

# multiplyvineyard™

## GROWTH SERIES

### Facilitator Guide

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## *How to use this Guide*

The purpose of this series is to help potential planters and current pastors work through the dynamics of healthy church growth. This will be accomplished through your teaching the material, and just as importantly, through the building of relationship in their interaction with you and others present, under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

We want to see healthy Vineyard churches planted throughout the United States and the world. The purpose of the Growth Series is to help current and potential church planters understand and implement basic principles that will help their church take root and thrive in the environment in which it is planted.

This leader guide is designed to give you a tool to use in your own ministry environment to: 1) train potential church planters or 2) develop your church planting team.

### **Format**

The Growth Series consists of five sessions that combine video clips with student interaction and exercises. The sessions may be presented over a weekend (Friday evening/Saturday), in two successive weekends, or however your ministry schedule permits. You may choose relevant video clips to use with select groups of people.

For all video referenced in this video go to <https://multiplyvineyard.org/course-category/growth/>.

### **How to Prepare**

1. Review the guide to get the flow of the material.
2. Plan how to use the material depending on:
  - a. How much time you have?
  - b. Which sessions are most pertinent to your church?
  - c. How in-depth you want to go?
3. Decide how to use the discussion questions and exercises.
4. Watch the videos beforehand.

### **Training Tips**

The video training clips provide the content; you as the facilitator create a healthy learning environment.

Planning a Healthy Learning Environment:

- Prayerfully prepare.
- Use the videos and accompanying exercises in a way that fits your culture.
- Thoughtfully guide discussion and answer questions.
- Debrief learning.

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- Be available between sessions to interact with participants.

Above all, cooperate with the Holy Spirit as you serve those who participate in this training.



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# *Session One: Understanding Growth Dynamics*

## **Session One Overview:**

1.1 Introducing Growth

1.2 Evaporation Rate

1.3 Flow

Total Session Time 70 minutes

## **1.1 Growth**

### **Facilitator Guide Content Outline:**

- How can you plant a church that will keep growing over the years? In this session we'll begin to look at dynamics of church growth to help you get off to a good start.
- 30 minutes: 15 minute welcome/warm up with a 3 minute video followed by 10 minutes of reflection.

### **Facilitator's Instructions**

#### **Welcome (5 minutes)**

- Introduce yourself briefly if needed.
- Share personally why you are offering this course and what you hope they will gain (you may review course objectives for this).
- Give a brief overview of the class time structure: video clips + exercises + discussion/ Q&A.
- If your participants are not familiar with who Geno Olison, Steve Nicholson, and/or Michael Gatlin are, take a few minutes to familiarize them, using the information at the beginning of this guide.
- Emphasize the importance of individual conversations with you and other participants between each session to enrich their time. Note that extra activities will be suggested which they can do to start implementing ideas (if they can find the time to do them).
- Encourage them to ask questions and have fun!

#### **Warm Up (5-15 minutes, depending on whether group members already know each other)**

To set a light-hearted atmosphere, start with a simple icebreaker question such as, "What's one of the most fun things you've done in the last month?" Have people introduce themselves if they don't already know each other. Then show the first video.

## 1.1 Growth Video (4 minutes)

*How do you grow a church?*

1. It takes hard work and intentionality to grow a church.
2. We need others to share insight and wisdom.

### Facilitator's Instructions

After the video, say something like: Geno says, “it takes hard work and intentionality to grow a church.” And that’s true! But we also know that the yoke Jesus gives us is easy and his burden is light (Matthew 11:30). So let’s take a few minutes to open ourselves to what the Holy Spirit wants to do in us and teach us through this training.

### Read and Reflect on Psalm 37:3-6 (10 minutes)

After reading the passage, take a few moments to listen to God. Use the following prompts to journal:

1. What heart’s desires are you coming with to this training?
2. In what areas do you need to grow in trusting God?
3. What is a good way for you to “take delight in the Lord” at this point in your life?
4. Write a prayer of commitment, giving yourself again to the Lord.

### KEY QUOTE

*“If the pastor is committed to growing in their own personal relationship with Christ and they are bringing others along in that process and people are being transformed, I’ve found that people generally aren’t quiet about that. They want to tell somebody else. They want to bring more and more people along.” — Geno Olson*

### Facilitator's Instructions

- Read (or have a volunteer read) Psalm 37:3-6, perhaps in more than one version.
- Give 3-4 minutes for people to write their responses.
- When it looks like most people are wrapping up, close in a time of prayer. Invite the Holy Spirit to teach.

## 1.2 Evaporation Rate

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

10 minutes: 7 minute video followed by 3 minutes of discussion.

## Facilitator's Instructions

Say something like: After a brief introduction from Geno, Steve and Michael will help us understand what the term “evaporation rate” means and how we can offset it.

### 1.2 Evaporation Rate Video(7 minutes)

*What dynamics are needed to keep a church growing?*

1. Defining Evaporation: Even when things are going well in a church, people naturally leave or transition in life (new job, additional schooling, etc.) The rate of this varies based on where you live.
2. In order for a church to grow, you have to first exceed your evaporation rate.
3. How do you offset the evaporation rate?
4. Increase flow: have more people coming in than going out.
5. Increase capacity: make room to include more people.

#### KEY QUOTE

*“The first thing that you have to grapple with is what I would call the evaporation rate: which is that the idea that in normal life, no problems, everything is going good, a certain number of the people you have now are going to move on in the next twelve months.”*  
— Steve Nicolson

### Discuss (3 minutes)

What thoughts come to your mind about dealing with the evaporation rate?

## Facilitator's Instructions

- Briefly collect the students' initial thoughts.

#### KEY QUOTE

*“In a certain sense, the essence of a growing church is more people coming in the front door than are going out the back door. But that's a function of two separate factors. The first factor is: are people even coming? And the second factor is: can you contain them? Can you sustain it? Do you have the capacity to hold on to them? Is there room?”* — Steve Nicolson

# Session 1 Wrap Up

## Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

30 minutes: 30 minutes to wrap up Session 1.

### Wrap Up Exercise (20-30 minutes)

Matthew 13 offers several pictures of what kingdom growth looks like. Choose one of the following sets of verses to read and questions to respond to, then share your thoughts with the whole group.

#### 1. Matthew 13:3-8 and 18-23 (Parable of the Seeds)

- a. If you consider yourself as the farmer, what can you learn from this parable about where to scatter your seed?
- b. Considering this parable, what difference would it make to you if you knew that you could not discern someone's soil type by their behavior and appearance?
- c. The farmer scattered seeds in all types of soil, without prejudging the condition of the soil. In order to bear more fruit, our role is to plant seeds of the kingdom, without prejudging the condition of people's hearts.

#### 2. Matthew 13:24-30 and 36-43 (Parable of the Weeds)

- a. Imagining that this parable might be talking about your church, how should you treat "problem" people who seem to hamper your growth?
- b. Switching metaphors, remember that you can't clean fish before you catch them. In other words, we've seen planters remove problem people way too soon and so hinder the growth of their church.

#### 3. Matthew 13:31-33 (Parables of the Mustard Seed and Yeast)

- a. Thinking about these parables with church growth in mind, what kinds of actions might you do in church life that would compare to the man planting the mustard seed or the woman kneading yeast into the dough? (What's your part?)
- b. What kinds of things would compare to the full-grown mustard plant or the risen dough? (What does God do?)

### Facilitator's Instructions

- Read through the instructions. If you have a large group, divide people up into groups of 2-3 and assign them a passage. If you have a small group, you may want to go through them together.
- After everyone has had a chance to respond to the questions (after 5 minutes or so) gather back together and have people share their responses.
- After you have discussed these parables, thank God for letting us partner with him in this amazing adventure of growing his church!

## Bring It Home

*“Healthy things grow, multiply and reproduce.”*

Before you start the next session, pray for the growth of your local church, for other Vineyard churches, and for other churches in your community. Pray for people to be intentional in inviting others into relationship with Jesus and welcoming them into the life of the church. Pray specifically for any areas where you feel the church can become more intentional in including new people. Pray for God’s kingdom to grow through:

- Pastors and leaders
- Evangelism, baptism and discipleship
- Healing, signs and wonders
- Community involvement
- Special events your church hosts
- Classes/training your church offers (ALPHA, membership class, DivorceCare, etc)
- Children’s ministry
- Small groups

### KEY QUOTE

*“One of the things that every company is trying to do is to turn somebody from a consumer into an advocate. One of the best ways that I’ve watched that happen in the context of the local church is when somebody experiences real life change.” — Michael Gatlin*

## Facilitator’s Instructions

If you are not running Session 2 immediately following, you may have students complete Session 2 work on their own time and return to the group at a later date for processing discussion.

## End of Session.



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# *Session Two: Increasing Flow*

## **Session Two Overview:**

2.1 Increasing Flow

2.2 Visibility

2.3 Community Involvement

2.4 Special Events

Total Session Time: 115 minutes

## **2.1 Increasing Flow**

### **Facilitator Guide Content Outline:**

- 35 minutes: 5 minute opening with a 10 minute video followed by 10 minutes of discussion and 10 minutes of reflection.
- How will people find out about your church? Why would they want to come to it? This session looks at how to help people find out about your church and want to visit it.

### **Opening (5 minutes)**

- What originally drew you to try out your current church?
- Why did you keep coming back?

### **Facilitator's Instructions**

- Give people 2-3 minutes to write a brief response.
- Have them share their response with the group.
- Transition to the video saying something like: "Let's see what Geno has to say about flow."

### **2.1 Increasing Flow Video (10 minutes)**

1. How do you attract people to come to your church?
2. The goal is to create a space where people want to come to ... and want to come back to.
3. You have to have enough visitors each week to offset the evaporation rate.
4. The vast majority of people come through personal invitation.
5. What has to be in place for personal invitation to work?
  - a. Predictability
  - b. Things to give their friends
  - c. Invitational series of relevant sermons
  - d. Real life change through a transformative relationship with God

## KEY QUOTE

*“The goal is to create a place and space where people want to come to, but also creating place where people want to come back to once they visit it.” — Geno Olson*

### Respond (10 minutes)

Steve mentions that our services need to be predictable for people to feel comfortable inviting others, but we also need particular places and times for “unpredictability to happen” (in order to give room for the Holy Spirit to move).

- Does your church service provide both predictability and unpredictability? How can you get both of these dynamics working together?
- What can you do to help people experience “real life change through a transformative relationship with God” in your service? ... outside of your service?
- What else stands out to you from the teaching?

### Read and reflect on Romans 10:9-15 (10 minutes)

*If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”*  
(Romans 10:9-15 NIV)

### Facilitator’s Instructions

- Read the passage.
- Give 3-5 minutes of silence for students to reflect.
- Gather a few thoughts.
- Pray for the good news to reach into the communities where we are planting.

## 2.2 Visibility

## Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

25 minutes: 13 minute video followed by 5-10 minutes of discussion and 5-10 minutes of working on their “Pathway to Involvement.”

### 2.2 Visibility Video (14 minutes)

*How will people find your church?*

1. Why do people come?
  - a. God has prepared people’s hearts.
  - b. They will go to the church they can find.
  - c. Three common needs that people seek in church:
    - i. They go to find God.
    - ii. They go to find community (relationship/friends).
    - iii. They go to find purpose (service/a job to do).
2. How do you stand out?
  - a. Signs
  - b. Advertising (when you are ready for “prime time”)
3. When you are first starting out, what do you do?
  - a. Personal engagement
  - b. Mass invitations
  - c. Repeated touches
4. What makes up a good website?
  - a. Things to listen to
  - b. Pictures of the kind of people you are
  - c. Clear statement
  - d. Podcast of your vision
  - e. Be careful not to promise more than you can deliver.

### Discuss (5-10 minutes)

What stands out to you from this talk that you want to remember?

### Facilitator’s Instructions

Gather responses from participants and summarize what you’re hearing from them.

## ACTIVITY

*Creating your Pathway to Involvement*

### Activity: Creating your Pathway to Involvement (5-10 minutes)

Sessions 2 and 3 are designed to equip you to reach out to people and get them involved in

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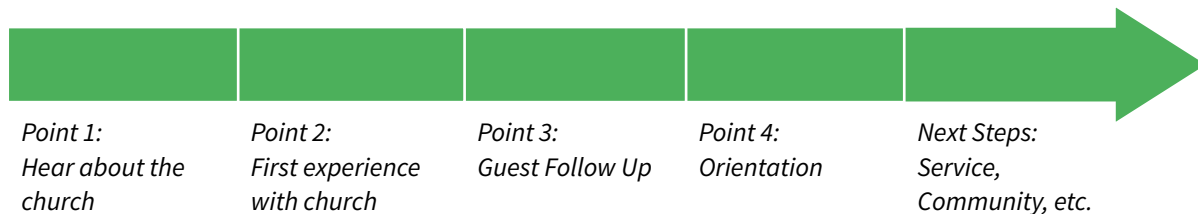
the life of your church. Throughout these sessions you will have opportunity to design your own “Pathway to Involvement” for your church.

How will people find out about your church? What will be the first touch they experience?

1. List as many ways as you can think of.
2. Write a purpose statement for this step. (For instance: People in our community will see our church as relevant to their lives.)
3. Now choose one or two ways that you want to be the most intentional about.
4. What can you do to help those happen in the best possible way?

### Facilitator’s Instructions

- Have people call out possible first touches in the larger group so everyone is brainstorming simultaneously (#1).
- Then have people individually write their purpose, (#2) the one or two ways they want to be most intentional about (#3) and how they want to make them happen (#4).
- You may have people work on their pathway individually (introverts) or in groups of 2-3 (extroverts).



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## Your Pathway to Involvement

### **Point 1: Hear about the church**

What do you want people to experience at this point?

What action steps do you need to take to make this happen?

How will you evaluate if this is working?

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### **Point 2: First experience with church**

What do you want people to experience at this point?

What action steps do you need to take to make this happen?

How will you evaluate if this is working?



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**Point 3: Guest Follow Up**

What do you want people to experience at this point?

What action steps do you need to take to make this happen?

How will you evaluate if this is working?

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**Point 4: Orientation**

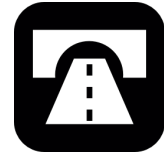
What do you want people to experience at this point?

What action steps do you need to take to make this happen?

How will you evaluate if this is working?

## Next Steps: Service, Community, Leadership, Other

What do you want people to experience at this point?



What action steps do you need to take to make this happen?

How will you evaluate if this is working?

Note: Please see Appendix A for all of the “Your Pathway To Involvement Exercises.”

### KEY QUOTE

*“God is always at work. He is always reaching people and working on them and doing things in their life. The deal is: when that’s happening, they’re going to go to the church they can find.”*

— Steve Nicolson

## 2.3 Community Involvement

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

15 minutes: 5 minute video followed by 10 minutes of brainstorming.

### 2.3 Community Involvement Video (6 minutes)

*How can you become a church with a good reputation in your community?*

1. Get Involved.
  - a. Meet people.
  - b. Serve in the community.
  - c. Community leaders will send others to you.

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2. Work to make the community a better place.
    - a. Partner rather than compete with others.
    - b. Read *The Art of Neighboring* by Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon.
    - c. Offer acts of service that are not politically motivated.

### **Brainstorm (10 minutes)**

What kind of community involvement can you get excited about? Who do you want to get to know? What difference do you want to make? Make a list of as many possibilities you can think of under each category below. If you are not in a position to connect in the location where you will be planting, think of possibilities at your current location to get experience. Feel free to include your current involvements.

- Community leaders you would like to meet
- Civic organizations to work with
- Services that your church could provide
- Fun activities to organize

### **Facilitator's Instructions**

Invite the Holy Spirit to bring things to mind. Allow 2-3 minutes for people to individually come up with some possibilities, then take 5 minutes to have them share their ideas with each other.

### **KEY QUOTE**

*"We're there to make our community a better place...We're partnering together to make (in my case, Duluth, Minnesota) an amazing place to live and grow. And so, there's not this competition between us, in that, we're actually working for the exact same thing."*

— Michael Gatlin

## 2.4 Special Events

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

35 minutes: 9 minute video followed by 5 minutes of brainstorming with a 20 minute wrap up exercise.

### 2.4 Special Events Video (9 minutes)

*What can you do to draw new people to your church?*

1. Plan special events for newcomers.
  - a. Give your folks whatever they need to invite others.
  - b. Impact them in such a way that they'll want to come back.
  - c. Teach on relevant topics.
  - d. Focus on inviting in the next bunch of people a couple of times a year.
2. Events that work well include:
  - a. Christmas/Christmas Eve Services.
  - b. Ash Wednesday/Good Friday/Easter Services.
  - c. Baptisms.
  - d. Fun things that don't compete with civic activities.

### Brainstorm (5 minutes)

- What special event might you do to address needs in your community (including the need to be introduced to Jesus)?
- What fun special events appeal to you?
- What kind of schedule might create a good rhythm of special events throughout the year?

### Facilitator's Instructions

Give people a couple of minutes to write responses, then gather thoughts.

### KEY QUOTE

*"One thing I've learned is to not try to compete with things our city's doing... If our city's doing something that's a really good special event, I like sending our people to get engaged there."*

— Michael Gatlin

## Wrap Up Exercise: What's My Next Step? (20 minutes)

1. Look through your responses under Visibility, Community Involvement and Special Events. Choose one or two possibilities (circle them, if you'd like) and write a simple plan

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for how to either 1) “advertise” better, 2) connect with a person/organization or 3) implement an event or service project.

- a. Which idea would you like to improve?
- b. What is the plan for improvement?
2. What would be the first step to do that? (doing research, praying, setting up a meeting, asking for advice, reserving a location, etc.)
3. Put a reminder on your calendar to work on that!
4. Did you get any ideas to add to your Pathway to Involvement? If so, take a few moments to write them down.

### **Facilitator’s Instructions**

- Read the instructions and give 4-5 minutes for people to write their response.
- Have everyone share with the group what they would like to plan, what they see as their first step, and who can hold them accountable.
- Ask if people got ideas for their Pathway. If so, have them share with the group.
- To conclude: Pray over and bless each other, listening for words that God might give each person. With a small group, you could do this one at a time. If you have a large group, people could share briefly with the whole group, then break up into groups of 3 for ministry.

### **To Go Further**

Continue to work on implementing the plan you have created above. Seek out accountability from your Senior Pastor or a trusted mentor who can check in with you on the process of this plan.

### **End of Session.**



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# Session Three: Closing the Back Door

## Session Three Overview:

3.1 Closing the Back Door

3.2 Atmosphere & Communication

3.3 Guest Follow-Up

3.4 Orientation

Total Session Time: 2 hours 15 minutes

## 3.1 Closing the Back Door

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

- 20 minutes: 5 minute opening with a 3 minute video followed by 10 minutes of discussion.
- Why would the visitors you've attracted to your church want to keep coming back? This session looks at how to welcome newcomers and help them connect to Jesus and the life of your church.

### Opening (5 minutes)

Can you think of a time when you tried to join a group where you didn't know anyone else (maybe an exercise class, sports team, or civic group)? Or a time when you went to a grocery store where you had never been before?

- What did that feel like?
- What contributed to those feelings?
- Did you end up joining or going back?

Keep those thoughts and feelings in mind throughout this session.

### Facilitator's Instructions

Gather some responses to the prompt as you start this session.

### 3.1 Closing the Back Door Video (3 minutes)

*How do you close the back door of your church?*

1. Every church has people who don't stick around; every church has a back door.
2. Our focus is on retaining a higher percentage of people who come through the front door.
3. Churches that intentionally address this issue can have small back doors.

### Reflect and Discuss: (10 minutes)

List 4-5 people (or families) who used to come to your church but don't now. Beside their name, write why they stopped coming. If you don't know, write something that might have been a contributing factor.

### Facilitator Instructions

- Give students 2-3 minutes to write down names and reasons for leaving. If they can't think of people in their current church, encourage them to think of another group or church that they belonged to where someone dropped out.
- When it looks like people have just about finished writing things down, collect reasons from people and see if others had the same reason on their list. Try not to let this get too long or negative, but let it go on long enough for people to see the need to be intentional if they want to hold onto people. If appropriate, bring out the humor in situations.
- Close with a prayer for God to empower us as leaders to establish churches that meaningfully connect the people who are coming to him and to his body. Ask him to teach us through this Series.

### KEY QUOTE

*"The reality is, every church has a back door. It's churches that are really smart and intentional about this that have a really small back door, while many, many other churches have huge back door."*

— Geno Olson

## 3.2 Atmosphere & Communication

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

25 minutes: 12 minute video followed by 5 minutes of discussion and 10 minutes of working on their Pathway to Involvement.

### 3.2 Atmosphere and Communication Video (12 minutes)

What helps create a welcoming atmosphere for people who come to church for the first time?

1. If you are going to grow, people need to decide to come back after they visit.
2. What makes a difference?
  - a. A friendly, welcoming atmosphere
  - b. Questions are addressed
  - c. An atmosphere of momentum
  - d. Clear communication

### **Discuss: (3-4 minutes)**

What stood out to you in that talk?

### **Facilitator Instructions**

Briefly gather thoughts from people.

## **ACTIVITY**

### *Your Pathway to Involvement*



### **Your Pathway to Involvement**

Using the content you began in Session 2, work on your next step on the pathway.

What do you think is important for people to experience in order to feel welcomed when they first visit your church building?

- List as many ways as come to mind.
- Write a purpose statement for this step. (For example: Visitors will feel welcomed and respected.)
- Now choose one or two ways to welcome people that you want to be the most intentional about.
- What can you do to help those happen in the best possible way?

## **KEY QUOTE**

*“If you’re going to grow, they need to make the decision to come back the second and the third and the fourth time.” — Steve Nicolson*

### **Facilitator’s Instructions**

Have people call out possible ways for people to feel welcomed in the larger group so everyone is brainstorming simultaneously (#1).

Then have people individually write their purpose, (#2) the one or two ways they want to be most intentional about (#3) and how they want to make them happen (#4).

Direct whether people work on their pathway individually or in groups of 2-3.

### KEY QUOTE

*“Most frequently people make the decision whether they’re going to come back to a church before they’ve even heard the sermon.”*

— Steve Nicolson

## 3.3 Guest Follow-Up

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

30 minutes: 9 minute video followed by 5 minutes of reflection and 15 minutes of working on their Pathway to Involvement.

### 3.3 Guest Follow-Up Video (9 minutes)

*How will someone initially get connected to and involved in your church?*

- Relationship: Establish a connection.
- Information: Give them a clear path.
- Service: Help them get involved.
- Build relationship through small groups.

### Facilitator Instructions

Feel free to gather thoughts from people on the teaching before going into (or instead of) the reflection exercise.

### Reflect: (5 minutes)

Which of the three important aspects of guest follow-up (relationship, information, or service) do you feel that your gifting/leadership is strongest in? What kind of people will you need on your leadership team to strengthen the other areas?

### Facilitator Instructions

Have people share in groups of 2-3. If you want to take the time, gather thoughts from the group to see which aspect of gifting is most common in the group.

## ACTIVITY

### *Your Pathway to Involvement*



#### **Your Pathway to Involvement (15 minutes)**

*Work on your next steps on the pathway: Receiving Information, Getting Relationally Connected, Serving.*

What are ways that you want your church to follow up with guests?

- List as many ways as come to mind in each area: relationship, information, and service.
- Write a purpose statement for this step.
- Now choose one or two ways that you want to be the most intentional about in each area.
- What can you do to help those happen in the best possible way?

#### **Facilitator's Instructions**

- Have people call out possible ways for your church to follow up with guests in each area: relationship, information, and service (#1).
- Then have people individually write their purpose, (#2) the one or two ways they want to be most intentional about (#3) and how they want to make them happen (#4).
- Have people work on their pathway individually or in groups of 2-3.

### KEY QUOTE

*"When people visit your church, you can assume that they want to find God, they want to find a friend, and they want to find a job."*

— Michael Gatlin

## 3.4 Orientation

#### **Facilitator Guide Content Outline:**

60 minutes: 8 minute video followed by 10 minutes of response and 15 minutes of working on their Pathway to Involvement with a 25 minute wrap up exercise.

#### **3.4 Orientation Video (8 minutes)**

*How can you motivate people to commit themselves to Christ and your church?*

- Regularly offer a membership class to move people to the point of commitment.



- Frequently restate the vision for people to want to stay committed.
- Clearly present the gospel and invite people to follow Jesus in your membership class.

### **Respond: (5-10 minutes)**

- What is one thing that stands out to you from this talk?
- What experience have you had with a membership class?
- How will you decide how often to offer a membership class?
- What's your church's (or your own) vision statement?
- What's one of your favorite verses to use when you present the Gospel?

### **Facilitator Instructions**

Have people get in groups of 2-3 and give them some instructions:

- They should both/all answer one question before moving on to the next question.
- When each group has finished responding to the questions, they can move right into working on their Pathway to Involvement.

Move people along into working on their Pathway if they have trouble wrapping up their discussion after 8-10 minutes.

## **ACTIVITY**

*Your Pathway to Involvement*



### **Your Pathway to Involvement (10-15 minutes)**

*Work on your next step on the pathway: Membership Class.*

How will you invite people to commit to Jesus? What else do you think is important to include in a membership class? What would you like the format of your class to be?

- List content that you want to include in your membership class.
- List elements of the class (food, balance of lecture/discussion, venue, length, etc) that sound good to you.
- Write a purpose statement for this step.
- Now choose one or two things that you want to be the most intentional about in both areas. (Remember to keep in mind length as you consider content you want to include.)
- What can you do to help (the content and format of) your membership class happen in the best possible way?

### **Facilitator's Instructions**

- Have people call out possible elements of their membership class (#1 & #2).
- Then have people individually write their purpose, (#3) the one or two ways they want to

- be most intentional about (#4) and how they want to make them happen (#5).
- Have people work on their pathway.

## Wrap Up Exercise: What Are They Saying? (25 minutes)

Get a picture in your mind of someone (real or imagined) who has been coming to your church for a few weeks or months. What would you hope they would say to their friends about their experience at your church? Describe what you hope they are saying in one of the following ways:

- Write a paragraph.
- Draw a simple cartoon.
- Make a chart or list.
- Record a hypothetical conversation on your phone.

### Facilitator Instructions:

- Read the instructions and invite the Holy Spirit to help participants to picture what he wants to do in newcomers' lives.
- Give 5 minutes or so for people to write their response.
- Have everyone share with the group what they hope newcomers would say about their church. You may want to reflect back what you hear from one person before moving on to the next. Note themes that come out or differences. Summarize what you're hearing.
- After each person has shared, as a group take a minute or so of silence to listen for words. Listen for what is God saying to the group about his heart for those who are looking to get connected to Jesus and his church. Have people share words, images, or Scriptures that have come to mind.
- Close with a prayer that those God is calling will find a family in our churches (or whatever seems like a fitting close.)

### KEY QUOTE

*"People need to hear who you are and why over and over and over again." — Steve Nicolson*

### To Go Further

Take what you've written up in your Pathway to Involvement and refine your steps. Consider the following suggestions:

- Envision what you want your Pathway to accomplish.
- What do you want your Pathway to look like to accomplish that?
- What next steps will you want to include for getting people connected to service, community and leadership?

- 
- Assess what you're already doing. What do you want to keep? What needs to change?
  - Introduce goals to your leadership -- people who can move things forward.
  - Contact people who can start working on the nitty-gritty.

### **KEY QUOTE**

*"What I find is that [a memorized vision statement] gets kind of dry and old quickly. I like to restate that vision in as many different kinds of ways as I can. And then what I begin to hear back from people is our vision back from them, but restated in their own language, which means that they've really grabbed a hold of it." — Michael Gatlin*

**End of Session.**

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# Session Four: Increasing Capacity—Space and Place

## Session Four Overview:

4.1 Increasing Capacity

4.2 Capacity Measures 1-3: Parking & Space for Children/Adults

4.3 Capacity Measure 4: Small Groups

Total Session Time: 90 minutes

## 4.1 Increasing Capacity

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

- 10 minutes: 5 minute opening with a 2 minute video followed by 3 minutes of response.
- What are common barriers to growth? This session looks at four basic areas where you need to make space so that more people can find a place in your church.

### Opening (5 minutes)

What is one thing you have learned so far in this Series?

### Facilitator Instructions

Have people share one thing they've learned so far with the rest of the group.

### 4.1 Increasing Capacity Video (2 minutes)

*What can you do to increase capacity?*

- Remove barriers that stifle growth.
- Create more room to grow.

### Think About It: (3 minutes)

The next video will explore what's needed in three areas:

- Parking
- Children's space and programs
- Adult seating space.

Which (if any) of those areas would be most natural for you to be concerned about? Which (if any) would you be more likely to overlook?

### Facilitator Instructions

- You may take a show of hands for each area. (Who would naturally be concerned about: Parking? Kids? Adult seating? Who would be likely to overlook) They may raise their hand as many times as applies.
- To transition, say something like: Let's see what Steve and Michael have to say about making space for more people in these 3 critical areas. Because once you have a flow, the issue quickly becomes whether you can hold more people.

## 4.2 Capacity Measures 1-3: Parking & Space for Children/Adults

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

40 minutes: 16 minute video followed by 10 minutes of discussion and 10 minutes of application.

### 4.2 Capacity Measures 1-3: Parking and Space for Children/Adults Video (16 minutes)

Do you have the capacity to service the main needs of people as they come in, or do they have a sense that there's no room for them?

1. Parking
  - a. Unless people do not drive to church, parking is important.
  - b. If there is not room in the parking lot, people will leave.
2. Children's Space and Programming
  - a. This is the most building-sensitive issue in all of church life.
  - b. If you want families, you have to do a great job with their kids.
3. Adult Seating Space
  - a. People need to see clusters of open seats (not too far from an aisle).
  - b. Let pressure build before adding additional services.
  - c. Aim for the sweet spot between 50% and 70% full.

### Discuss (5-10 minutes)

- Have you ever decided not to go somewhere because it felt too full?
- What stood out to you from this talk?
- What reinforced what you already knew?
- What new insights did you gain?

### Facilitator Instructions

- If you have a large group, have students answer the questions in groups of 3-4.
- Gather thoughts from the group.
- Reflect back what you're hearing.

### Apply (5-10 minutes)

Imagine that you are the senior pastor and your church is at capacity in each of the above

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areas. For reasons beyond your control, for at least another 2 years you cannot change your venue or the number of services you offer.

- What creative ideas can you come up with to help people deal with space issues? (in parking? in the children's space? in the auditorium?)
- What alternate ways can you think of to continue to increase the number of people who come to Christ and into his body even if you cannot increase capacity at your location?

### **Facilitator Instructions**

- Keep the group together if you feel that would be helpful for brainstorming.
- Did anyone think of multi-site or church planting?
- Help the students realize that often you need to get creative before you have the resources to increase your capacity.

### **KEY QUOTES**

#### **Capacity Measure 1: Parking**

*"If there isn't room in the parking lot, they will circle around, and not very long, and leave." — Steve Nicolson*

#### **Capacity Measure 2: Children's Space and Programs**

*"Probably the kids space is the most building-sensitive issue in all of church life." — Steve Nicolson*

#### **Capacity Measure 3: Adult Seating Space**

*"When your seating gets to be about 70% full, it's actually full."  
— Steve Nicolson*

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## 4.3 Capacity Measure 4: Small Groups

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

50 minutes: 5 minute video followed by 15 minutes of discussion, 5 minutes on their Pathway to Involvement and 25 minutes of Wrap Up.

### 4.3 Capacity Measure 4: Small Groups Video (5 minutes)

*How do you get enough new groups for new people?*

- Always have new groups for new people.
- Keep the commitment for leading a small group manageable.
- Consider using a trimester schedule.

### Discuss (10-15 minutes)

1. What different kinds of small groups have you experienced as a member? Which do you feel benefitted you the most?
2. Have you ever experienced a small group that really made you feel connected?
  - a. If so, what was good about that group?
  - b. If not, what would you have hoped for?
3. Who was the best small group leader you ever had? What did they do that inspires you?
4. Have you ever been trained as a small group leader? If so...
  - a. What from that training has been most helpful?
  - b. Can you think of anything that would have made it more effective?
5. Think back to when you first started leading a small group.
  - a. What were your greatest challenges?
  - b. What helped you overcome those challenges?
  - c. Were there pastors who helped you grow as a leader? If so, what did they do?
6. How important do you think that small groups are in order for people to get relationally connected?

### Facilitator Instructions

Have students reflect on their experiences in small groups using the outline above. Begin thinking as a member (1-3), then as a leader (4-5) of a small group and draw some conclusions (6).

- Have them write responses to the questions. There are a lot of questions! They don't have to answer every question, but should spend more time on the ones that touch on something significant for them. (4-5 minutes)
- If you have a lot of extroverts, you can have them break into groups of 2 to discuss rather than write.
- Gather thoughts from the group and reflect back common threads. Encourage them to draw conclusions. (5-10 minutes)

## ACTIVITY

### *Your Pathway to Involvement*



#### **Your Pathway to Involvement (5 minutes)**

After this discussion, do you want to change or add anything to your Pathway to Involvement?

#### **Facilitator Instructions**

- Encourage people to consider how the discussion on small groups informs what they prioritize on their Pathway to Involvement.
- While they are working on this, you may want to be asking the Holy Spirit for specific words to speak over them when you close the session after the Wrap Up Exercise.

#### **Wrap Up Exercise: (25 minutes)**

In order to increase flow, close the back door, and increase capacity we all need leaders and workers in many different areas, from facilities to small groups to community involvement. The good news is that God is raising up people in your church to fulfill his purposes in your community and beyond.

Choose one of the following Scriptures to read and reflect on, and listen to what God is saying to you personally. Use the questions as a prompt if they seem helpful. If the Holy Spirit brings a different Scripture to mind, feel free to reflect on that instead.

1. Scriptures:
  - a. Romans 12:4-8
  - b. Ephesians 4:11-16
2. Possible questions to guide your reflection:
  - a. What is the role God is calling you to fulfill?
  - b. What are different ways that God wants to use various people in your church?
  - c. How does this passage speak to being joined together in 21st Century living?
  - d. How will Christ's body grow?

#### **Facilitator Instructions**

Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in how you lead this time. You may do it together as a group, going through just one of the passages (or one of your choosing), or you may have people journal individually. Have them:

- Read the passage(s) of Scripture, asking the Holy Spirit to bring to mind what he wants to emphasize.
- Journal or share with the group what comes to mind.

Close the time with prophetic encouragement.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

### *Launching Leaders*

If you would like to continue thinking about raising up and training leaders in your church please sign up for the Multiply Vineyard newsletter and get a free digital copy of *Launching Leaders: How To Multiply Leaders In The Local Church*.

Subscribe here: <http://multiplyvineyard.org/subscribe/>



### **To Go Further**

In what ministry area do you most need more leaders? As you read through *Launching Leaders*, choose one specific kind of leader you want to raise up (such as small group leaders, children's workers, or welcome team leaders). Answer the questions at the end of each section with this particular ministry area in mind to help develop a plan for raising up leaders who will not burn out quickly. Don't spread yourself too thin at first, but get the training loop down and then reproduce it into other areas of ministry.

### **Facilitator Instructions**

Encourage your students to do this if they want to "go further."

### **KEY QUOTE**

#### ***Capacity Measure 4: Small Groups***

*"If people don't find friends in the first twelve months, they won't stick. Which means you have to have room for people to connect, and primarily that's small groups." — Steve Nicolson*

### **End of Session.**

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# Session Five: Increasing Capacity— Growing in Leadership

## Session Five Overview:

5.1 Capacity Measures 5-6: Staff & Structure

5.2 Capacity Measure 7: Senior Leaders

Total Session Time: 85 minutes

## 5.1 Capacity Measures 5-6: Staff & Structure

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

- 35 minutes: 5 minute opening followed by a 10 minute video and 20 minutes of reflection.
- What leadership issues will you face as your church grows? This session looks at how your staff, structure, and personal leadership must keep growing in order for your church to continue to grow.

### Opening (5 minutes)

In order for your church to keep growing you must take care of the people you are gathering. They need more than a place to park and a place to sit and a place for their kids, more than a great small group. They need access to a pastor who cares about them personally. They need a structure that enables them to use their gifts as a part of a well-functioning team. And they need a senior pastor who is continually growing in leadership and faith, releasing control of the church to Jesus so that Jesus can build his church.

### Think About It:

Who is a leader or senior pastor that you look up to? What specifically do you admire about their leadership?

### Facilitator Instructions

Read the paragraph above with the class then take responses to the questions.

### 5.1 Capacity Measures 5-6: Staff & Structure Video (10 minutes)

*Why is it so important to add staff and/or restructure?*

1. Staff
  - a. People need a pastor to connect to: one pastor for every 100-150 people.
  - b. Take care of people.
  - c. Pastors do not have to be full time.

## 2. Structure

- a. Restructure as the church grows.
  - i. First layer: The pastor can lead everyone up to 40-50 people.
  - ii. Second layer: Add volunteer leaders and a meeting to coordinate them.
  - iii. Third layer: Add paid pastors to oversee volunteer leaders.
- b. When you add more people you have to restructure to enable them to work well together.
- c. The structure can become so inefficient that it fails to give people what they need.

### **Read and Reflect on Acts 6:1-7 (15-20 minutes)**

*1 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. 2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."*

*5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.*

*7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. (Acts 6:1-7 NIV)*

1. Read the passage and answer the following questions:
  - a. Verse 1
    - i. Who was complaining, and why?
    - ii. What does Luke identify as the underlying reason(s) this problem occurred?
  - b. Verse 2
    - i. How do the apostles respond to the complaint?
    - ii. What additional problem do they address?
  - c. Verses 3-4: What solution do the apostles propose?
    - i. For the believers in general.
    - ii. For themselves.
  - d. Verses 5-6:
    - i. What was the response of the church?
  - e. Verse 7:
    - i. What happened next?
    - ii. How do you think what happened in verses 2-6 contributed to this?
    - iii. What are some possible scenarios if the apostles had chosen to ignore the

- complaint (how might verse 7 read differently)?
2. What connections can you make between this passage and the video teaching? Does the video teaching reinforce what this passage describes? If so, how? If not, how does it differ?

### Facilitator Instructions

- Have fun with this! Read Acts 6:1 aloud to the whole group (you can start with 5:42) and “magnify” the problem. How do you think the apostles found out about this problem? Use some imagination and describe what was happening and what the Greek-speaking Jews might have been saying. Describe how the apostles may have been tempted to be annoyed and/or dismissive. (3-4 minutes)
- Then have people split into groups of 2 or 3 to answer the questions. (6-7 minutes)
- Call everyone back together to gather responses. (6-10 minutes)

### KEY QUOTES

#### **Capacity Measure 5: Staff**

*“You need about one staff person for every one hundred to one hundred fifty people.” — Steve Nicolson*

#### **Capacity Measure 6: Structure**

*“There are points where churches plateau (they stop growing) because their structure capacity is maxed out.” — Steve Nicolson*

## 5.2 Capacity Measure 7: Senior Leaders

### Facilitator Guide Content Outline:

50 minutes: 7 minute video followed by 10 minutes of discussion and 30 minutes of Wrap Up.

### 5.2 Capacity Measure 7: Senior Leaders Video (7 minutes)

*What personal and spiritual challenges will you need to overcome as a leader?*

- For the church to keep growing the leader must keep growing in leadership and faith.
- Every time the church restructures, the leader has a new job.
- Your level of faith will be challenged.
- You will face the pain of change.

### Discuss (10 minutes)

As you consider the challenges you will face as a senior leader, what scares you? What excites you?

### Facilitator Instructions

- Have people turn to the person next to them and share their response.
- After a few minutes, gather responses from the whole group.
- Keep an encouraging tone as you consider the challenges, remembering James 1 (Joy in troubles!).
- Conclude the session and the Series with the following exercise.

### KEY QUOTE

*“The pain of change is actually not quite as bad as the pain of staying the same.” — Michael Gatlin*

### Think About It: (20-40 minutes)

A growing, healthy church is dependent upon getting a steady flow of people into the church, keeping people from going out the back door by connecting them to Christ and the church, and increasing capacity so that people know there's a place for them to come and contribute. In order for this to happen, the personal spiritual and leadership capacity of the senior leader must keep expanding. Church growth requires you to do things you never bargained for; you have to keep growing and learning, which can be hard and uncomfortable.

Reflect back on what you have learned in this Series. Take a few minutes of silence to hear what God is saying to you. Then write your response to the following question:

- What do you sense God is calling you to do now that will help keep you on track for establishing and leading a healthy church plant that can grow into the destiny God has

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for it? List one or two things that have stood out to you from the teaching that you want to apply now.

- Who can help you follow through? Write down their name and how you will contact them.

### **Facilitator Instructions**

- Read the paragraph aloud and have people write their response to the question.
- You may have them share their responses with one or two others and pray, or if you have time, you can keep together as a group and all listen as each person shares.
- Take time for personal prophetic encouragement.
- Close with words of blessing. Consider praying Philippians 1:3-6 over them: I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (NIV)

### **KEY QUOTE**

#### **Capacity Measure 7: Senior Leaders**

*“Here’s the thing: the more the church grows, the less control you have. And then it is, do I trust Jesus? Do I trust the Holy Spirit? Do I trust my leaders?” — Steve Nicolson*

**End of Session.**

# Appendix A: Your Pathway to Involvement

## ACTIVITY SUMMARY

### *Your Pathway to Involvement*

- Session 2.2 Visibility
- Session 2.4 Special Events
- Session 3.2 Atmosphere and Communication
- Session 3.3 Guest Follow-Up
- Session 3.4 Orientation
- Session 4.3 Capacity Measure 4: Small Groups



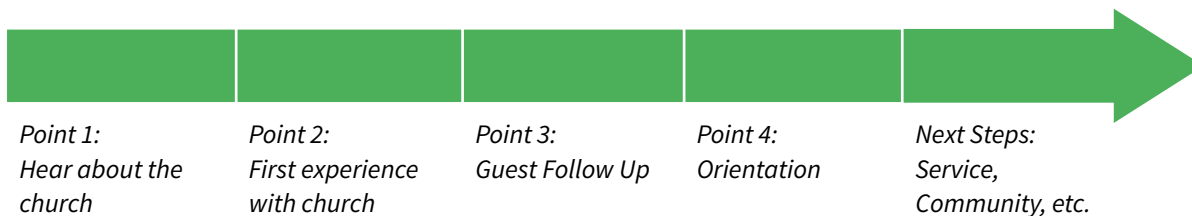
## Session 2.2 Visibility (Page 16)

### **Your Pathway to Involvement**

Sessions 2 and 3 are designed to equip you to reach out to people and get them involved in the life of your church. Throughout these sessions you will have opportunity to design your own “Pathway to Involvement” for your church.

How will people find out about your church? What will be the first touch they experience?

1. List as many ways as you can think of.
2. Write a purpose statement for this step. (For instance: People in our community will see our church as relevant to their lives.)
3. Now choose one or two ways that you want to be the most intentional about.
4. What can you do to help those happen in the best possible way?



### **Questions for Each point in the process:**

- What do you want people to experience at this point?
- What action steps do you need to do to make this happen?
- How will you evaluate if this is working?

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## Session 2.4 Special Events (Page 21)

### Wrap Up Exercise: What's My Next Step?

1. Look through your responses under Visibility, Community Involvement and Special Events. Choose one or two possibilities (circle them, if you'd like) and write a simple plan for how to either 1) "advertise" better, 2) connect with a person/organization or 3) implement an event or service project.
  - a. Which idea would you like to improve?
  - b. What is the plan for improvement?
2. What would be the first step to do that? (doing research, praying, setting up a meeting, asking for advice, reserving a location, etc.)
3. Put a reminder on your calendar to work on that!
4. Did you get any ideas to add to your Pathway to Involvement? If so, take a few moments to write them down.

## 3.2 Atmosphere and Communication (Page 25)

### Your Pathway to Involvement

Using the content you began in Session 2, work on your next step on the pathway.

What do you think is important for people to experience in order to feel welcomed when they first visit your church building?

- List as many ways as come to mind.
- Write a purpose statement for this step. (For example: Visitors will feel welcomed and respected.)
- Now choose one or two ways to welcome people that you want to be the most intentional about.
- What can you do to help those happen in the best possible way?

## 3.3 Guest Follow-Up (Page 27)

### Your Pathway to Involvement

*Work on your next steps on the pathway: Receiving Information, Getting Relationally Connected, Serving.*

What are ways that you want your church to follow up with guests?

- List as many ways as come to mind in each area: relationship, information, and service.
- Write a purpose statement for this step.
- Now choose one or two ways that you want to be the most intentional about in each area.
- What can you do to help those happen in the best possible way?



### 3.4 Orientation (Page 28)

#### Your Pathway to Involvement

*Work on your next step on the pathway: Membership Class.*

How will you invite people to commit to Jesus? What else do you think is important to include in a membership class? What would you like the format of your class to be?

- List content that you want to include in your membership class.
- List elements of the format of the class (food, balance of lecture/discussion, venue, length, etc) that sound good to you.
- Write a purpose statement for this step.
- Now choose one or two things that you want to be the most intentional about in both areas. (Remember to keep in mind length as you consider content you want to include.)
- What can you do to help (the content and format of) your membership class happen in the best possible way?

### 4.3 Capacity Measure 4: Small Groups (Page 35)

#### Your Pathway to Involvement

After this discussion, do you want to change or add anything to your Pathway to Involvement?

## THANK YOU

*Thank you for completing the Multiply Vineyard Growth Series.  
To take another course, go to <https://multiplyvineyard.org/courses/>.*

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