

wesleyan life

THE MAGAZINE OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH





We are

BY TRICIA RIFE

Attend Village Church in Red Rock, Arizona, and you'll quickly know the importance of story. Village Church's main method of evangelism is storytelling. In fact, the church offers a four-week training on storytelling multiple times a year so congregants can learn to tell their stories in two minutes.

When co-pastors, Cody Bren and Ashley Jennings, introduced themselves to the local school board soon after their families moved to Red Rock to plant Village Church, they volunteered for whatever the school needed. (Village Church meets in a K-8 school — the only school in rural Red Rock.) They first served as crossing guards. Then both taught classes — Ashley, photography, and Cody, music. The town, made up largely of young families, is situated about 30 minutes from the nearest city.

Bren and Jennings, who met through The Wesleyan Church ordination process,

story

believe God can use all kinds of stories — one that tells how someone came to faith in Jesus or a specific point in a believer's life when Jesus became even more real.

"We have to be prepared to share the gospel as we know it with our story," said Jennings. "We've seen this be super effective. Before we planted our church, this is all we had to go off of at the beginning."

"We have three parts of our story with Jesus," said Bren. "If someone shares about marriage struggles, I'd tell him my story: who I was before Christ, how Christ entered



Ahaszuk, a musician and **self-proclaimed atheist**, was not interested in spiritual topics.



Watch Ahaszuk's story and download the storytellers' resource kit to help others share their story. wes.life/storytellers



into my marriage and how Christ has changed my marriage.

"People learn how to share and own their stories in every discipleship opportunity that arises," said Bren, a former worship pastor. Such is the case with Greg Ahaszuk, a lay leader at Village Church.

Bren met Ahaszuk at a community potluck held in Jennings' driveway. At first Ahaszuk, a musician and self-proclaimed atheist, was not interested in spiritual topics.



we do." That includes group training, personal conversations and creating video testimonies to be shared in church. The ability to tell one's story also creates avenues for discipleship.

As integral as storytelling is, Village Church is also looking into church planting opportunities. The two-year-old young church is making a big impact in a rural setting, as it pursues, not one, but two church plants.

Resurrection Life in Gladden Farms community is Village Church's next official plant, situated about 15 miles south of Red Rock. Three families from California are relocating to Marana, where Gladden Farms is located, along with two

families from Tucson, Arizona. From the start, Bren and Jennings asked the Gladden Farms church plant team to "have a vision for where to plant the church that will come out of Gladden Farms." God revealed separately to multiple team members that Picture Rocks, which is south of Gladden Farms, would be the next church plant location.

Ashley Donnel moved from Sacramento, California, to attend Village Church. She sometimes shared her faith at a local gym in Arizona. One day, the owner

approached her. Expecting a reprimand due to publicly praying with a few of the gym members, Donnel was surprised when the owner, a man who had walked away from the church years ago, conveyed an old vision that one day his gym would have a church within its walls. Because of storytelling, Donnel and the gym owner are discussing their own church plant.

Village Church also envisions getting a youth center up and running in Eloy, a town burdened by crime and poverty. This process is in the early stages.

Jennings and Bren see God's hand at work and it excites them.

"We communicate the vision of church planting almost every Sunday," said Bren. "How did God call us to be a small town with a big vision? It's as if God is using Red Rock as a hub to position people."

"We want to see a movement of churches that plant churches that plant churches," said Jennings. 🌱

tellers.

The two began playing music together, which led to conversations about "real life stuff." Not long after, Bren led Ahaszuk in accepting Jesus.

"Greg wasn't interested in anything to do with God when I met him," Bren said. "Now he is a lay leader and plays in our worship band."

Bren believes it is through relationship and story that Ahaszuk decided to place his faith in Christ.

"We are storytellers," said Bren. "Storytelling is integrated into everything



Excuse or opportunity?

God has strategically placed Wesleyan churches and people in an amazing variety of geographical contexts. Like the book of Acts, we have been “dispersed” to the “here, near, far and hard” (Acts 1:8), throughout North America and around the world. God’s positioning us to have a transforming presence in every ZIP code (and, for our Canadian constituents, near every Tim Horton’s).

How those locations differ. Some are rural, some are urban. Some are wealthy, others struggle in poverty. Some are multicultural while others have one prevalent culture. Some are so densely populated they are best measured in blocks. Others go on for miles and miles.

When it comes to multiplication of disciples and churches, do we view our location as an excuse or an opportunity?

I recently talked with several leaders who have a multiplication vision. Steve McVey serves in Lamont, Kansas, with a posted population of 22.

Yet his church is the birthplace of the “Dirt Roads Network,” an initiative for planting and uniting rural churches to reach rural North America. Ashley Jennings is leading in **Red Rock, Arizona**, and ready to send her first church planter out of her young plant. Mick Veach is in **Midtown Detroit**, in the heart of a city facing incredible challenges. Irving Figueroa is in **Guaynabo, Puerto Rico**, an island devastated by Hurricane Maria, with the subsequent impact of a decreasing population. Nestor Gudino is multiplying Hispanic churches in **North Carolina**, not only in different locations but to reach different generations and languages. Anthony Graham, an effective co-vocational pastor, is building a multi-location church in **New York City**.

Not one of them uses their context of not enough people, too many people, not diverse, too diverse, distracted by wealth or broken by poverty as an excuse. Each sees kingdom opportunity. Each is stepping out, and God is providing.

May God grant us faith and courage to “**make the most of the opportunity.**” 🍌



DR. WAYNE SCHMIDT
General Superintendent
The Wesleyan Church

Transforming lives, churches, and communities through the hope and holiness of Jesus Christ.

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wesleyan life

Founders Orange Scott (1843), Seth Rees (1897)

Executive Editor Janelle Vernon

Creative Director Kory Pence

Assistant Editor Tricia Rife

Designers Lyn Ryn, Anna Stingley

Digital Curator Matthew Tietje

Digital Storyteller Aaron Fussner

Cover Anna Stingley

Contributors

Chris Adams

Elizabeth Glass-Turner

Jackie Bledsoe

Ethan Linder

Anita Eastlack

Wayne Schmidt

Dalene Fisher

Gabriela Garver

DIGITAL MAGAZINE AT WESLEYAN.LIFE

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Correspondence

For change of address give both old and new addresses. Address all editorial and advertising correspondence, subscriptions and change of address to:

Mailing Address

Wesleyan Life
P.O. Box 50434
Indianapolis, IN
46250-0434

Physical Address

The Wesleyan Church
13300 Olivo Road
Fishers, IN 46037
Tel: 317.774.7907
Fax: 317.774.3924



www.wesleyan.org

communications@wesleyan.org

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Celebrate Multiplication

SERVING GOD TOGETHER is the best way to accomplish the mission of the church. The church needs advocates for women in ministry to open up possibilities for everyone's gifts. This issue points people to resources, training and stories of success. 🙌

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Celebrate



SHALOM LIDDICK



AMANDA OICKE



I MUST
LIVE AS A
SENT ONE!



NATALIE CHURCHMAN

We are
vital
the mis



A collage of various elements on a white background. It includes several Polaroid-style photographs of women, some of which are overlapping. A single green leaf is placed near the top center. A small, dark, torn piece of paper is visible. A green succulent-like plant is in the bottom left corner. A vertical strip of paper with text is on the left side. A small photo of a door covered in many small photos is on the right side.

Church planters who are *women* are fueling the future

The back of Rev. Anita Eastlack's office door is plastered with photos. Smiling faces peer toward her desk whenever her door is closed. It's a simple but potent reminder of what's at stake in church multiplication: each person on the back of her door is a woman involved in leading or preparing to lead a church plant in The Wesleyan Church. What started out as just four women whom she was aware of has grown to dozens covering her door — and the number continues to grow. When Eastlack sees the photos, she prays.

Eastlack, the executive director of Church Multiplication and Discipleship for The Wesleyan Church, began the prayer project and started hosting online video calls to facilitate connections among church planters who were women. From the four women she began with two years ago, the regular calls now involve 42 women involved in church plant leadership across the country. It's a time when women in church plant ministry can build relationships, learn from others at different stages of a church plant cycle, discuss strategies and vision and problem-solve gender-related challenges. In The Wesleyan Church, 12.1 percent of women pastors are active in lead roles. For women called to lead roles in ministry, church planting can be a creative venture to live out that calling.

Rev. Natalie Churchman of New Hope Wesleyan Church in Hornell, New York, is one of these women. Churchman, who serves as assistant pastor, describes the satisfaction of fruitful ministry in a lively environment.

"Since the first worship service at New Hope, ***I knew that God placed me in this position to serve him.*** It is amazing to watch people who have never understood the love of God and his amazing grace come to a saving faith and be transformed."

Churchman was in the process of becoming a licensed minister when her home church initiated a church plant. At the time, she was a member of her local board of administration. "I let them know I was feeling led to be a part of the plant." It was the pastor and leadership of the mother church, Buena Vista Wesleyan in nearby Canisteo, that helped her envision herself at work in a church plant.

Having a varied background in ministry has been invaluable for Churchman.

"I believe the best church planters or co-church planters are men and woman who are able to successfully do a variety of ministries. Any church planter needs to be totally dependent on God for strength and direction. Whatever needs to be done, you may have to do."

Meanwhile, **Shalom Liddick** and her husband, Michael, who is also a pastor, are planting a church in Arizona. There is "no specific way you have to look to be a pastor. You just have to be obedient."

Born in Nigeria and raised in Belize, Liddick believes the call to ministry is clear — but it took a while for the pastor's daughter to picture herself in pastoral ministry.

"God had to break down the walls." Liddick didn't grow up in a denomination that affirmed women in ministry, but finally the moment came.

"The call to pastoral ministry is clear. There's a certainty, a moment in history." This clarity is necessary because, Liddick continues, "we're going to have challenges." Difficult times can cause ministers to doubt their calling unless that experience is planted deeply to sustain pastors through hard seasons.

Currently, the Liddicks are growing their team, meeting with their coaches and connecting to their community as they prepare for preview services this fall; the official launch is slated for December. As she prepares to step further into the unknown, for Liddick, following her call comes down to learning to trust — and being willing to accept God's answer, whatever it is.

In Canada, Kingswood University graduate **Amanda Oicle** never pictured herself as a church planter. She has a diverse background in ministry, leading kids' church, prayer groups, small group ministry and launching a Celebrate Recovery program, but never expected to be a pastor.

"When I felt a call to ministry I did not assume it meant pastoral ministry," said Oicle. "I expected it to be Christian counseling because I had no experience with women in senior leadership, but as I was discerning my next steps for education I felt like God was saying pastoral ministry. My pastor was the first person I talked to about being a pastor and then a planter."

With the encouragement of her pastor, Oicle's sense of calling from pastoral ministry to church planting arrived quite specifically.



There is no specific way you have to look to be a pastor
You just have to be obedient



We're going to have challenges





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— Jackie Bledsoe, digital resource coordinator

"God called me to church planting through a vision," said Oicle. "I was 'young' in the gift of prophecy at that time, so you can imagine how shocked I was. I had a dream that my husband and I were walking around with a real estate agent to find a store front building to launch a church. My home church, Deep Water [in Halifax, Nova Scotia], was a church plant so the idea of starting something from scratch was not completely new to me; however, me leading was a very new concept."

Beginning this August, she is slated to provide senior leadership to a six-year-old church plant in the Toronto area. Part of her preparation for the role has been participating in a church planter cohort for women, which Oicle describes as "a great network of support and encouragement." Her study at Kingswood has also prepared her for the distinct opportunities and challenges of ministry in a church plant.

Oicle reflected on young adults considering ministry, especially women.

"I want women to know that they are vital in the mission of the Church," said Oicle. "When it comes to the next generation the best way for them to discover the prospect of church planting is to empower them to use

their gifts and passions and then mentor them, speak into their lives and help them visualize what God may be leading them to do."

Back in Eastlack's office, her door is ready and waiting for more photos of women actively serving in church plant leadership. As she looks for avenues to "close the gospel gap," Eastlack is driven by an all-hands-on-deck urgency, praying for multigenerational, multiethnic, men and women and lay and clergy ministers to take up the call of the Great Commission and live as sent people.

As Eastlack surveys the North American population, she is quick to note that, "the nations have come to us! North America has become a mission field." She is determined to mobilize strategies to engage in the mission field on our doorsteps.

"God has given us everyone and everything we need to reach this generation for Christ," she affirms. The back of her door testifies to this reality. 🌿



ELIZABETH GLASS-TURNER

is managing editor of wesleyanaccent.com, an online magazine featuring leading voices across the Wesleyan Methodist family.



Living as a SENT ONE

When I began to travel for my current job, I preferred to cocoon on the plane. I used the time to catch up on emails and sleep.

It didn't take long for me to sense the Holy Spirit's conviction, as the Lord was nudging me out of my cocoon. I must live as a sent one.

For this season of my life, airports and airplanes have become my mission field, to strike up a conversation if people want to talk.

Now I have a list of names and a few details about each person in my notes, so I can remember to pray for the salvation of Ebony, Erling, Mary, Peter, Lisa, James, Carnegie, Tyson and Sandhu.

Amarish is a Hindu who loves to learn about other religions. He asked me to share a teaching with him after I spent time asking him about his Hindu practices. As I opened my Bible app to the book of John and started talking about Jesus, he closed his eyes and leaned forward, taking it in.

Recently, I prayed with Valerie who needs back surgery but is afraid.

She asked for my business card, so she can follow up with me after surgery.

Last year, Church Multiplication and Discipleship partnered with Ed Stetzer at the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism on a research project for small churches. Among the top indicators for growth by conversions was, "The pastor more often attends a class or conference to learn personal evangelism skills. If the pastor is a learner and stays inspired and growing in the area of evangelism, that pastor's church will reach more people who commit to Christ and who stick."

God has begun to favor The Wesleyan Church in new ways.

Will we stay humble and keep our motives pure?

Will we keep reaching lost people for Jesus?

Will we live as sent ones? 🏹



REV. ANITA EASTLACK

is executive director of Church Multiplication and Discipleship for The Wesleyan Church.

QUEST

Quest is a ministry of Southern Wesleyan University for **high school students who want to explore God's call on their life** and what purpose God has in store for them.

Quest offers two types of experiences for high school students: Quest Academy and Quest Adventure. Students can participate in either of the experiences or in both!

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QUEST DIRECTOR:

Professor Brent Dongell has recently joined the faculty at SWU as a professor in NextGen ministries. Brent holds a B.S. in Christian Ministries from Indiana Wesleyan University and an M.Div. in Christian Leadership from Liberty University. He is the author of "The Hard Twenty Somethings: Not Alone in the Unknown" and has a heart for reaching students with the gospel.





V

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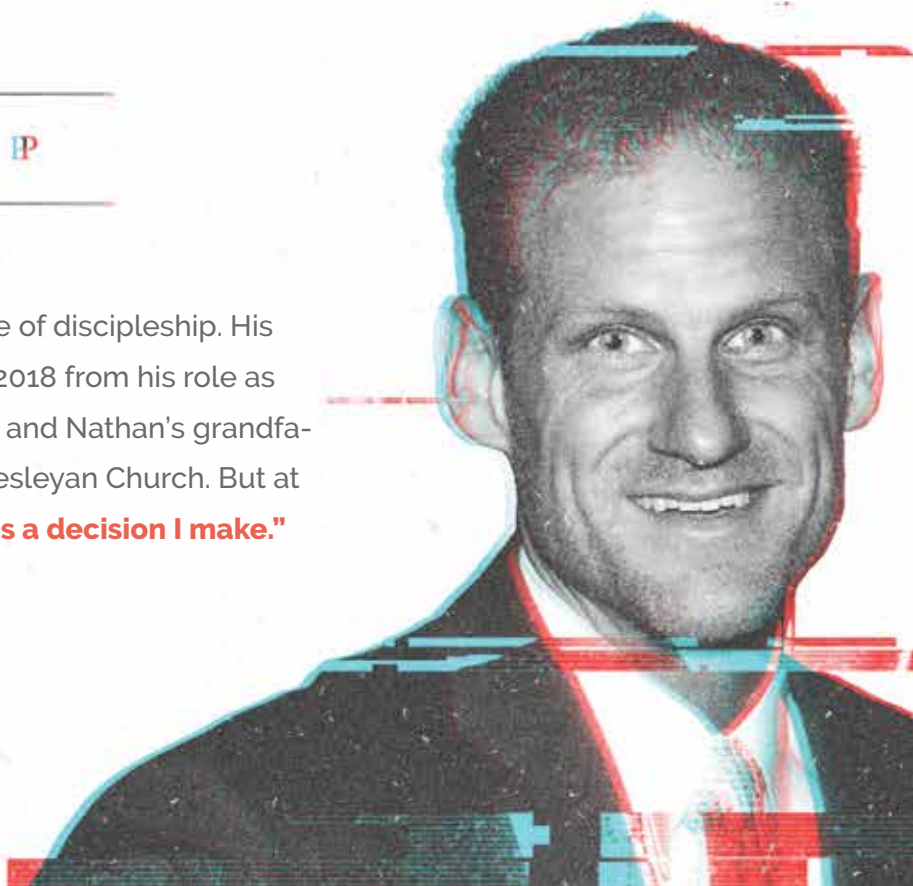
Hoover grew up in Marion, Indiana, attended Indiana Wesleyan University, and went on to earn his doctorate at Indiana University School of Optometry, after which he used his degree to practice optometry, especially focusing on serious eye problems. He grew up in environments that fostered spiritual growth, he graduated with a terminal degree in medicine and was experiencing success in his practice; but the undercurrents of his spiritual life were not yet fully aligned with God's activity. A moment of conviction and response helped him lean more fully into God's work.

"There was a moment in my relationship with Christ where there was a radical transformation in my life," said Hoover. "I was at the top of my game professionally, and he broke through and helped me realize that it isn't about me. Success isn't just defined by what car you buy or what house you live in. **It's all about how you influence the people around you for Jesus Christ.**"

With this new definition of success, Hoover resigned from the board of a church of about 1,800 people and realized God was calling him to something different. Eventually, the new call became clear, as Hoover felt led to help Expansion Church become a transformative presence in its community of Chesterton, Indiana.

As his discernment of this call to partner with Expansion Church became clear, Hoover continued his existing focus on patient care; as he did so, he also worked on including spiritually formative experiences into his team's culture.

Dr. Nathan Hoover was born into a rich heritage of discipleship. His father—Rev. Stan Hoover—retired in June of 2018 from his role as district superintendent of the Chesapeake District, and Nathan's grandfather and great-grandfather were pastors in The Wesleyan Church. But at some point, Hoover reflects, **"I had to realize this is a decision I make."**



"I ask, 'How can I make people's lives better by them seeing Jesus Christ in me?' I am not ashamed of where I go to church and what I believe as I go into my exam room or talk with my team. I invite people to church from work on a regular basis; I don't shove it down people's throats, but I do work to connect with people and get to that question: **'How's your relationship with Christ?'**"

Combining spiritual attentiveness with their existing focus on patient care, Hoover's already-thriving practice experienced accelerated growth and began expanding to multiple locations around Indiana. Hoover now sees between 30 to 50 patients every day at three different office locations — generally traveling from one office to another between morning and afternoon.

Deeply involved in **Expansion Church** as an advisory team member and small group leader, Hoover is applying his business acumen to strategize around how the church can partner with God in making disciples. He also has words of advice for career-driven laity who are on the periphery of their congregations.

"How can I make people's lives better by them seeing Jesus Christ in me?"

"When you're at the top, you're only halfway there—it has to be about more than just you...look at all the free time you have. What are you using it for? Ask, 'What am I filling my life with?' and **'How can I use my gifts and influence at church or in a service organization?'**"

This effort requires cooperation between laity and clergy, so if pastors want to engage laity in the work of the church, Hoover advises them to ask for more than financial contributions. Ask them to think about how their gifts might benefit the church, community and world—and how their leadership might make their church more harmonious with God's call.

If Hoover could sit down over coffee with every Wesleyan pastor, he would offer this advice: "There are people waiting in the wings to see vision and to see if there's something truly of depth there. Many entrepreneurs have been around the block and want to see what the vision is; if that's laid out nicely, many will think it's worth their time and resources to get involved." 🐦



REV. ETHAN LINDER

is the college, young adult and connections pastor at College Wesleyan Church in Marion, Indiana.



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HELPING MINISTERS TO THRIVE

Tending the Shepherds

“Take care of yourself...you are no good to the kingdom of God lying flat on your back like this.”

My paternal grandfather said those words to my father from his hospital bed. My grandfather was a pastor who had served small congregations in New England until forced into an early retirement due to a major heart attack in his early 50s. A second attack took his life a decade later.

His salary in the early years barely put the family at poverty level and he, at times, would pick up an extra job just to make ends meet. One congregation refused to install heat in the old, drafty parsonage in the middle of a harsh New England winter. A man from one church would regularly come by the parsonage unannounced just to yell at my grandfather for no good reason.

In those days, no one talked about clergy health.

“People have no idea how draining pastoral ministry can be. I will grieve with a family as I conduct a funeral, and right after, rejoice with a couple as I perform their wedding. We are expected to preach well, counsel well, lead the building of a new church, represent the church in our community, cast a great vision, disciple new believers and meet with several committees who all believe their ministry is the most significant. Every time the phone rings, we wonder if it’s a crisis, or if they just want to get a cup of coffee,” said one pastor.

Clergy health research reveals that many health difficulties pastors experience can be prevented. Pastors must live disciplined lives — exercising regularly, learning to manage their adrenaline, paying attention to proper nutrition and sleeping an average of seven to nine hours nightly.

Congregations can help by having realistic expectations, creating healthy feedback loops and implementing a healthy church discipline process to take some of the unwarranted, unfair criticism off the pastor. Supporting (and even requiring) self-care habits, sabbaticals and vacations can be incredibly helpful to a pastor.



DR. CHRIS ADAMS
is the executive director of the
Azusa Pacific University Center
for Vocational Ministry.

 **READ THE FULL ARTICLE**
wes.life/tendingtheshepherds

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**Healthy pastors
create healthy
congregations. **



THE ANSWER IS YES

Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus was dramatic. Before God called him out, he was *"breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord"* (Acts 9:1, NKJV).

Just a few years ago, Micheal Freeman was similarly full of rage. He wasn't necessarily angry with God's people, but he was "breathing threats and murder." Fueled by drugs, alcohol, depression and five sleepless nights, Freeman loaded every weapon he owned into the trunk of his car with ill intent.

Freeman remembers driving down his driveway and looking both ways. The next thing he recalls is being parked in front of a Celebrate Recovery (CR) meeting sponsored by Celebrate Church, a Wesleyan church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. CR is a national Christ-centered, twelve-step addiction recovery program. With nothing to lose, Freeman joined the gathering.

There, he heard Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (NKJV). When Freeman left CR that night, he drove straight home.

Freeman had been abused by a distant family relative when he was five. To avoid the pain and numb the memory, Freeman started using drugs and alcohol when he was only a child. As an adult, Freeman was extremely professional and

had a successful military career. But he "always had a buzz on" in order to cope. The day he set out to end it all, he was exhausted. "I didn't want to live any longer," he said.

Freeman attended CR again the next week. Sitting at the back and wearing a hat and sunglasses, the message was "like an email about my entire life." Convicted and broken, Freeman left CR and headed north on Interstate 29. Overcome, he pulled over. Alone and on his knees, he gave his life to Christ.

From his driveway to the shoulder of I-29, Freeman's Damascus Road was dramatic and providential. Plucked from destruction and compelled by the Holy Spirit, Freeman withheld nothing. "When I became a Christian," he explained, "I drank of the living water. I don't thirst for drugs and alcohol. I do have struggles, but the living water has quenched my thirst for so many things." He has been clean ever since. "The night that I got on my knees, I was all in." He prayed, "Before you ask, God, the answer is yes."

Freeman began attending Celebrate Church faithfully. Soon thereafter, Pastor Keith Loy, who had a vision for church planting, asked who in the congregation would stand and go. Freeman said that he felt like a young boy whose father was pulling him to his feet by grabbing hold of the belt at his waist. He stood.

"After 50 years of addiction, Freeman's life was radically transformed when he came to know Jesus Christ," said Reed Devries, Celebrate director of church planting.



“Before you ask, God, the answer is yes.”



“That radical transformation has been so evident to everyone around him. His life of anger and control has been replaced by a heart of love and submission to Christ and serving others.”

Celebrate’s vision for church planting, Devries explained, “now permeates everything we do,” and Freeman is an important part of the vision.

Freeman is headed two hours west of Sioux Falls to Chamberlain, South Dakota. He and his wife, Dawn, are part of 50 Celebrate church planters being sent. To prepare Freeman, Celebrate has been discipling him since his conversion.

“Freeman has been mentored by a number of people, and for the last two years has been in regular training regarding church planting. As a part of that, he came on our staff for six months in a church planting residency,” explains Devries. “There will never be a time we won’t be mentoring and walking with him.” Freeman and other Celebrate church planters meet weekly for accountability and training.

Rev. Anita Eastlack, executive director of Church Multiplication and Discipleship, understands the importance of Freeman’s story: “We like to say, ‘celebrating every time





“If we all prayed fervent and focused prayers, imagine the revival that would break out!”

a disciple makes a disciple and a church multiplies itself until The Wesleyan Church has a transforming presence in every ZIP code.’ The population of unchurched people is growing faster than the conversion rate. This has created a conviction within us and a sense of urgency to reach our generation for Christ.

“The Holy Spirit is speaking a common message to all of us,” said Eastlack. “Wake up. The time is short. Focus on the kingdom. Reach people with Christ’s love, hope and forgiveness.

“If we all prayed fervent and focused prayers, imagine the revival that would break out! When lay people begin praying and realizing that they are ‘qualified’ to participate, many will begin to hear God calling them.”

Freeman’s transformation should bring hope to us all.

As he said, “When I read about the Damascus Road, I thought, ‘That is me. That is what happened.’ I know this is a second chance. I want to reach as many people as I possibly can.”

God is calling people of all sorts of backgrounds to say, like Freeman, **“Before you ask, God, the answer is yes.”** 🌿



DR. DALENE FISHER

is the dean of Arts and Sciences and assistant professor of English at Oklahoma Wesleyan University.

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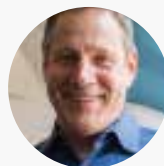
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Acculturation: a nifty word used in cross-cultural ministry to describe the process of “fitting in” to a new life, language, economy, socio-economic group, etc. It involves taking a good long look at who and why you are and then figuring out how to best shape-shift into a whole new culture. It’s exhausting, rewarding, frustrating and one of the best personal growth tools available.

In the bustling European capital where I live, the idea of acculturation becomes a bit complicated as about half of the city’s population has a migrant background. The city’s ethnic divide became wider during the 2015 Syrian Refugee Crisis and continues to grow as refugees from all over the world arrive seeking safety from war, poverty and oppression.

Walking through the streets you will hear English, German, French, Turkish, Hungarian, Serbian, Farsi and Arabic. This culture clash leaves many newcomers in a difficult position: which culture do we acculturate? Western European culture? One of the various subcultures created by immigrant groups who live and work together? A hybrid of East-meets-West that leaves us all confused?

As team members of Global Partners’ newest field focusing on Muslim immigrant and refugee outreach in Europe, we’re faced with the same acculturation questions as many of our friends. The good news is that when it comes to refugees, this can be a point of connection. Struggling through the red tape of bureaucracy? We get it. Can’t find a grocery store open on Sundays due to long-standing Catholic tradition? Tell me about it. Not sure whether to shake hands or hug? Me neither!



God amidst *the chaos*

It's not difficult to see that the need for Christ is just as real inside this closed-off community.

What’s even better is that many refugees are looking for a whole new life, family and faith. One of our friends, Hamed, had been questioning the Muslim faith for years before leaving his homeland, but was unable to legally look for answers outside of Islam. Once his plane hit the ground in Europe, he sought out a local pastor and decided to follow Christ within three hours of his arrival. To us, that’s incredible and portrays the ripe harvest among refugees. The guidance and hope Christ offers is something these now nationless people crave.

Things become a bit more complicated concerning our Muslim immigrant friends, many of whom have been here for years if not their whole life. From the outside, it would seem they have attained the “better life” their parents or grandparents sought. They are surrounded by family, their worship



community and their self-sustaining subeconomy. This large people group operates almost exclusively inside of their own cultural bubble and have for several generations.

However, it's not difficult to see that the need for Christ is just as real inside this closed-off community. They face hardships such as prejudice, employment instability and lack the rights of the European citizens that surround them. They are forever in limbo, stranded between a home country most have never been to and a new land that will not fully accept them. Understandably, this creates an atmosphere of suspicion when it comes to outsiders. It takes much more effort on our part to gain the trust necessary to build sustainable relationships.

The task before us is overwhelming, especially given that the evangelical presence here is small with roughly three percent of the country's population claiming to be Protestant. However, we are determined to share the good news of Christ to anyone who will listen — no

matter how culturally confused we all are. We know that through Christ we can celebrate differences in language, culture and upbringing, while remaining united by his love.

So, what is God doing here amidst the chaos? He is drawing his loved ones closer to him. He is redeeming long, hard journeys and jail-breaking those who are fleeing systematic, racial and religious oppression. He is allowing peace and joy to drift into lives that have seen only injustice and fear.

God is transforming individuals who are transforming their communities and awakening a spiritual hunger across the city. We hope that with God's help his light will break through the cracks of inequality and neglect to reach our Muslim immigrant friends. 🙌

AUTHOR

is a Global Partners missionary serving in immigrant outreach in Europe. (Name withheld for security reasons.) Global Partners gives global focus to the mission of The Wesleyan Church.

"Through Christ we can celebrate differences in language, culture and upbringing, while remaining united by his love."



**Many refugees
are looking for a
whole new life,
family and *faith.***

 **LEARN MORE:** www.globalpartnersonline.org





Kingdom MATH

Kingdom math doesn't always add up, but it always *equals* transformed lives.

Figgs' mindset has changed, although he admits it wasn't easy. Church growth was heralded over church multiplication throughout the majority of his ministry career.

"I've grown my church for years, but I've not deployed my church. I needed to get used to giving people rather than getting them. I needed some time to process and pray about giving away my people."

He asked Wagner for time to do just that, process and pray. The two men agreed. One year later, Figgs shared with Wagner his conclusion that the church grows best through multiplication and that he and Calvary Wesleyan would support Wagner's call to plant a church.

Figgs and Calvary Wesleyan believe in church multiplication so much that current church building projects have been put on hold to put more money toward church planting.

When Pastor Ken Figgs of **Calvary Wesleyan Church** in Harrington, Delaware, learned that staff member Kenneth Wagner had received a call to plant a church, church preservation math was thrown out the window and kingdom math became Figgs' guide.

At that time, Figgs was leading a 750-member church rich with a 117-year history. When Wagner was sent to plant **UNITED Church**, 60 members of Calvary Wesleyan went with him to nearby Dover, located 30 minutes north of Calvary Wesleyan, to help. The church gave \$150,000 to support and fund UNITED, which launched September 20, 2015.

What happened afterward can only be calculated with kingdom math, where addition by subtraction equals multiplication. Kingdom math underwrites a story of sacrifice, of giving up "rights" to what one thinks belongs to him or her and how it can be used to do something greater than originally imagined.

"If you add the growth of what I've done in multiple churches over 30 years, it doesn't add up to what Wagner has done in two years," said Figgs.

**"I'm totally sold out
▶ [on multiplication]."**



! LEARN MORE
about Calvary Wesleyan Church
calvarywesleyan.org



! **MORE INFO**
about Church
Multiplication Collective
wesleyan.org/cmc

! **LEARN MORE**
about UNITED Church
unitedchurchde.com

515 people

showed up to the first
UNITED Church gathering

128 people

received Christ as Savior
on Easter 2017

According to Figgs, about 80 percent of Calvary Wesleyan has come alive to church multiplication. "We are deploying people and coming alongside churches. We send people to preach and lead worship and children's workers into churches that need partnerships.

"In the last two-and-a-half years, we've really raised our awareness of the need for people developing people. We have put into place a development system focusing on leadership and discipleship. If you're not developed as a disciple, you're not going to be effective as a leader," Figgs said.

"Let's not just build a church and fill it up, let's multiply the church and fill up the kingdom." I believe that is the fastest way to grow the kingdom."

God continues to honor that mentality, as Calvary Wesleyan continues to grow — not just numerically, but in developing disciples who lead well in all facets of ministry.

"The outreach part of our church has changed dramatically. Last year, we fed half of Harrington (population 3,300) a full Thanksgiving meal. We sent 200 people into a different Dover community with whom we had no connection," said Figgs. "Our people are now open to assisting others and providing what they need. Thinking in multiplication terms changes what we see, how we think and what we do."

Because Calvary Wesleyan supported church multiplication, releasing and sending, lives are being transformed at UNITED.

People like Gary, who was getting up at 5:00 a.m. on Sundays to serve on the service set-up team. One Sunday, he placed his faith in Jesus and is growing in that relationship.

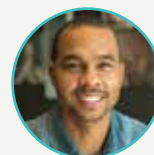
People like Bill who was Special Ops in the United States Army and far from God. Now he is reading God's Word and growing in his faith.

People like Lindsey who drives over an hour to be at church early to help set up and is falling more in love with Jesus.

People like Roy. Before UNITED, his family was plugged into a church, but he wasn't and now he has given his life to Jesus. He serves on the UNITED Church Advisory Team.

UNITED is planning to launch a new campus this fall, and Calvary Wesleyan is helping support them.

The sacrifice, generosity and serving hearts of a lead pastor, a church planting pastor and their congregations has led to The Wesleyan Church making more disciples, multiplying the church and having a transforming presence being celebrated in yet another ZIP code. 🐦



JACKIE BLEDSOE
is digital resource coordinator
for Church Multiplication
and Discipleship.



Learning to Multiply

Multiplication is at the heart of The Wesleyan Church's vision strategy to becoming a transforming presence in every ZIP code, and that's why Wesleyan education is ramping up efforts to equip the church, from lay leaders to full-time pastors, to make disciples.

Achieving that vision strategy will take all hands on deck," said Russ Gunsalus, executive director of Education and Clergy Development.

Nontraditional educational pathways have allowed those called into ministry from the marketplace to be equipped, thanks to their "flexibility, portability and affordability," Gunsalus noted.

Likewise, young Wesleyan graduates are going on to plant new ministries. Here's a glimpse of how Wesleyan educational institutions are preparing students for church multiplication:

"Each institution is unique but **united in their mission.**"



LEARN MORE

about Wesleyan Higher Education
wesleyan.org/ecd/colleges

Houghton College

Students receive instruction from professors who have real-life church planting experience. Houghton regularly sends students and athletes off campus to support growing ministries — locally, across the country and abroad. Students are also encouraged to plug into a local church during their college years, forming habits and gifts that support multiplication, and Houghton has seen many of its graduates go on to plant new ministries.

! MORE INFO
about Houghton College
wes.life/houghton

Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU)

KERN, a five-year “high school to master’s degree” ministry program, has served as a seedbed for innovative, entrepreneurial planters. In the program’s fifth year, students take a course in Church Health and Mission that is often taught by a church planter, such as Dr. Charles Arn. Most recently, KERN students Marcus DePeal and Andy Riemersma planted a ministry at nearby Ball State University, a state educational institution.

IWU is also looking to form church planting cohorts, in which a group of students from a variety of majors might team up to plant a church together after graduation.

! KERN MINISTRY PROGRAM
at Indiana Wesleyan University
wes.life/kern

Kingswood University

Church multiplication students typically visit four plants during their second year and are required to participate in a four-month, on-site internship. Students also interact with church planters on campus, including guest speakers and denominational leaders who provide opportunities to get connected with cutting-edge ministries. A new “Marketplace Ministry” degree program for those who anticipate serving bivocationally has been launched.

Perhaps Kingswood’s most creative preparation effort is a church-plant version of “Shark Tank,” in which students put together mock church planting proposals that are judged and rewarded by a team of experienced church leaders.

! KINGSWOOD UNIVERSITY
Degree Programs
wes.life/kingswood

Oklahoma Wesleyan University (OKWU)

For the past decade, OKWU has been supporting young churches through its Church Plant Partnership, a ministry that matches students from all degree programs to church plants across the country.

Three students were recently sent to fill needs at Overflow Church, a multi-faceted ministry in Benton Harbor, Michigan. Sheresa, a finance student, assisted with running thrift shops; Brandon, a ministry major, helped lead youth programs; and Dalynn, an education major, helped create a community literacy program.

“By incorporating students with different skill sets, we have the opportunity to look at churches’ needs and provide the connection to students who can best help their ministries grow,” said Ben Rotz, associate vice president of Student Development.

This year, OKWU is launching a missions group to train and send students to serve nationally and internationally to build healthy churches and communities.

! MORE INFO
about Oklahoma Wesleyan University
wes.life/oklahoma

Southern Wesleyan University (SWU)

In the past year, under the direction of Dr. Mike Tapper and Rev. Mark Wilson, Southern Wesleyan has ramped up its church multiplication ministries — forging partnerships with multiplying pastors and churches, welcoming planters into the classroom as guest lecturers and taking students off campus to visit church plants.

SWU also launched Quest, a program to help high school students discern God’s calling for their lives, which includes weekend trips to local, missional churches.

A new program called 3-1 launches this fall: three years of classroom academics followed by a full year residency in disciple-multiplying partner churches.

! SWU QUEST PROGRAM
swu.edu/quest

! SWU 3-1 PROGRAM
wes.life/swu3-1



WESLEY SEMINARY

INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Wesley Seminary's church planting and multiplication specialization is blossoming as it broadens its focus to better serve those in ministry.

"Our hope is that those who are thinking about going into multiplication ministry will have an understanding of what's required and those who are already doing it will bring their experience in a way that energizes the whole group," said Dr. Abson Joseph, academic dean.

Some courses function as a lab — allowing students to discuss problem-based scenarios that can then be applied to real-life ministries — and others are completely on-site. One course takes students to various church plants in Indianapolis for hands-on learning.

! MORE INFO
about Wesley Seminary
wes.life/wesley-seminary

The seminary also participates in the Exponential Conference, a nationwide gathering that equips multipliers and introduces students to bi-vocational ministry.

Regardless of their specialization, all Wesley Seminary students are equipped to engage in ministry multiplication through discipleship, whether as a lay person, bi-vocational leader or full-time pastor. The seminary's newest specialization, intercultural studies, focuses on multiplication across cultures.

"In the past, it has been difficult for a student right out of college to plant a church," said Dr. Ken Schenck of Indiana Wesleyan University, "but The Wesleyan Church increasingly has the support systems in place."

"Our educational institutions are an integral part of The Wesleyan Church raising awareness of the need for and God's call to make disciples," said Gunsalus. "Lives are being impacted because of the faithfulness of faculty, staff and students to include multiplication in their curriculum. For generations, lives have been changed by our schools. May God continue to reach future generations through the truth that is taught at Wesley Seminary, Houghton, Indiana Wesleyan, Kingswood, Oklahoma Wesleyan and Southern Wesleyan. Each institution is unique but united in their mission." 🌿



GABRIELA (GABY) GARVER

is a writer and copy editor for an online newspaper in Istanbul, Turkey.



FAITH & CULTURE

COLLISION

LEARNING TRUTH IN A POST-TRUTH WORLD
IS MORE RELEVANT THAN EVER BEFORE.

OKLAHOMA
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

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I praise God!"

—Emmanuel, 38 year-old farmer
Romankeneh, Sierra Leone

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62%

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Events

Following are events designed to help The Wesleyan Church flourish. Explore each link to learn more about how you can increase your faith, knowledge and wellbeing.

2018

OCTOBER



PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

Resources to encourage and affirm your leaders

wesleyan.org/pastorappreciation

4–6
OCT

CALL & RESPONSE • *The Past, Present and Future of Black Christians in America*

callandresponseconference.com

11–12
OCT

NEW PASTOR ORIENTATION

wesleyan.org/newpastororientation

31
OCT

CCDA • *Wesleyan Church Multiplication Collective Shoulder Day*

wesleyan.org/ccda

2019

9–12
JAN



THE GATHERING • *Thriving Clergy Conference*

wesleyan.org/gathering

12–15
MAY

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH

wesleyan.org/icwc

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unleashing the church's mission

resources.wesleyan.org





ELLIOTT NAMED NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Stephen Elliott has been appointed the National Superintendent, replacing H. C. Wilson who has retired.

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/elliottcanada



FOUR DISTRICTS VOTE TO MERGE INTO GREAT LAKES DISTRICT

The Illinois, East Michigan, North Michigan and West Michigan districts have taken steps to merge.

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/votetomerge

News



GLOBAL



GENERAL



COLLEGE



Students spend their summer communicating Christ

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/students



Pickering named interim Western Pennsylvania District Superintendent

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/pickeringds



NORTHEAST DISTRICT MERGER COMPLETE

The new district includes eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, eastern New York State (including New York City), Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire.

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/northeastdistrict



ADVANCING WESLEYAN EDUCATION THROUGH WE5

The WE5 initiative celebrates the combined strength and ongoing impact of The Wesleyan Church's five colleges and universities.

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/we5



Every Wesleyan Higher Education campus provides multiethnic opportunities

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/educationmultiethnic



New leadership model announced for Chesapeake District

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/chesapeakeleaders



Immigrant Connection continues to expand its sites and impact

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/immigrantconnection

Remembered

EULA BROWN (75) died February 7. She served as a missionary in South America.

REV. KAYE BUSH (73) died April 4. She pastored in Michigan.

REV. LEONARD CATRON (95) died April 8. He pastored in South Carolina.

PASTOR ANA CHACON (73) died July 7. She was serving as a pastor in California.

○ FULL STORY: wes.life/pastorchacon



REV. KEITH COFFEY (79) died June 15. He pastored various churches.

REV. WAYNE COX (87) died June 26. He served at Houghton College's West Seneca campus.

ESTHER ELLIOTT (89) died June 5. She served as a missionary in South Africa.

REV. FRED FOX (69) died April 3. He was serving as pastor of First Wesleyan Church in Chillicothe, Ohio.

REV. JOHN GALLEGOS (64) died April 9. He pastored Joy Community Church, an affiliate of The Wesleyan Church, in Machias, New York.

REV. WILLIAM "CURTIS" HALL (81) died May 5. He pastored in Virginia.

REV. HUDSON HESS (83) died April 13. He pastored in New York.

REV. CHARLES HORTON (84) died March 11. He pastored in California.



NANCY HUBBARD (60) died April 11. She served as a missionary in Panama.

○ FULL STORY: wes.life/nancyhubbard

ELIZABETH KARNs (85) died May 28. She served in South Africa, Liberia, Zimbabwe and Guyana as a missionary.

REV. DANIEL KELLER (75) died February 25. He pastored for 18 years.

SUSANA ALEJO LIPAOEN (84) died May 15. She pastored in the Philippines and California.

DR. VERNON MARPLES (82) died April 12. He pastored churches in Canada.

ALBERTA "BERTIE" LEMLEY MERRIFIELD (75) died November 15, 2017. She served as a missionary in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Swaziland and Ghana.

REV. EDWARD REEL, JR. (88) died March 25. He pastored in Indiana.

REV. ROY STRAUB (92) died May 18. He pastored in Ohio, New York and North Carolina.

REV. GARY TESH (69) died June 25. He pastored in North Carolina.

REV. ORACE WAYNE (O. W.) WILLIS (88) died May 30. He pastored and served as Indiana South District superintendent.

ELLA WOOLSEY (95) died March 29. She served as a missionary in Sierra Leone.

REV. ROGER WRIGHT (67) died July 10. He pastored in the East Michigan District.

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