

Footnotes from the Foothills



November 2011

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From Dennis' Desk

There once was a town where a fireman lived. Everyone liked the fireman because he was a nice guy. He made it a habit to be gentle and kind, which was unusual for a fireman, who were supposed to be tough.

There was a fire one day, and the fireman charged to the scene of the fire with his fellow firemen and heavy equipment. As they came toward the fire, much to their surprise and chagrin, they encountered between themselves and the flames about two hundred townspeople. And each of them was standing there with a water pistol, aiming at the fire, going squirt, squirt, squirt, squirt.

The fireman asked, "What's going on here?" A spokesperson for the group turned and said, "Well, we all appreciate this wonderful work you're doing in our community, and each of us has come to contribute in some small way to your work." Squirt, squirt.

The fireman said, "I don't get it. You are all crazy!" "Oh we realize that we all could do more, couldn't we, folks?" said the spokesperson. "Most definitely," everyone said, "But we just wanted to offer this token of our support." Squirt, squirt.

"But you don't know what you're doing!" shouted the fireman.

"True, but you have to appreciate the fact that everyone is willing to offer what little help they can," said the spokesperson. And everyone said, "Amen!" and went squirt, squirt as the building continued to burn to the ground.

At that, the fireman shouted, "Everyone get out of the way! This is no picnic, this is a fire, and a fire doesn't require well-meaning people who come to make small contributions. A fire is a place where people come to give their lives."

Sometimes our churches are a lot like those people. "We all appreciate the work you're doing pastor." Squirt, squirt.

"Sure, I'll serve on that committee, but I may not be able to go to many of the meetings." Squirt, squirt.

"We really support all the work of the church and appreciate what's going on—here's a couple of dollars to help out." Squirt, squirt.

"Oh, I know we only make it to worship once or twice a month, but we really get a lot out of it when we go." Squirt, squirt.

And then we hear the heavenly fireman say, "Will you please get out of here! What I am looking for are disciples who are radically committed and willing to die for the sake of the gospel!"

Following Jesus means being willing to follow Him to the cross. My dream is that we can go out together and put out some real fires. Squirt, squirt.

Dennis

Let Freedom Ring!

Let those Christmas Bells Ring!

Letting the Freedom of Knowing Jesus
Christ Ring Out Loud To the
Church of the Lily of the Valley in
Casillas, Mexico



Help us erect a church bell so our sister Church in Mexico may
fill the mountains with the peal of The Church at work!

We are asking every church to take up a special Christmas
offering to help us with this project.

Let Freedom Ring!



Bishop Bruce Ough is coming to the Foothills District on **December 5**, 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for a **Pastor's Day Apart** at the New Hope UMC just outside of Logan (9825 Gore Church Road)

Come join us as Bishop Ough leads the Foothills Pastors in a Day-Apart experience in Renewing the Connections that we have together as a Community of Faith.

Lunch will be provided. Please **RSVP** to the District office by **Nov. 30th**



CHARGE CONFERENCE

November 15 Churches: Bremen, Dresden, Gallipolis Grace, Malta, Marietta Christ & Gilman, McArthur, The Plains, New Beginnings/Heath meet at **7:00 p.m. at the Malta UMC** and will be celebrating the **Unbinding the Gospel** with our coaching churches.

Please bring your completed (and voted on!) Charge Conference forms with you. We will collect them at the beginning of our time together. Forms to be turned in include:

- ◆ Minutes
- ◆ Individualized Charge Conference Form (please include Lay Speaker Reports)
- ◆ Individualized Church Officer Form with corrections/additions
- ◆ 1 Breakthrough Goals Card

We look forward to seeing you at your charge conference and pray that this event will be an encouragement to your church and its ministry!

Webmaster Needed

The Foothills District is looking for an individual who would be willing to take over the maintenance of the district website. Our current Webmaster is looking to “retire” from this responsibility, but would be willing to show someone the ropes, so to speak.

If you would be interested in volunteering for this task, please contact Brent at the District Office by phone or e-mail.

Inviting, Welcoming & Involving Young Adults Workshop—November 13

Have you ever wondered why your smaller church can't attract young adults or young families? Have you pondered what you have to do differently to reach them?

A workshop on “*Inviting, Welcoming and Involving Young adults/Young families in the Smaller Church*” will be offered on **November 13th at 3:30 p.m. at the Moxahala UMC**. Pastors and laity in our smaller churches are all invited and encouraged to attend! Please RSVP and let us know how many will be attending from your congregation by calling the District office at 888-868-1225 or e-mail us at office@foothillsdistrict.org.

Early Response Team (ERT) Training - Led by UMCOR Authorized Trainers

This ERT training will provide:

Information and hands-on training so you can assist survivors of natural disaster in their recovery. Upon successful completion of the course and a favorable background check, each participant will receive an UMCOR badge. UMCOR badge allows United Methodist Early Response Teams access to FEMA declared emergency zones.

Dates & Locations: Saturday, November 19, 2011 Georgetown United Methodist Church
217 S. Main Street Georgetown, OH 45121

Cost: \$35.00 (background check included) limited to the first 35 applicants

Time: 8:30 am Check-in and registration opens, 9:00 am Class starts

Register: Online at www.westohioumc.org (click on the red box in the upper right corner labeled “Register for Events”)

More Info: Contact Julie Bassett at 614-844-6200 or jbassett@wocumc.org

Celebrating the Smaller Church In Our District

Little Hocking UMC reaches beyond the walls of the church and into the communities surrounding them every November with a Coat Giveaway. Last year, the church was able to provide coats to 451 people. Each coat contains a scripture placed in the pocket to be found at some later date. The need has grown each year for the coats, but God always provides the coats – some new and some gently used. Last year, He even provided a coat for one of our four-legged friends. This year, the giveaway will be November 4-5th. Along with the coats, the church also provides hats, gloves, boots and clothing. This is an outreach that the church works toward the entire year – from raising funds to purchase coats, to tirelessly looking for good, used coats and to the actual giveaway. This smaller church is making a difference in its community!



Smaller Church Ideas...Connecting with your Community

One smaller church in a more rural area hosted a “Beast Feast” where they invited their friends in the community and specifically unchurched hunters to a potluck meal of dishes based on a wide variety of wild game.

PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR - MARCH 24 & 25, 2012

PASTORAL RETREAT for:

Supply pastors

Part-Time Local Pastors

Pastors serving churches under 50 in worship attendance

Any Lay Person who is thinking about becoming a Pastor someday

Begins March 24th (at 3:30 pm) and ends the 25th (at 11:30 am) in Historic Marietta Ohio

This retreat will provide you with a time to relax, connect with others, reflect on ministry and to be refreshed in the Spirit. Our leader will Brandon O'Brien, author of “The Strategically Small Church”, who will help us understand our calling and role as pastor of a smaller church.

Details will be coming!



West Ohio Conference

Stewardship 101 Developing a Plan to Grow Generous Givers

7:00 pm, Thursday, November 3, 2011

Immanuel UMC, Logan, OH

66 E. Hunter Street

Every church has an opportunity to grow generous stewards with their members and attendees.



Rev. George D. Cooper
Executive Director
Council on Development

However it takes an intentional plan.

- The Need for Growing Generous Stewards
- Brief Biblical Foundation
- Overview Current Giving Patterns
- People want to be Generous but Need Help
- The Long View for Stewardship
- Forming a Local Church Strategy & Suggested Components
- What is the Role of the Finance Committee
- What is the Role of the Pastor

**Every Church is Encouraged to Attend with your Pastor
and Finance/Stewardship persons.**

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Also for your calendar--

Growing Generous Givers Consultation

January, 2012

Led by Joseph Bishman and Dennis Mohler

Time-tested principles for a 12-month Stewardship program guaranteed to make a difference in your church!

SMALL IS BIG! - The Transforming Influence of the Smaller Church

All Pastors and Laity in Smaller Churches are invited!

March 24th (10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Main Speaker- Brandon O'Brien

Workshops: Recapturing Your First Love
Creative & Meaningful Worship
Investing in Spiritual Lay Leaders
Equipping Leaders for a Multi-Site Ministry

Place- Historic Marietta, Ohio

Is God Calling You???

The Foothills District is continually looking for spiritual, lay leaders who are sensing a call into pastoral leadership in our district. It is our desire to create a pool of qualified and trained supply pastors from all over our district who will be ready to step into pastoral leadership when a church is in need of a pastor. If you would be interested in being equipped and trained please call or e-mail Brent at the District office. (watson@foothillsdistrict.org)

We still have several Foothills District T-Shirts available for sale for \$5 each.

We have:

- ⇒ 1 small
- ⇒ 2 Medium
- ⇒ 1 X-Lg

If interested please contact the district office at 888-868-1225 or office@foothillsdistrict.org



Mission Giving

The Foothills District faithfully gives what limited funds we have to mission projects throughout our District. We come alongside our Cooperative Ministries, Local Church Ministries and Community Ministries as an outreach from our local churches. If you would like to be supportive of ministry throughout this region then please consider giving a gift to the Foothills District which is solely designated to Mission Projects within the District. Thank You!

10 Small Church Strategies in a Big Church World

by Nathan Rice

There are countless numbers of websites/blogs out there dedicated to helping churches realize the potential of developing a strategy for effective ministry. Unfortunately, there is a curious shortage of strategies that can be easily implemented by a small church with limited resources.

I can proudly say that I've been a member of the smallest of churches, and visited the largest of churches in my area. There is indeed a sharp distinction between the two, and for good reason. Larger churches have the added luxury of expendable cash and lots of willing volunteers. While this may not always be the case, it certainly is most of the time.

The problem lies in the smaller church's ability to effectively minister to its congregation. Perhaps the pastor has to work another job because of the lack of funds, rendering him unable to adequately prepare, or perhaps the lack of members makes for a lousy, boring, and dull music service. The problem is still the same. As a member of a church like that, you take it upon yourself to search for strategies to help your situation. Unfortunately, all you find is big church people, giving out big church strategies, to help the big church get bigger. While there's nothing wrong with that, it certainly doesn't help you much.

That's why I wanted to write this post. This post is for you smaller churches looking to find a way to make help your little church be more effective in its ability to minister. A worthy goal indeed.

So, without any more rambling from me, here are 10 strategies for small churches:

1. Develop a strategy to minister to both current members, and potential members.

One way to guarantee that your small church stay small, is to only think about, minister to, pray for, or pay attention to your current members. Don't get me wrong, I'm not suggesting you ignore them, but you have to look beyond the needs of just the people in the building, and start looking at the community.

2. Get a website

Hear me out. Some of you may think that this is a big church strategy, but it's not. Web hosts are CHEAP, and most churches CAN afford them. The design part can be a little tricky, but there are many web people out there who would be more than willing to help out. Here's the key though: YOU HAVE TO USE THE WEBSITE!!! Pastors, use the website as a way to connect to those potential members! I'm sick and tired of seeing pastors be lethargic concerning technology!!! YOU need to be the one who pushes the idea! YOU need to be the one who encourages your people to visit the site. YOU need to be the one who organizes programs to promote and utilize the website! If YOU don't do it, who will???

3. Think Smaller — As in Height

The kids are THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT part of your ministry. Spend a lot of time, money and effort on having a good children's program. Make church a place they WANT to be every week. If that means asking Betty, the lady who has been teaching children's church for the last 30 years, to step aside, so be it!!! You have a responsibility to those kids to give them a good foundation. Ever wonder why you have 15 4-12 year-olds, but only have 3 teenagers in your church, and absolutely no 18-30 year olds? Somewhere along the line, they got BORED with church. Use the core group you have now to develop a good group for the future. Trust me, if the kids like church, the parents won't have any choice but to bring them. And for heaven's sake, don't make the kids sit through the regular service. Give them something that THEY WILL ENJOY, and let the grown ups worship in peace!

4. Be willing to make the tough decisions

If that means canceling the Wednesday night service because only a handful of people are coming, GROW A SPINE and do it! If that means standing up to "that family" who tries to run the church, BE A MAN (OR WOMAN) AND DO IT! People WILL follow leadership (more on that later)

5. Utilize your strongest assets

Every church has SOMEONE that has a talent. Maybe your church has a great singer, or a good financial manager, or a great pianist, or a computer geek, or a great manager. Whoever they are and whatever they can do, TAKE ADVANTAGE of it. Find out who has a passion to serve and what their talents are, and develop a relationship with them. Call them into your office and share your vision with them, instill your passion in them, and demonstrate your leadership to them. People naturally respond to passion, vision, and leadership, and when goals are clearly laid out, talented people with passion usually respond IN A BIG WAY!

6. Use media to compensate for lack of resources

If you don't have the greatest singers in the world, use things like videos and soundtracks to open up the service or play

during the offering. We did this for the Christmas Eve service at my dad's church, and it worked wonderfully. However, there is a right way and a wrong way to go about this, so be careful. If you don't have a video projector, just use your P.A. system. The effect won't be quite as dramatic, but it will still work.

7. Teamwork

Pull together a team from your members and brainstorm. What are you planning on preaching next week? RUN IT BY THEM to see if they have some good ideas to add. Let them give you creative ideas to help the message be clearly transmitted. Give them copies of your notes and give them a couple of days to critique it. Using a variety of minds to develop a service will help your church communicate more clearly.

8. Put it on a screen and/or put it in my hand.

Give me something that I can take home and continue to digest through the week. Put the summary and notes (with blanks to fill in) in the handout to encourage involvement during the message. Use perforated cards on the bulletin that can be torn out and given to friends as an invitation to upcoming services.

9. Themed Message series.

I visited [Marathon Church](#) here in the upstate probably over a year ago, and I STILL remember the message. Why? Because the stage was creatively decorated and the pastor came out dressed as a police officer. Like it or not, themed sermons help the audience retain information. You do want them to learn something from your service, don't you?

10. Have lunch with pastors and church planters.

Let some of their passion and vision rub off on you. Unfortunately, many pastors treat the ministry as a competition with the pastor down the road. IT'S NOT! Realize that we all have "special teams" that we are coaching, but we still work for the same "Head Coach". Swallow your pride and pick up the phone. You'll be glad you did.

BONUS #1:

[Perry Noble](#) was kind enough to send me this bit of advice to pass along to you:

"I can speak to the small churches on small budgets who are looking to be creative...because we were that church not too long ago.

The big thing is THINK BIG, START SMALL! No...you can't do with other "big churches" do...but you can do things to make Sunday's more exciting. Creativity does not have to cost a lot of money. It's amazing what can take place with a few dollars and creative minds. I would tell pastors to find creative people in the church and form a team and say, "Here is what I want to communicate...is there any way to REALLY get this point across" and then watch and see what happens."

BONUS #2:

Also, [Steven Furtick](#), pastor of [Elevation Church](#) in Charlotte, NC wrote the following in response to my email:

"Illustration: Have you ever been dressed to the nines for a wedding and had to stop along the way at a gas station? Feels pretty silly to be dressed so nice pumping gas. And it almost feels like you need to explain to everyone: "I'm going to a wedding..." whether they ask or not.

But when you get to where you're going, you'll look great. You'll fit right in.

Church growth is like this. It feels silly sometimes to build structures and systems that accommodate more people than you're currently serving. But you must. In fact, my mentors have told me to structure Elevation like we have twice as many people as we currently do..."

Well, I hope that's helpful to all the smaller churches out there. What are you waiting for?



Handbells Needed

Do you have a set of handbells your church isn't using? Tunnel UMC is looking into starting an adult hand bell choir. If you have a set that is not being used, and your church would be willing to loan them, please contact Pastor, Richard Thomas. You may contact Richard at 740-423-5519 or via e-mail at lifeway731@msn.com.

Leadership Development

The Foothills District is striving to help pastoral and lay leaders of all our churches - large and small - to be the most effective, fruitful leaders they can be. We want to make you aware of the opportunity to give a monetary gift to the District that is designated for Leadership Development. If you believe in helping to raise up spiritual leaders in our region then please consider giving a gift to the Foothills District designated for Leadership Development. Thank you!



Methodist Theological School in Ohio

The [Harding Scholarship Competition](#) is now open to new Fall 2012 students. The nation's most capable students compete each year for the Harding Scholarship, which offers full tuition plus a \$10,000 annual stipend. The Harding scholarship is available to students with a 3.6 undergraduate GPA. The competition is open to all denominations and all master's degree programs.

Students with a 3.0 GPA are eligible to compete for our [Premier Scholarships](#). MTSO offers nearly fifty full tuition scholarships, as well as many partial awards.

Terry Teykl—Nov. 6 at Marysville

The Evangelical Fellowship of West Ohio is sponsoring a workshop on Prayer Evangelism by Terry Teykl. It will be held on November 6th from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm at Marysville United Methodist Church, Marysville OH. This is an event that you will want to attend with as many others from your congregation as possible. Several of us heard Terry at Annual Conference this past June and were moved to stop talking about evangelism and to make it a priority. We have designed this opportunity to share this outstanding speaker with as many of our conference as possible. There is no registration cost or reservations required. A free will offering will be taken. We hope to see you there!

FREE STUFF!

There are many items available from the closure of the Snowville UMC. Please contact the Foothills District office if you are interested in any of the following items:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2 Pump organs and benches | Piano |
| Christian Flag | American Flag |
| 21 Long pews | 1 short pew |
| 2 Golden flower vases | Small Wooden cross |
| Large Wooden cross | Glass cross |
| 2 small advent wreaths | 3 Large altar chairs |
| 2 dividers | 2 sweepers |
| 2 pictures of Jesus | 2 plastic children's chairs |
| Trash can | Easel |
| 20 Old UM Hymnals (red) | |



**FOOTHILLS DISTRICT
UMC**

**“EVERY CHURCH A
MISSION STATION --
EVERY COMMUNITY A
MISSION FIELD”**

PO Box 67
47 Johnson Rd.
The Plains, OH 45780-0067

Phone: 888-868-1225
Fax: 740-797-4582
E-mail: office@foothillsdistrict.org

PRAYER CONCERNS:

Sherry Brower, wife of Rev. Rod Brower
Sherry Goodwin, wife of Rev. Gene Goodwin
Spring Young, wife of Rev. David Young
Rev. Bill Bentley
Condolences to Rev. Gloria Ankrom and family on the death of her mother,
Marie Sprague.

MORE Free Stuff!

Central Avenue UMC in Athens has communion ware, paraments and two chairs to give away to a good church home. If you are interested, please contact the church office at 740-592-2389 or by e-mail at info@centralavenue.net.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Office Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Lunch 12:00-1:00 p.m.

E-Mails: Office—office@foothillsdistrict.org

Dennis Mohler, DS—Mohler@foothillsdistrict.org

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Sherri Rogers, Office Admin.-rogers@foothillsdistrict.org

Todd Hines, Lay Leader-layleader@foothillsdistrict.org

Roger Thatcher, Dist. Disaster Response Coordinator-rwtjct@yahoo.com

**Check us out on the Web:
www.foothillsdistrict.org**