

# multiplyvineyard™

## GROWTH SERIES

### Participant Guide

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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 1-1.5 Hours

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- You will understand key dynamics for healthy church growth.
- You will be given strategies to address evaporation rate in your church.

## *Introducing Growth*

How can you plant a church that will keep growing over the years?

In what areas do you need to grow in trusting God?

What is a good way for you to “take delight in the Lord” at this point in your life?

Write a prayer of commitment, giving yourself again to the Lord.

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## Evaporation Rate

What dynamics are needed to keep a church growing?

Choose one of the following sets of verses to read and questions to respond to.

**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?)



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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: 2 Hours

## **Learning Outcomes:**

- You will learn simple ways to begin increasing the flow of new people into your community.
- You will look at ways events and community involvement can create trust for your church in your community.

## Increasing Flow

How do you attract people to come to your church?

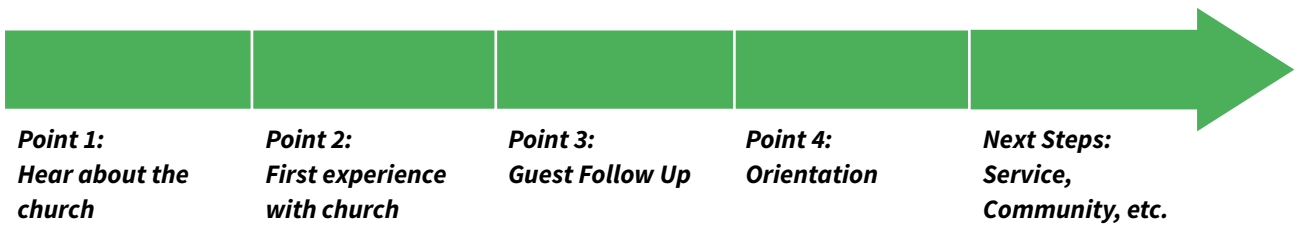
Does your church service provide both predictability and unpredictability? How can you get both of these dynamics working together?

What can you do to help people experience “real life change through a transformative relationship with God” in your service? ... outside of your service?

## Visibility

### ACTIVITY

*Creating 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?

**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?

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## Community Involvement

What kind of community involvement do 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.

Community leaders you would like to meet

Civic organizations to work with

Services that your church could provide

Fun activities to organize



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### 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

## Special Events

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?

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### 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

## 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

### Learning Outcomes:

- You will assess the ways your community loses people who don’t return to the church.
- You will implement strategies to strengthen your guest follow up and orientation.
- You will learn how vision is one of the strongest tools for getting people engaged.

### Closing the Back Door

How do you close the back door of your church?

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.

### 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 a huge back door.”*

— Geno Olson

## Atmosphere & Communication

### ACTIVITY

*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?

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### 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*

### Guest Follow-Up

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?

### ACTIVITY

*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.

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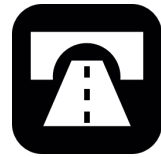
Now choose one or two ways that you want to be the most intentional about in each area.

What can you do to help those happen in the best possible way?

## Orientation

### ACTIVITY

#### *Your Pathway to Involvement*



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

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.)



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What can you do to help (the content and format of) your membership class happen in the best possible way?

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.

### 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*

## 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: 1 - 1.5 Hours

### Learning Outcomes:

- You will interact with key capacity measures that limit or accelerate church growth.
- You will reflect on the ways that your small group structure supports healthy community and church growth.

### Increasing Capacity

Which (if any) of these areas ( parking, children’s space and programs, and adult seating space) would be most natural for you to be concerned about? Which (if any) would you be more likely to overlook?

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

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?



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## Capacity Measure 4: Small Groups

What different kinds of small groups have you experienced as a member? Which do you feel benefitted you the most?

Have you ever experienced a small group that really made you feel connected? If so, what was good about that group? If not, what would you have hoped for?

Who was the best small group leader you ever had? What did they do that inspires you?

Have you ever been trained as a small group leader? If so...What from that training has been most helpful? Can you think of anything that would have made it more effective?

Think back to when you first started leading a small group. What were your greatest challenges? What helped you overcome those challenges? Were there pastors who helped you grow as a leader? If so, what did they do?

How important do you think that small groups are in order for people to get relationally connected?

## ACTIVITY

### *Your Pathway to Involvement*



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

How does this discussion on small groups inform what they prioritize on their Pathway to Involvement.

## 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*



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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: 1 - 1.5 Hours

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- You will interact with more capacity measures for church growth.
- You will complete your pathway to involvement activity.

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

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

### Capacity Measure 7: Senior Leaders

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

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

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## 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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