In some cases, they redesigned and improved aspects of their area in order to fully utilize the skills of the new member. The leaders were not asked to do anything but plug in the new volunteers, however, the ripple effect of the process caused them to independently improve their ministry area or program.

The third strength that developed outside the project was a boost to existing volunteer morale. As new members were evaluated and placed into ministry positions their excitement for their positions began to spread among existing volunteers in those areas. Like the ripple effect that occurred within the leaders, the morale boost was not planned or expected. Existing volunteers came to me during the project and expressed their thanks for bringing new volunteers into their area. In addition to the energy that was brought by the new volunteers, the morale surge was also due to the attention volunteers felt their ministry area was getting. The old volunteer placement process tended toward a more crisis based placement system. The system meant some of the higher turnover programs got more attention while stable programs were often overlooked. The old adage of the “squeaky wheel getting the grease,” was holding true. Under the new process, ministry areas got new volunteers based on the profile of the volunteer. The wider distribution of volunteers led to some ministry programs, that had not received new people in a long time, getting some attention. The morale boost, along with the previous two strengths, all occurred naturally outside the direct scope of the project but all were of great benefit to the church as a whole.

### **Weaknesses of the Project**

While areas of strength are present in the project, several weaknesses also exist. Two weaknesses became the most apparent upon final evaluation of the project. The first is the short time frame of the project. The second is the small sample size of the new member class.

The first weakness is the short time frame allowed for the project. As mentioned in the first section, true assimilation is a long-term condition and the time limits of the project prevented long-term analysis. A true evaluation of member retention should involve following up with members one year, two years and even five years after they join to evaluate their attendance and service in the church. The fifteen-week limitation of the project prevented that level of evaluation. While some factors, such as a new member's feelings of connection to the church, were used to project long-term outcomes and were speculative in nature. The constraint on time was one of the main weaknesses in the project.

A second weakness was the small sample size of new members who participated in the project. Only seven new members were present for the class and placement process. More participants would have allowed for a greater amount of feedback. The additional feedback through surveys and focus groups would have allowed for greater confidence in identified trends and the discovery of additional trends. In the months prior to the start of the fifteen weeks of the project, the church experienced a sharp decline in attendance and additions. The average number of new members per quarter dropped considerably from the previous two quarters. The decline limited the number of potential participants in the class. Because the project was focused specifically on new members, there was no potential to bolster attendance by including other groups, like longer term members who were simply not involved in volunteer positions.

### **What I Would Do Differently**

Given the opportunity to repeat this project from the beginning, the main aspect that I would change would be to include the Senior Pastor in more of the elements of the process. The Senior Pastor at the church was fully supportive of me and the project, throughout the entire process. He even attended part of the first class so that he could welcome the new members and share with them for a few moments. However after that

point, I was the only staff contact the new members had. In hindsight, the process would have been more effective had the Senior Pastor been more involved. While I felt that I had the full respect of all the new members, there is always more impact when teaching or training comes from the Senior Pastor himself.

In addition to some added validity to the training, the placement process would have been more effective had it been conducted with the Senior Pastor. A certain excitement comes from being personally asked to participate in a ministry by the Senior Pastor. For many new members, the only interaction they have had with the Senior Pastor is shaking his hand when they walk the aisle to join. A greater connection would have formed had the Senior Pastor been the one to review their DESIGN profile and match them to a ministry. In larger churches, this approach would become prohibitive because of the time load on the Senior Pastor; however for our church size it would have been very plausible.

One additional, and minor change, I would have made to the project would have been to contact the new members more frequently during their first months of service. During the evaluation period after their placement interview, I contacted the new members periodically to see if they were getting connected to their ministry and to see how their integration were proceeding. I did the calling in rotation so that each new member got a call only once every two or three weeks. In retrospect, I would have liked to contact members every week during the first eight weeks of their service. In a few cases, the leader of their new prospective ministry had not contacted the new members, and it was a few weeks before I was able to identify the problem and correct it.

### **Theological Reflections**

I gained satisfaction from the academic portions of this project. Doing research, developing and executing a plan to accomplish the purpose, conducting surveys and evaluations were all gratifying. However, the greatest joy I received from the project was in

watching God at work the in the lives of His people and His church. Repeatedly throughout the project, I was reminded of what an amazing institution the church really is and how great the God is who sustains it.

During the project I was frequently studying or teaching passages from scripture that described the church as a body, a single organism made up of many distinct and varied parts. While these passages are remarkable to study, seeing them come alive in the new members of Noonday was even more remarkable. With only seven participants in the class, there could not have been a wider array of uniquely designed people. Each had their own unique combination of skills, personality and passion. Yet for each one there was a seemingly ideal position of service in the body. Not just a place they could serve, but a place the church needed them to serve. It has been several months since the project ended, but I cannot imagine what the church would do without some of the new members who completed the project. The details of their skills and our needs could not have been orchestrated by anyone less than an all-knowing all-loving Heavenly Father.

### **Personal Reflections**

Completing this project has taken a lot of time, effort and perseverance. At times it seemed like certain aspects of research, writing, planning or implementation would never be completed. Yet as I reflect on the journey, I see so many places God accomplished His work in my own life and in the life of the church. Personally, God used this project to remind me of the importance of the role of the pastor in a church as well as the importance of every individual church member.

I was reminded of the importance the role pastors have to equip members for works of service. I confess that many times in my years as a pastor I have fallen into the habit of doing more work than I could have enabled others to do. Many times it seemed easier to simply do something myself rather than identifying and training someone else to do the same

task. Throughout the project I was convicted that whenever I take that easy road, I am only bottlenecking the true potential of the body of Christ. Rather than adding work by myself, it is my biblical calling as a pastor to multiply the work of God through his people, the church. In addition to the importance of the pastor's role, I was also reminded of the importance of every church member in the ministry of the church.

The work of the church is not to be done by a single pastor, but it is also not to be done by a small handful of willing volunteers. Seeing these seven new members find their place in ministry within the church revealed the importance of every church member being involved. An old adage says, "Sometimes you can't see the forest for the trees." But by contrast, I realized in ministry there were times I "was not seeing the trees for the forest," meaning I missed the importance of each individual tree in the forest. When looking at the church I was content when programs were fully staffed, even if it left a large portion of members doing nothing. The project showed me the great ministry potential that is stored in every single member of the body. A potential that must be unlocked and put to use, not only for the church's sake but for the health and spiritual development of that individual.

### **Conclusion**

This project stands as a testament to the reality that God's plan is always the best plan, and that God's plan is for the pastors He calls to find a place in ministry for every church member in accordance with the way God has already gifted that individual. The strength of this project is not in the process but in the foundational principle that every Christian is gifted and called to a place of service in God's redemption effort. When church leaders can help new members get quickly and strategically involved in ministry, those church members are going to be more likely to grow spiritually, serve sacrificially and ultimately stay more connected to a local fellowship. To God be the glory in all these things.

## APPENDIX 1

### CHURCH-WIDE SURVEY

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the church's knowledge of spiritual gifts and level of current volunteer involvement. This research is being conducted by Jay Worthington for the purpose of completion of a Doctorate in Ministry. In this research you will share your opinion on several questions. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

1. What is your age range?

20-30                      31-40                      41-50                      51-60                      61+

2. How long have you been a member of Noonday?

I am not a member                      - 1 year                      1 to 2yr                      3 to 5yr  
6 to 10yr                      11 to 20yr                      21 to 40yr                      +40yr

3. How long did you attend as a guest before you officially joined?

- 1 month                      2 to 5 months                      6 months to 1 year                      +1 year

4. How long were you a member before you took your first volunteer positions at the church?

- 1 month                      2 to 5 months                      6 mon to 1 year                      +1 year                      Have not yet

5. Currently how many hours in a month do you spend in a volunteer position(s) here at the church?

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 +



6. What are the top two reasons you believe church members do not get involved in volunteer positions: (circle two)

- Have not been personally asked
- Don't feel they are qualified
- Don't think they are needed
- Lack of commitment to the church
- Don't have adequate training
- Too busy with activities outside the church
- Don't feel they should have to because the church has paid pastors already
- Don't feel they have been a member long enough
- Don't feel they are spiritually mature enough

7. Do you know your primary and secondary spiritual gifts? YES / NO

a. Primary: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What percentage of church members do you believe are currently serving in volunteer positions in the church?

0% - 10% - 20% - 40% - 60% - 80% - 100%

**For each question circle the corresponding number that most closely relates to your opinion on the issue using the following scale.**

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10  
Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

9. The Bible teaches that every Christian should be serving in the church somewhere.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

10. Service in the church is meant for the spiritually mature believer.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

11. The growth of a church is directly related to how many of its members are volunteering within the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

*If you are not currently serving in a volunteer position(s)*  
*please skip questions 12 through 16*

12. When I started my first volunteer position in church I was anxious about serving.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

13. After serving in my first volunteer position for a few months my anxiety level decreased greatly.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

14. I received adequate training for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

15. I receive adequate ongoing support for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

16. I receive adequate encouragement for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

## APPENDIX 2

### INITIAL NEW MEMBER SURVEY

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the church's knowledge of spiritual gifts and level of current volunteer involvement. This research is being conducted by Jay Worthington for the purpose of completion of a Doctorate in Ministry. In this research you will share your opinion on several questions. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

1. What is your age range?

20-30                      31-40                      41-50                      51-60                      61+

2. How long did you attend as a guest before you officially joined?

- 1 month                      2 to 4 months                      6 months to 1 year                      +1 year

3. How long do you think it will be before you take on a volunteer position within the church?

- 1 month                      2 to 4 months                      6 mon to 1 year                      +1 year                      Do Not Plan To

4. What are the top two reasons keep you from becoming involved in a volunteer position(s): (circle two)

- Have not been personally asked
- Don't feel I am qualified
- Don't think I am needed
- Not sure I am that committed to the church
- Don't have adequate training
- Too busy with activities outside the church
- Don't feel I have been a member long enough
- Don't feel I am spiritually mature enough
- Don't feel I should have to because the church has paid pastors already

5. How anxious are you about taking on a volunteer positions here at the church?  
Very Anxious 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Not Anxious

6. Do you know your primary and secondary spiritual gifts? YES / NO

a. Primary: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

**For each question circle the corresponding number that most closely relates to your opinion on the issue using the following scale.**

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10  
Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

7. The Bible teaches that every Christian should be serving in the church somewhere.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

8. Service in the church is meant for the spiritually mature believer.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

9. The growth of a church is directly related to how many of its members are volunteering within the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

*If you are not currently serving in a volunteer position(s)*

*please skip questions 10 through 14*

10. When I started my first volunteer position in church I was anxious about serving.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

11. After serving in my first volunteer position for a few months my anxiety level decreased greatly.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

12. I received adequate training for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

13. I receive adequate ongoing support for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

14. I receive adequate encouragement for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

APPENDIX 3

FINAL NEW MEMBER SURVEY

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the church's knowledge of spiritual gifts and level of current volunteer involvement. This research is being conducted by Jay Worthington for the purpose of completion of a Doctorate in Ministry. In this research you will share your opinion on several questions. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

1. What is your age range?  
20-30                      31-40                      41-50                      51-60                      61+
2. How long did you attend as a guest before you officially joined?  
- 1 month                      2 to 5 months                      6 months to 1 year                      +1 year
3. Do you know your primary and secondary spiritual gifts?                      YES / NO
  - a. Primary: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

**For each question circle the corresponding number that most closely relates to your opinion on the issue using the following scale.**

- 1   -   2   -   3   -   4   -   5   -   6   -   7   -   8   -   9   -   10  
Strongly Disagree                      Disagree                      Uncertain                      Agree                      Strongly Agree
4. The Bible teaches that every Christian should be serving in the church somewhere.  
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree
  5. Service in the church is meant for the spiritually mature believer.  
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree
  6. The growth of a church is directly related to how many of its members are volunteering within the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

*If you are not currently serving in a volunteer position(s)*

*please skip questions 7 through 11*

7. When I started my first volunteer position in church I was anxious about serving.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

8. After serving in my first volunteer position for a few weeks my anxiety level has decreased greatly.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

9. I received adequate training for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

10. I am receiving adequate ongoing support for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

11. I am receiving adequate encouragement for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.

Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 Strongly Agree

## APPENDIX 4

### CHURCH WIDE SURVEY RESULTS

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the church's knowledge of spiritual gifts and level of current volunteer involvement. The research is being conducted by Jay Worthington for the purpose of competition of a Doctorate in Ministry. In this research you will share your opinion on several questions. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

1. What is your age range?
  - 20-30 **(12%)**
  - 30-40 **(16%)**
  - 40-50 **(17%)**
  - 50-60 **(20%)**
  - 60+ **(35%)**
  
2. How long have you been a member of Noonday?
  - I am not a member **(20%)**
  - 1 year **(10%)**
  - 1 to 2 yr **(12%)**
  - 3 to 5 **(11%)**
  - 6 to 10 yr **(13%)**
  - 11 to 20 yr **(14%)**
  - 21 to 40 yr **(12%)**
  - +40 yr **(8%)**
  
3. How long did you attend as a guest before you officially joined?
  - 1 month **(21%)**
  - 2 to 4 months **(34%)**
  - 6 months to 1 yr **(22%)**
  - +1 year **(23%)**



4. How long were you a member before you took your first volunteer positions at the church?
  - 1 month **(17%)**
  - 2 to 4 months **(18%)**
  - 6 months to 1 yr **(24%)**
  - +1 year **(18%)**
  - Have not yet **(22%)**
  
5. Currently how many hours in a month do you spend in a volunteer position(s) here at the church? **Average = 2.5 hours**
  
6. What are the top two reasons you believe church members do not get involved in volunteer positions:
  - (23%)** Too busy with activities outside the church
  - (20%)** Don't feel they are qualified
  - (17%)** Have not been personally asked
  - (14%)** Lack of commitment to the church
  - (9%)** Don't feel they are spiritually mature enough
  - (8%)** Don't think they are needed
  - (7%)** Don't have adequate training
  - (1%)** Don't feel they should have to because the church has paid pastors
  - (1%)** Don't feel they have been a member long enough
  
7. Do you know your primary and secondary spiritual gifts?
  - Yes **(53%)** / No **(47%)**
  - a. Primary: **Service/Teaching (2 way tie)**
  - b. Secondary: **Service/Teaching/Mercy (3 way tie)**
  
8. What percentage of church members do you believe are currently serving in volunteer positions in the church?
  - >10% **(35%)** 20% **(43%)** 40% **(17%)** 60% **(4%)** 80% **(0%)** 100% **(1%)**

**For each question circle the corresponding number that most closely relates to your opinion on the issue using the following scale.**

1    -    2    -    3    -    4    -    5    -    6    -    7    -    8    -    9    -    10  
 Strongly Disagree      Disagree      Uncertain      Agree      Strongly Agree

9. The Bible teaches that every Christians should be serving in the church somewhere. **9**
  
10. Service in the church is meant for the spiritually mature believer. **4-5**
  
11. The growth of a church is directly related to how many of its members are volunteering within the church. **7-8**

*If you are not currently serving in a volunteer position(s) please skip questions 12 through 16*

12. When I started my first volunteer position in church I was anxious about serving.  
**6-7**
13. After serving in my first volunteer position for a few months my anxiety level decreased greatly. **7**
14. I received adequate training for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **6-7**
15. I received adequate ongoing support for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **7**
16. I receive adequate encouragement for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **7-8**

## APPENDIX 5

### INITIAL NEW MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the church's knowledge of spiritual gifts and level of current volunteer involvement. The research is being conducted by Jay Worthington for the purpose of competition of a Doctorate in Ministry. In this research you will share your opinion on several questions. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

6. What is your age range?
  - 20-30 **(0%)**
  - 30-40 **(28%)**
  - 40-50 **(43%)**
  - 50-60 **(0%)**
  - 60+ **(28%)**
  
7. How long did you attend as a guest before you officially joined?
  - 1 month **(0%)**
  - 2 to 4 months **(86%)**
  - 6 months to 1 yr **(14%)**
  - +1 year **(0%)**
  
8. How long do you think it will be before you take on a volunteer position within the church?
  - 1 month **(43%)**
  - 2 to 4 months **(29%)**
  - 6 months to 1 yr **(14%)**
  - +1 year **(14%)**
  - Not Plan To **(0%)**
  
4. What are the top two reasons that keep you from becoming involved in a volunteer position(s): (circle two)
  - (33%)** Have not been personally asked
  - (22%)** Don't feel I am spiritually mature enough
  - (22%)** Don't feel I have been a member long enough
  - (11%)** Don't feel I am are qualified
  - (11%)** Don't have adequate training

- (0%) Not sure I am that committed to the church
- (0%) Don't think I am needed
- (0%) Too busy with activities outside the church
- (0%) Don't feel I should have to because the church has paid pastors already

5. How anxious are you about taking on volunteer positions here at the church?

Very Anxious 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – **5** – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10 Not Anxious At All  
(5.71)

6. Do you know your primary and secondary spiritual gifts?

Yes (29%) / No (71%)

a. Primary: **Teaching**

b. Secondary: **Giving/Leadership**

**For each question circle the corresponding number that most closely relates to your opinion on the issue using the following scale.**

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10  
Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

7. The Bible teaches that every Christians should be serving in the church somewhere. **7**

8. Service in the church is meant for the spiritually mature believer. **4**

9. The growth of a church is directly related to how many of its members are volunteering within the church. **7**

*If you are not currently serving in a volunteer position(s) please skip questions 12 through 14*

10. When I started my first volunteer position in church I was anxious about serving. **5**

11. After serving in my first volunteer position for a few months my anxiety level decreased greatly. **5.6**

12. I received adequate training for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **5.6**

13. I received adequate ongoing support for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **7**

14. I receive adequate encouragement for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **7**

## APPENDIX 6

### FINAL NEW MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the church's knowledge of spiritual gifts and level of current volunteer involvement. The research is being conducted by Jay Worthington for the purpose of completion of a Doctorate in Ministry. In this research you will share your opinion on several questions. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

1. What is your age range?  
20-30      30-40 **(25%)**    40-50 **(75%)**      50-60      60+
2. How long did you attend as a guest before you officially joined?  
-1 month    2 to 5 months **(75%)**    6 months to 1 yr **(25%)**    +1 year
3. Do you know your primary and secondary spiritual gifts? YES **(100%)** / NO
  - a. Primary: Admin., Hospitality, Serving, Teaching
  - b. Secondary: Mercy, Helping, Leadership

**For each question circle the corresponding number that most closely relates to your opinion on the issue using the following scale.**

4. The Bible teaches that every Christian should be serving in the church somewhere.  
1    -    2    -    3    -    4    -    5    -    6    -    7    -    8    **(8.5)**    9    -    10  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree      Uncertain      Agree      Strongly Agree

1. Service in the church is meant for the spiritually mature believer.  
1    -    2    -    3    **(3.5)**    4    -    5    -    6    -    7    -    8    -    9    -    10  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree      Uncertain      Agree      Strongly Agree

2. The growth of a church is directly related to how many of its members are volunteering within the church. **7**  
 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 **(7.25)** 8 – 9 – 10  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

*If you are not currently serving in a volunteer position(s) please skip questions 12 through 14*

3. When I started my first volunteer position in church I was anxious about serving.  
 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 **(5.0)** 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

4. After serving in my first volunteer position for a few months my anxiety level decreased greatly.  
 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 **(7.33)** 8 – 9 – 10  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

5. I received adequate training for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church.  
 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 **(9.0)** 10  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

6. I received adequate ongoing support for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **7**  
 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 **(9.0)** 10  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

7. I receive adequate encouragement for the volunteer position(s) I currently have in the church. **7**  
 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 **(9.0)** 10  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

## APPENDIX 7

### THREE-DAY CLASS OUTLINE

#### **DAY ONE – (2:30min)**

##### **INTRO (10min)**

Opening: (5min)

Beginning The Journey: (5min)

- Why is BTJ important?
- What are we going to cover?

##### **WHO WE ARE (1:20min)**

History: (30min)

Beliefs: What we believe (15min)

Beliefs: What we practice (15min)

Beliefs: Who we affiliate with (10min)

Staff: Pastoral Staff (5min)

Staff: Support Staff (5min)

##### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT OF NOONDAY (20min)**

Core Values (20min)

##### **EXECUTIVE PASTOR PRESENTATION (10min)**

##### **SENIOR PASTOR PRESENTATION (10min)**

##### **FELLOWSHIP TIME (20min)**

#### **DAY TWO – (2:30min)**

##### **INTRO (10min)**

Review (10min)

##### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT OF NOONDAY (15min)**

Major programs (10min)

Major events (5min)

Weekly schedule

**WHAT NOONDAY EXPECTS OF IT'S MEMBERS (30min)**

**MINISTRY DESIGN (50min)**

Why Service (15min)

Desires (25min)

Experiences (10min)

**STUDENT PASTOR PRESENTION (10min)**

**SENIOR PASTOR PRESENTATION (10min)**

**FELLOWSHIP TIME (20min)**

**DAY THREE – (2:30min)**

**INTRO (10min)**

Review (10min)

**MINISTRY DESIGN (1:45min)**

Spiritual Gifts (40min)

Individual Style (30min)

Growth Phase (5min)

Natural Abilities (5min)

How It All Fits Together (15min)

Ministry Overview (10min)

**WORSHIP PASTOR PRESENTATION (10min)**

**SENIOR PASTOR PRESENTATION (10min)**

**FELLOWSHIP TIME (20min)**



## APPENDIX 8

### TWO-DAY CLASS OUTLINE

#### **DAY ONE – (2:30min)**

##### **INTRO (10min)**

Opening: (5min)

Beginning The Journey: (5min)

- Why is BTJ important?
- What are we going to cover?

##### **WHO WE ARE (1:20min)**

History: (30min)

Beliefs: What we believe (15min)

Beliefs: What we practice (15min)

Beliefs: Who we affiliate with (10min)

Staff: Pastoral Staff (5min)

Staff: Support Staff (5min)

##### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT OF NOONDAY (20min)**

Core Values (20min)

##### **EXECUTIVE PASTOR PRESENTION (10min)**

##### **SENIOR PASTOR PRESENTION (10min)**

##### **FELLOWSHIP TIME (20min)**

#### **DAY TWO – (2:30min)**

##### **INTRO (5min)**

Review (5min)

##### **WHAT NOONDAY EXPECTS OF IT'S MEMBERS (15min)**

##### **MINISTRY DESIGN (35min)**

Why Service (15min)

Desires (15min)

Experiences (5min)

**MINISTRY DESIGN (1:05min)**

Spiritual Gifts (20min)

Individual Style (15min)

Growth Phase (2min)

Natural Abilities (3min)

How It All Fits Together (15min)

Ministry Overview (10min)

**WORSHIP PASTOR PRESENTION (5min)**

**STUDENT PASTOR PRESENTION (5min)**

**SENIOR PASTOR PRESENTION (5min)**

**FELLOWSHIP TIME (20min)**

## APPENDIX 9

### CLASS TEACHING NOTES

#### **REVIEW (5min)**

#### **WHAT NOONDAY EXPECTS OF IT'S MEMBERS (15min)**

1. Membership
2. Salvation
3. Baptism
4. Personal Growth
5. Stewardship

#### **WHY SERVICE? (15min)**

##### *Student Book Answers*

1.     SERVICE     is the Gospel
  - a. Supporting Scripture:     Matthew 20:26-28
2. The Purpose of Serving
  - a. To     GLORIFY     God
    - i. Supporting Scripture:     1 Peter 4:11
  - b. To     EDIFY     Others
    - i. Supporting Scripture:     Ephesians 4:11-12
  - c. The Focus is     UP     and     OUT    ; never     IN
3. Serving Gives     LIFE     to our     FAITH    
  - a. Supporting Scripture:     James 2:14-17

(5min) Service is the Gospel

a. Disciple's Mom embarrassing

a. Mom embarrassing you? Well we see in scripture that moms have been this way long before us. Why even the disciples moms did the same thing.

We see it in Mt 20

1. Can you imagine their embarrassment. But Jesus responds with a profound truth.
2. Mt 20:26 -28
  - a. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, **27** and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. **28** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

b. Service is the Gospel

(3min) The purpose of serving

a. To Glorify God

i. 1 Peter 4:11

1. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

b. To Edify Others

i. Eph 4:11-12

1. Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. **12** Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

c. The focus is up and out...never in

i. God knows our hearts and that He needed to help us keep our focus up and out.

ii. This is how to avoid burnout

1. When the focus is not on us we are invigorated by our service, when it is on us...or the results...it is draining.

(3min) Service gives life to our faith

a. Def Quickening: to revive; restore life to

i. James 2:14-17

1. **14**What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? **15**Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. **16**If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? **17**In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

(3min) Today

a. Your DESIGN for ministry

## **DESIRES (15min)**

### ***(5min) – [VIDEO] – Passions***

#### *Student Book Answers*

1. “Desires”, “A **GOD GIVEN** passion that **COMPELS** us to make a **DIFFERENCE** in a **CERTAIN** area.”
  - a. Psalm 37:3-5: “Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the **DESIRES** of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this.”
  - b. Galatians 1:15-16 “But when God, who **SET ME APART** from **BIRTH** and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles.”
  - c. Ephesians 2:10 “For we are God's workmanship, **CREATED** in Christ Jesus to do **GOOD WORKS**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

#### **(3min) Desire Defined**

- a. A working definition of “Desire” is.... A God given passion that compels us to make a difference in a certain area. This Definition has three major components: it is God given, it makes a difference, it is in a certain area. Because of the presence of our “sin” nature we are capable of both good and bad desires. Today we are speaking of those desires, which are godly. Not only are they God given, but they compel us to make a difference, in a certain area.
- b. Desire has also been described by Bob Buford in *Halftime: Moving from Success to Significance* as “the fuel of life. It is the great source of energy and drive. It is what causes us to explore new vistas, develop new relationships, and seek solutions to perplexing problems.”
- c. Rick Warren writes that we each have a unique heartbeat that races when we think about certain subjects, activities, or circumstances that interest us. These reveal the nature of our heart...and are clues to where we should be serving.

#### **(5min) Scriptures**

- a. Psalm 37:3-5: Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:
  - i. Note that it is God who will give us our desires, not the things we already desire, but he will give us new desires that correspond to his will.
- b. Galatians 1:15-16: But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man
  - i. Note that Paul is saying that his desire to reach the Gentiles for Christ was set apart in him at birth. It was knit into his being by God.

- c. Ephesians 2:10: For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
  - i. Our desires are created in us for action, to do good works.

**EXPERINCES (5min)**

(5min) Biblical Examples

- a. God always works through human agents. He has uniquely created them and therefore can uniquely use all aspects of their lives for his glory.
- b. Romans 8:28 “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”
  - i. “ALL THINGS” We so often use this verse to talk about the bad or tough times, but all things is all things, our work, education, hobbies, life.
- c. Biblical Examples
  - i. Academic – Paul’s long study as a Pharisee gave him many inroads in his travels.
  - ii. Vocational – David never through twice about his years tending sheep until he had to use a sling to take down a giant.
  - iii. Life – Joseph and all his hardships.
  - iv. Total - Even in Christ we see his years as a carpenter and years walking throughout the holy land giving him the physical strength he needed to endure the cross.

**SPRITUAL GIFTS (20min)**

*Student Book Answers*

1. *Definitions*
2. *Key Scriptures: (what does each passage highlight about gifts?)*
  - a. (1 Corinthians 12:7) Each believer is given at least one gift.
  - b. (1 Corinthians 12:11) The Holy Spirit determines who receives which gifts.
  - c. (1 Corinthians 12:21-26) Each gift is equally valuable.
  - d. (Ephesians 4:11-12) We are to use our gifts to serve others for the benefit of the body.
  - e. (1 Peter 4:10) We are commanded to use our gifts.
  - f. (Ephesians 4:13) Exercising our gifts will help us develop spiritual maturity.
3. *Common PROBLEMS*
  - a. OVER evaluation
  - b. UNDER evaluation
  - c. *Are not USED*
    - i. *Supporting Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 13:1-3
    - ii. *Supporting Scripture:* Philippians 2:3-4

(5min) Definitions

- a. Ask your class how they would define a Spiritual Gift.
- b. After a few responses share the following definitions from modern pastors and

authors:

- i. Ken Hemphill defines a spiritual gift as “an individual manifestation of grace from the Father that enables you to serve Him and thus play a vital role in His plan for the redemption of the world.”
  - ii. Peter Wagner defines a spiritual gift as “a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ according to God’s grace for use within the context of the Body.”
  - iii. Gene Wilkes like to use this definition: "A spiritual gift is an expression of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers which empowers them to serve the body of Christ, the church."
- c. All of these are good definitions but we need to go to the Bible to see how it would define a spiritual gift. Have a class member read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. What are some things mentioned here by Paul that are the same as or are different from the definitions we came up with or just heard?

#### (5min) Biblical Understanding

- a. Pass out slips of paper with the following scriptures on them. Then ask learners to read their scriptures one at a time and have the group discuss what can be learned. Be sure to bring the discussion back to the point listed below.
  - i. (1 Corinthians 12:7) Each believer is given at least one gift.
  - ii. (1 Corinthians 12:11) The Holy Spirit determines who receives which gifts.
  - iii. (1 Corinthians 12:21-26) Each gift is equally valuable.
  - iv. (Ephesians 4:11-12) We are to use our gifts to serve others for the benefit of the body.
  - v. (1 Peter 4:10) We are commanded to use our gifts.
  - vi. (Ephesians 4:13) Exercising our gifts will help us develop spiritual maturity.

#### (4min) Common Problems

- a. Spiritual gifts seem to create two distinct problems. The first is that of "over-evaluation," which results in spiritual pride, arrogance, and disunity.
  - i. Over-evaluation is the result of someone seeing their gift as a sign of spiritual value. When Paul addressed the matter of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:1-4, he substituted the word "charismata" for the Corinthian term "pneumatika." Pneumatika comes from the Greek word "pneuma," meaning "spirit." The Corinthians preferred this term because they believed that the gifts "proved" that they were spiritual persons (pneumatikon). Paul prefers the term charismata from the root "charis," meaning "grace." Here's the primary point: gifts tell us nothing about the possessor but everything about the giver. Since all gifts are the expression of God's grace, why would anyone become arrogant?
    1. Analogy for a hammer, just examining it and researching it and not using it.
- b. The second problem is under-evaluation.
  - i. This is seen when a person concludes that they have no gift and thus they

sit on the sidelines, never getting involved in the Kingdom activity of the church. Some studies indicate that less than 25 percent of the members of the average evangelical church are involved in any meaningful way in the ministry of their church. Under-evaluation is sinful because it denies the clear teaching of God's Word and it deprives the church of the services of gifted members.

1. Getting a hammer and then trying to use it to saw a board.
- c. Paul's antidote to both problems is the same – "Think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one" (Romans 12:3). Any Christian who fails to discover and utilize his or her gift in service to or through the church sins against the King and weakens His body, the church.
- d. The third problem is lack of use.
  - i. Any gift that's left unopened or is disregarded is useless. God gives us specific spiritual gifts as the primary avenue for Him to use us in His church to bless others. Every Christian should watch for opportunities to minister to others, to use their gifts as a blessing and an encouragement to others. Even the newest Christian can serve others. Spiritual gifts are not meant to draw attention to ourselves. God gives them so we can bless and build up others. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, Paul basically says, "If I have all the gifts but do not have love, I am nothing." Conceit, pride, and selfish motives will cancel out the blessing your gift was meant to be.
    1. If others are not encouraged, honored, built-up, strengthened, equipped, or edified through your gift, you may be serving in the wrong ministry or misdirecting your efforts.
    2. Philippians 2:3-4 challenges us to "do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look out not only for his own interest, but also for the interests of others."

#### (6min) Gifts Overview

- a. Have everyone review the scoring of his or her spiritual gifts tests.
- b. Go through the twelve spiritual gifts one at a time. Read the descriptions then ask who scored high in that gift.

### **INDIVIDUAL STYLE**

#### *Student Book Answers*

#### *1. Truths about Personality*

- a. God GIVES us our personality
  - i. Jeremiah 1:5 – Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you.
  - ii. Isaiah 44:2 – Thus says the Lord who made you and formed you in the womb

#### (5min) Truths about Personality



- a. God **FORMED** our personality *The Bible goes into great detail about God knowing us and forming us before we were even born. Therefore, our personality comes from the very hand of God.*
  - i. Jeremiah **1:5**– Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you.
  - ii. Isaiah **44:2**– Thus says the Lord who made you and formed you in the womb

(2min) – Score Test

(5min) – Explain types

**Lions (A on test sheet)** may be a little bossy sometimes, but that's okay... they make great leaders that are driven by what they believe in, aren't afraid of a challenge, and won't give up without a fight. Lions tend to be reliable friends and great parents.

**Otters (B on test sheet)** are fun-loving, spontaneous creatures. Always optimistic, otters can sometimes overlook important details or move at a pace that's a little too fast for everyone to keep up with. They aren't usually into details, and may have a problem with procrastinating. However, otters are very social and have a great love for people. They may be very charismatic and have lots of friends.

**Golden retrievers (C on test sheet)** appreciate the value of a close relationship, and can deal with commitment. You're thoughtful, nurturing and tolerant... people know that they can go to you if they need to be comforted. However, your caring nature may make it difficult to say no, and your sensitivity can cause you to get hurt a lot. Golden Retrievers are very adaptable, compassionate, and great team players.

**Beavers (D on test sheet)** tend to be intellectually busy, always questioning why things are the way they are, and how stuff works. You think logically, and tend to be less emotional. You may be very organized, putting things where you know you'll be able to find them later, or use an "inner filing system" to record experiences. Beavers like to take things apart... and take people apart as well, making them some of the toughest critics. They set high standards for others, and themselves

(5min) – Guess Staff

### **GROWTH PHASE**

Nothing hard here. In our spiritual lives we are all somewhere along the spectrum from lost to Christ like. Where are you on that journey.

### **NATURAL ABILITIES**

This is simply the “what have we forgotten” section of the design. As we talked about with Experiences, God uses ALL things for his glory. Sometimes even the smallest things

like a hobby of sewing. Our gifted hands ministry is making me holders for the preschool area curriculum books. You too may have some random hobby, or skill that has yet to be listed.

## **HOW IT ALL FITS TOGETHER**

### *Student Handout Answers*

1. Keys to FULLFILLING and EFFECTIVE service

- a. FOCUS is key
  - i. Supporting Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-6
- b. UNITY is key
  - i. Supporting Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:20-26
  - ii. SYNERGY verses ANTAGONISM
- c. MOTIVATION is key
  - i. Supporting Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3
  - ii. SERVILITY verses SERVANTHOOD

(2min) How it all fits together

- a. It is not enough to know and work, we believe in God's grace...not our works. So there are a few keys to fulfilling and effective service.
- b. History of Corinthian Church
  - i. Very carnal city – sent Paul a letter about marriage and meat offered to idols.
  - ii. Paul addresses their division, their questions and then their worship, focusing that on their gifts/service.
  - iii. The Corinthian church was in the throws of this. By examining Paul's response to them we can see these keys.

(4min) Focus is key

- a. 1 Cor 12:4-6
  - i. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. **5** There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. **6** God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.

(4min) Unity is key

- a. 1 Cor 12:20-21 & 25-26
  - i. Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. **21** The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you."
  - ii. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. **26** If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.
- b. Synergy vs Antagonism
  - i. Synergy def = the whole is greater than the sum of it's parts.
  - ii. Hoarse pulling story
    1. Belgian or Clydesdale – 6 ½ feet tall 2,000lbs

- 2. One can pull about 4 tons, Two can pull about 22 tons
  - iii. Opposite is Antagonism = the whole is less than the sum of it's parts
- (4min) Motivation is Key
- a. 1 Cor 13:1-3
    - i. **1** If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. **2** If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. **3** If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.
    - ii. Why does the famous love chapter follow a discussion of service within the body?
  - b. Our service must always be motivated by love. Love for God and love for each other.
  - c. Servility vs Servanthood
    - i. Servility def = of or befitting a slave or a menial position & meanly or cravenly submissive
    - ii. Servanthood def = sacrificial love
3. Mt 20:28
- a. **28** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

### **MINSITRY OVERVIEW**

(5min) Why this is important

- 1. This helps us to get you placed in just the right position in the church
  - a. Same Gift/Diff Passion
    - i. Same gifts but different desires.
    - ii. Same desires but different gifts.
- 2. Take up Exit Survey
  - a. PLEASE DON'T FORGET THE BACK OF THE COLORED SHEET
- 3. Schedule individual follow times
  - a. I will want 20min of your time some time this coming week. In person or over the phone. You need to set that up with me before you leave.

### **PASTOR PRESENTATIONS (15min)**

### **FELLOWSHIP TIME (20min)**

## APPENDIX 10

### CLASS HOMEWORK PACKET

I know what you are thinking... “Seriously, homework for a church membership class?” Well, yes, but there is a good reason. In the second session of our Beginning the Journey class we will be talking about service and will look at how God has uniquely designed you for a special ministry spot within His church here at Noonday. To help us determine your DESIGN we will be discovering things like your personality and spiritual gifts. This will be accomplished by using the assessment tools you have as homework.

By filling out these assessments this week on your own, everyone will be prepared for the next session. Doing the work at home enables us to do the new members class in two weeks rather than three. So, simply follow the instructions and if you have any questions please call the church office.

This homework will help you identify how you have been designed by God for ministry within His church. To do this you will fill out a D.E.S.I.G.N. profile located on page 13 of this packet. This form is for you to use while doing your homework. Once you are done, the colored form paper clipped to the back of this packet will be filled out and turned in next week.

#### **STEP ONE: PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Start by placing your name at the top of the sheet and then indicating your age category.

#### **STEP TWO: D = DESIRES**

Your desires or passions are the things in life that you feel very deeply about - the things that motivate you to action. On pages 5 and 6 are some questions to help you think about your passions and help you identify your top two. Use these questions to help fill in your top Ministry and Personal passions under the D section on the DESIGN profile (page 13).

#### **STEP THREE: E = EXPERIENCES**

Your life experiences can be a very valuable resource for the church. For example, if you were an electrician for 20 years, then the next time we have electrical projects you could donate labor or give advice. In this section you will fill in your educational background and work/vocational experience. In addition, you can share any life or volunteer

experiences that you think would be helpful for us to know. For example, a life experience could be that you grew up in a foreign country.

#### **STEP FOUR: S = SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

The Bible teaches that every believer is given a special talent/gift from God to be used in serving the church. The spiritual gifts section is the longest in the homework, but it is also the most important. There are 72 questions located on pages 8 through 10. Follow the instructions on page 7 and record your answers to each question under the corresponding number on page 11. After you have completed all the questions, add the scores you entered down each column to get a total score for that letter. For example, to get a score for column A, add your score in the first box of the first row with the first box in the second row, then add that number with the first box in the third row and so on. Record the column score in the bottom row where indicated. Then on your DESIGN profile, list the letter with the highest score under primary and the letter with the second highest score under secondary. In the next class we will tell you what gift each letter represents.

#### **STEP FIVE: I = INDIVIDUAL STYLE**

Your individual style is your personality type. Though we are all very different from one another, there are common personality types that we all share, i.e. some people are outgoing, while others are introverted. This section will help you identify your personality type. On page 12 there are four boxes; each box has a column of numbers with a word or phrase on either side of that number. To complete the assessment, read the phrase on each side of a number, if EITHER of the two statements describes you or you think others would use it to describe you, circle the number. Again it does not need to be both, just one or the other. Once you have completed each of the four boxes stop. We will score the test together in class.

#### **STEP SIX: I = GROWTH PHASE**

This is a quick way to reflect on where you are in your spiritual journey. We are all on a journey to become more like Christ. Some of us have been on that journey longer and/or have been blessed enough to have great churches and mentors who have invested in us. Others of us may have only been a Christian for a short time, or may have been away from the faith for a season. For this section on your DESIGN sheet simply circle one of the three options.

#### **STEP SEVEN: N = NATURAL ABILITIES**

Singing is not a spiritual gift, but it is a natural talent that can be a great enhancement to a worship service. In this final section simply list any natural abilities or special talents that you possess. There are no right or wrong answers here. Anything from baking to coaching sports teams can be listed here.

**FINAL STEP**

Now you are done. Simply transfer your final answers to the green colored DESIGN profile sheet at the back of the packet and bring the ENTIRE packet to the next class.

## Passion Assessment

The people I would like to help the most are: (circle three to five)

|                |                        |                     |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Infants        | Preschoolers           | Elementary Children |
| Preteens       | Middle Schoolers       | High Schoolers      |
| Teen Moms      | Single Parents         | College Students    |
| Divorced       | Widowed                | Singles             |
| Young Marrieds | Parents                | Empty Nesters       |
| Homebound      | Disabled               | Prisoners           |
| Hospitalized   | Nursing Home Residents | Median Adults       |
| Women          | Senior Adults          | Other:              |

Causes that I feel strongly about are: (circle three to five)

|            |              |                        |
|------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Child care | Discipleship | Politics               |
| Violence   | Injustice    | Local Missions         |
| Education  | Addictions   | International Missions |
| Economics  | Technology   | Reaching the Lost      |
| Poverty    | Family       | Hunger                 |
| Other:     |              |                        |

At the end of my life, I'd love to be able to look back and know that I'd done something about:

If someone were to mention your name to a group of your friends, what would they say you were really interested in or passionate about?

What conversation would keep you talking late into the night?

List the top three most impacting/meaningful experiences of your life and then the main reason why it was meaningful:

| Experiences | Reason |
|-------------|--------|
|-------------|--------|

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Based on these questions and your experiences, what would you say are your top two passions?

## Spiritual Gifts Inventory

This spiritual gift profile is designed to assist you in identifying your strengths as specifically relating to ministry and service in the local church. Its primary purpose is to enable you to pinpoint areas of ministry for which you are most likely gifted. It is not designed to be an exhaustive analysis of spiritual gifts, but rather to highlight areas of strength based on what you feel motivates you spiritually. Our church staff will gladly recommend printed materials that will assist you in further exploring your gifts and strengths.

You will fill in a “score” on the answer sheet in the corresponding box to the statement number based on the following scoring system:

| <u>Score</u> | <u>How this Statement Describes Me</u> |
|--------------|--|
| 0            | I am seldom or never this way          |
| 1            | I am usually not this way              |
| 2            | I am this way some of the time         |
| 3            | I am this way most or all of the time  |

Keep in mind when you score yourself that most of these are desirable traits for a Christian to have, and giving yourself a 0 or 1 on a particular trait does not mean that you are unspiritual, but rather that it is not a primary motivating factor for you as an individual.

Also keep in mind that the church will not be looking at your individual answers to particular questions, but rather using the overall information to highlight areas in which you are especially gifted and motivated. Once your primary areas of ministry strength are identified, we can then use this information to identify specific service opportunities which may be of interest to you.

1. I like to organize and plan.
2. I want to spend time with unbelievers so I can share my faith.
3. I enjoy being asked to share my advice or being an encouragement to others.
4. It is important to me that money I give to the church is used as effectively as possible.
5. I am more strongly motivated by the idea of meeting a need than performing a task.
6. I enjoy using my home to minister to others.
7. I can easily get others to complete a ministry project.
8. Those who are in distress or elated seem drawn to me.



9. I seem to be able to notice sin before others are aware of it.
10. Routine work for church that others find tedious is enjoyable for me.
11. I have a burden to disciple others so that they can help one another .
12. I am able to instruct others in the exact meaning of words and passages in Scripture.
13. I finish projects and make decisions with great speed.
14. I feel that the most important task given to Christians is witnessing.
15. I give practical, step-by-step advice to those in need.
16. I watch my finances closely so that I can give freely to God's work.
17. I prefer to be led by others.
18. Guests say they feel comfortable in my home.
19. Often groups in which I am involved look to me to lead them.
20. I enjoy doing kind deeds for people who are unable to reciprocate.
21. I am compelled to unmask sin in other people.
22. I enjoy doing repetitive tasks for the glory of God.
23. I feel the need to protect those whom I disciple from enemies of Christ.
24. I have the ability to make difficult passages understandable.
25. I enjoy setting goals and then making plans to meet those goals.
26. I feel an urgency that a decision for Christ is made when I witness to someone.
27. I am more interested in studying passages of Scripture with practical applications than deep theological truth.
28. It is fun for me to give freely because I love God.
29. I rapidly meet the needs of others for help.
30. I have the ability to make strangers feel at ease.
31. I have the ability to make decisions rapidly and stand by them.

32. I like encouraging those in hospitals and homes for the aged by visiting them.
33. I boldly tell others about evils in our government and other worldly systems.
34. I like being asked to do jobs at church.
35. I deny myself in order to be there for weak or new Christians.
36. Others have expressed to me that I have assisted them in learning Biblical truth in a meaningful way.
37. I volunteer to organize others when I sense a lack of organization.
38. I am drawn to unbelievers because I want to win them to Christ.
39. Teaching that can't be applied bothers me.
40. I am willing to do without in order to give money for God's kingdom.
41. I enjoy helping those in leadership by completing some of their smaller tasks so that they can minister.
42. I enjoy giving food and lodging to those who need it.
43. I adapt my guidance easily to fit the maturity level of those working for me.
44. I want to be a comfort to Christians who are sick or in the midst of a distress.
45. I enjoy being used by God to teach and caution large groups of believers.
46. I like projects which require a hands-on approach.
47. I care more about relationships than tasks.
48. I enjoy spending a lot of time studying the Bible so I can share these truths with others.
49. I thrive on organizing people, ideas and resources to improve the efficiency of a ministry.
50. I have an overwhelming desire to share with unbelievers.
51. I like assisting others in resolving difficult questions in their lives.
52. I notice when others have a material or financial need.

53. I find contentment in helping someone who can use my abilities.
54. I like having people visit my house.
55. If a group doesn't have a leader, I will lead it.
56. I like doing special things for people who are sick or having difficulties.
57. I desire for the audience to be convicted after I proclaim God's word.
58. I consider myself a task-oriented person.
59. I like being given the job of disciplining a group of believers.
60. I find contentment studying God's Word and communicating my understanding to others.
61. I have put into place effective plans to meet group goals.
62. I enjoy meeting non-Christians, even total strangers.
63. I enjoy assisting others in the midst of problems by giving them practical advice.
64. I trust that God will meet all my needs so that I can give sacrificially a portion of all my income.
65. I like helping others strictly for the need I feel I meet, not because I expect something in return.
66. I enjoy welcoming guests and making them feel comfortable and involved.
67. I have the ability to help groups of all sizes in making decisions.
68. I am greatly concerned with being a comfort to others.
69. I want my instructing to cause others to understand what God is saying and to respond.
70. I prefer following rather than leading.
71. I desire to care for the spiritual well-being of a group of Christians over an extended time.
72. I prefer to compile my own material instead of using another teachers' material for presentation.

Place a "score" in the box below each question number based on the following criteria:

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | H  | I  | J  | K  | L  |
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

**Gary Smalley**  
**Personality Assessment**

*Go through the words in the following lists and circle every NUMBER where either or both words would be used to describe you or that other have used to describe you*

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A</b></p> <p>Likes Having Authority 1 Too Direct or Demanding<br/>         Takes Charge 2 Pushy<br/>         Determined 3 Overbearing<br/>         Confident 4 Cocky<br/>         Firm 5 Unyielding<br/>         Enterprising 6 Takes Big Risks<br/>         Competitive 7 Cold Blooded<br/>         Enjoys Challenges 8 Avoids Relationships<br/>         Problem Solver 9 Too Busy<br/>         Productive 10 Overlooks Feelings<br/>         Bold 11 Insensitive<br/>         Purposeful 12 Workaholic<br/>         Decision Maker 13 Unthoughtfull of Others<br/>         Adventurous 14 Impulsive<br/>         Strong Willed 15 Stubborn<br/>         Independent 16 Avoids People<br/>         Controlling 17 Bossy<br/>         Persistent 18 Inflexible<br/>         Action Oriented 19 Unyielding</p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>B</b></p> <p>Enthusiastic 1 Overbearing<br/>         Takes Risks 2 Dangerous and Foolish<br/>         Visionary 3 Daydreamer<br/>         Motivator 4 Manipulator<br/>         Energetic 5 Impatient<br/>         Very Verbal 6 Attacks Under Pressure<br/>         Promoter 7 Exaggerates<br/>         Friendly 8 Shallow Relationships<br/>         Enjoys Popularity 9 Too Showy<br/>         Fun Loving 10 Too Flippant/Not Serious<br/>         Like Variety 11 Too Scattered<br/>         Spontaneous 12 Not Focused<br/>         Enjoys Change 13 Lacks Follow Through<br/>         Creative 14 Avoids Details<br/>         Group Oriented 15 Bored with "Process"<br/>         Optimistic 16 Doesn't See Details<br/>         Initiator 17 Pushy<br/>         Infectious Laughter 18 Obnoxious<br/>         Inspirational 19 Phony</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>C</b></p> <p>Sensitive Feelings 1 Easily Hurt<br/>         Loyal 2 Misses Opportunities<br/>         Calm 3 Lacks Enthusiasm<br/>         Nondemanding 4 Weakling / Pushover<br/>         Avoids Confrontation 5 Misses Honest Intimacy<br/>         Enjoys Routine 6 Stays in Rut<br/>         Dislikes Change 7 Not Spontaneous<br/>         Warm and Relational 8 Fewer Deep Friends<br/>         Gives In 9 Co-Dependent<br/>         Accommodating 10 Indecisive<br/>         Cautions Humor 11 Overly Cautious<br/>         Adaptable 12 Loses Identity<br/>         Sympathetic 13 Holds on to Others Hurts<br/>         Thoughtful 14 Can be Taken Advantage of<br/>         Nurturing 15 Ears Get Smashed<br/>         Patient 16 Crowed out by Others<br/>         Tolerant 17 Weaker Convictions<br/>         Good Listener 18 Attracted to Hurting People<br/>         Peacemaker 19 Holds Personal Hurts Inside</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>D</b></p> <p>Reads All Instructions 1 Afraid to Break Rules<br/>         Accurate 2 Too Critical<br/>         Consistent 3 Lacks Spontaneity<br/>         Controlled 4 Too Serious<br/>         Reserved 5 Stuffy<br/>         Predictable 6 Lacks Variety<br/>         Practical 7 Not Adventurous<br/>         Orderly 8 Rigid<br/>         Factual 9 Picky<br/>         Conscientious 10 Inflexible<br/>         Perfectionist 11 Controlling<br/>         Discerning 12 Negative to New Opinions<br/>         Detailed 13 Rarely Finishes Projects<br/>         Analytical 14 Losses Overview<br/>         Inquisitive 15 Smothering<br/>         Precise 16 Strict<br/>         Persistent 17 Pushy<br/>         Scheduled 18 Boring<br/>         Sensitive 19 Stubborn</p>   |

*Count up the number of numbers circled in each block double that number and then chart it below*

| A     | B     | C     | D     |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |
| 40    |       |       | 40    |
| 35    |       |       | 35    |
| 30    |       |       | 30    |
| 25    |       |       | 25    |
| 20    |       |       | 20    |
| 15    |       |       | 15    |
| 10    |       |       | 10    |
| 5     |       |       | 5     |
| 0     |       |       | 0     |

**Noonday Baptist Church**  
Continuing The Journey  
*Exit Survey*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: 10-18      19-24      25-34      35-44      45-55      56+

How are you DESIGNED for ministry?

D: Desires –

Ministry Passions:

\_\_\_\_\_

Personal Passions:

\_\_\_\_\_

E: Experiences –

Academic Degrees:

\_\_\_\_\_

Vocational History:

\_\_\_\_\_

Life Experiences:

\_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Experiences:

\_\_\_\_\_

S: Spiritual Gifts –

Primary: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

I: Individual Style –

Primary Personality: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Personality: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

G: Growth Phase in my spiritual walk –

Are you: (Circle one)

A new believer

An older believer that has never been discipled

An older believer that has been discipled

N: Natural Abilities –

Things you are good at: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ABSTRACT

### ASSIMILATING NEW MEMBERS BY CONNECTING THEM WITH SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES AT NOONDAY BAPTIST CHURCH MARIETTA, GEORGIA

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The project explores increasing retention of new members by helping them become active in service within their church. The basic premise is as members become involved in volunteer positions within the church, they will become more connected.

Chapter 1 details the purpose, goals and ministry context of the project. Chapter 2 examines the biblical foundation for the project using 1 Corinthians 12 as the focal passage, but also examining Matthew 20:26-28, Ephesians 4:7-13, and 1 Peter 4:10-11. These texts emphasize the importance of church members serving in the church and the importance of church leaders to equip members for that service.

Chapter 3 studies theoretical and sociological issues that are pertinent to the project. This chapter focuses on different ways that service increases a member's ownership and belonging in a church.

In chapter 4 a detail account of the fifteen-week project is given in a week-by-week format. Chapter 5 is a critical evaluation of the entire project.

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