

This week's Lead Pastors' Zoom Meeting will take place on Thursday, **September 17**, at 4:00 p.m., with both Spanish and English "channels." Dr. Scott Rainey, Global Director for Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International, will be our guest presenter. Scott will help us explore practical discipleship options in a COVID-19 environment, including digital ways to make disciples as well as discipleship for children and teenagers in a pandemic.

Remember the Journey of Grace!

- Nazarene Discipleship as a Journey of Grace
- We have separated evangelism from discipleship for far too long in the church. We say that you evangelize someone first and then you disciple them.
 - o Scripture doesn't pull these apart like we have.
 - The Great Commission is an evangelistic charge to make disciples!
 - o We don't pull these apart in our homes when we raise Christian kids.
 - We disciple our children from day one... and evangelize them along the way when the Spirit opens the door.
 - o SDMI's mission statement is to "carry out the Great Commission"
 - So, if that is our mission statement, and all we do is focus on discipling the already believer, we will never accomplish our mission.
 - o There is no evangelism that doesn't make disciples, and there is no discipleship that doesn't reach the lost!
 - o Discipleship doesn't begin at conversion, it begins at birth!
 - o We don't convert people to disciple them. We disciple people in order to be sure they are truly converted.
 - o We do not do conversion-based evangelism but holiness-based evangelism. Our evangelism always has the end in mind... holiness!

So, discipleship discussions should always include the entire journey (from no faith to new faith to mature faith).

- How can we disciple pre-Christians during a pandemic?
- How can we disciple new Christians during a pandemic?
- How can we disciple mature Christians during a pandemic?

Another way to look at this is that we need to "care for God's sheep":

- You
- Your family
- Your church
- The lost

It is important to remember that discipleship is always about relationships.

- Relationship with God and with others.
- Remember, SDMI's mission statement, "carry out the Great Commission with children, youth, and adult in preparation for a lifetime of being and making disciples."
- **You can't disciple without a relationship!**

1. Taking care of yourself (you have probably had other zoom meetings on this, maybe you didn't see that as discipleship... it is a part of discipleship)
 - Spending time with Jesus everyday
 - Accountability partners
 - Exercise
 - Sleep cycles
 - Eating right
 - Monitoring work time so that you don't do too much or too little
 - Getting away from news and social media (the new fast!)

2. Taking care of the family unit.
 - I believe there is a great need for youth pastors and children's pastors to focus on ministry to and training of parents... not just attention to the children and teens.
 - I would highly encourage developing a strategy to support parents in their personal ministry to their families.
 - Parents are the primary disciplers... the church is secondary. So, if you want to disciple the kids well, you need to focus your discipleship on the parents. Teach them to disciple their children (children and youth).
 - Right Now Media – our experience with our kids at home
 - Faith Conversations (parent to child) at Home
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/s/71yucpsvo6jbmsp/faith%20conversations%20at%20home.mp4?dl=0>

3. Taking care of the church.
 - Hebrews 10:24-25, *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*
 - What is your strategy if things close down again?
 - Our experience of house church during the last shut down.
 - CDC... 10 or less.
 - Organizing your church in home affinity groups... online groups for those who will not branch out.
 - Nothing stops meeting one-on-one with new Christians!
 - Online Basic Bible Studies for New and Growing Christians (for use on SmartPhones)
 - <https://basicbiblestudies.com/>
 - Online VBSs (district digital VBS)
 - VBS materials
 - <https://nazarene.org/who-we-are/organization/ministries/sdmi/vbs>

From: Dorothy Whipp

Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 9:11 AM

To: Scott Rainey <srainey@nazarene.org>

Subject: Thank you for Treasure Quest

Hello - I am the District Children's Director for the Oklahoma District.

Just wanted to take a minute to say thank you to the SDMI family for putting together the VBS "Treasure Quest". It has been a huge blessing to our District.

In May when all of the closures were coming (District Assembly, Quiz Meets, Camps, etc.) our DS wanted us to do something digitally in a way to be able to connect with our kids and families. Once we dug out from under the negative thinking of "We can't do that. We've never done it that way before" we decided to do a Digital VBS. The response from our District has been GREAT!!

We divided up the rotations, Memory Gem's, Treasure Points, Opening and Closing Prayers (all the elements of an "in house" VBS) and asked different churches and their kids to do just ONE of these and send us the video. We had participation from over 40 churches!!

Then we compiled them, set a date, and made them available during that week. One of the advantages is now that these are put together they can be used at any time. Several churches are going to use them for Wednesday night programming once we are allowed to gather again. Several churches are going to have a VBS, again, once they can all gather, and use portions from the video's and then do certain rotations themselves.

I loved having the advantage of this being available. I didn't have to worry about content or if the lessons were going to line up with our theology. I didn't have to take days before reviewing every single rotation or skit and rewrite it. The quality was good and all the elements that I needed were available to me. During a time when we, Pastors, were already overloaded trying to figure out all the new ways to take care of our congregations as well as minister to those outside of our congregation, I felt like this VBS was the General Church, offering me a hand up. You gave me the resources so that I could move forward and continue to reach others. It was also a reminder that you care for Children's Ministries enough to have spent hours getting this ready for us to have.

Thanks! Thanks for the reminder that YOU love kids, God loves kids, and together we have the chance to reach more kids for Him.

Dorothy Whipp
Associate Pastor / Children's Pastor
Edmond First Church of the Nazarene

- Outreach to teens... Covid is actually an open door to teens who need relationships!
4. Reaching out to lost sheep
- Grabill Fair – engaging with neighbors
 - Lunch today with Taylor (a young man seeking God)
 - Regular texting and meetings with Mark (an atheist friend)
 - Dental appointment this morning (taking every opportunity to share Christ)
 - Mark Bane is still knocking door-to-door for his church in KC... during the pandemic!

- Take every opportunity!
- Engaging people online through FB live chat... iPastor
 - “If you are in on FB live with us for the first time, click ‘like’”
 - “If you are on FB live with us and you want to speak to a pastor sometime this week, simply put ‘contact’ in the message box.”
 - We have to take the next steps!

Here are some resource links for discipleship during a pandemic...

Panel Discussion: Creative Discipling in These Days

- <https://vimeo.com/413246249/ede7f29b1e>

Global Resources for the Journey of Grace

- <https://sdmi.whdl.org/collections/sdmi-collections>

Faith Connections Adult Video Sunday School Lessons

- <https://www.youtube.com/c/TheFoundryPublishing/playlists>

Online Basic Bible Studies for New and Growing Christians (for use on SmartPhones)

- <https://basicbiblestudies.com/>

FOR CHILDREN:

Faith Conversations (parent to child) at Home

- <https://www.dropbox.com/s/71yucpsvo6jbmsp/faith%20conversations%20at%20home.mp4?dl=0>

VBS materials

- <https://nazarene.org/who-we-are/organization/ministries/sdmi/vbs>

FOR YOUTH:

Probably the best place to start for youth is our resource hub and blog, www.NYIConnect.com. We develop and curate a variety of connection points that provide quality content, media, tools, and insights. Feel free to browse around NYIConnect.com to get a sense of what is recommended, but here are some links to specific pages that may be most helpful...

<http://nyiconnect.com/dont-forget-the-parents/>
<http://nyiconnect.com/youth-quizzing-during-covid-19/>
<http://nyiconnect.com/websites/>
<http://nyiconnect.com/blogs/>

In addition here are some direct links to things we’ve shared recently on social media, in Zoom calls, and online conversations with NYI leaders at the local/district level that I’ve found especially helpful during these unique times with ministry during the coronavirus...

- Basics for starting/leading small groups online
<https://youthministry.com/a-digital-small-group-strategy-in-the-age-of-social-distancing/>
- Best list of ways to connect with students digitally
<https://orangestudents.com/ways-to-digitally-connect-with-students-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
- Fuller Youth Institute
<https://fulleryouthinstitute.org/covid19>
- Center for Parent/Youth Understanding
https://cpyu.org/resource_category/coronavirus/

I want to declare that it will likely be discipleship that helps the church reemerge after the pandemic.

- Remember the disciples following the death of Jesus... hiding in their homes?
- It was the mission, to make disciples, that brought them out of their homes.
- It will be the mission, to make Christlike disciples in the nations, that brings Nazarenes out of their homes!