

## Our Church

### To the Leader:

The Church of the Nazarene is an organized church that is interconnected with Nazarene churches all over the world. How exciting to be a part of something larger than ourselves, all with the directive from Jesus Himself to make Christlike disciples in all the nations.

It is valuable for all members of our local church to see and understand the bigger picture of the Church. We have the church on local, district, and general church levels. As a connected church we share beliefs, values, the mission, and responsibilities.

The Church of the Nazarene is unapologetically connected. By that we mean we are an interdependent body of local churches organized into districts in order to carry out our mutual mission of “making Christlike disciples in the nations.” We are accountable to one another to maintain the integrity of our commonly held beliefs.

We want our children to know they also are a part of the church, on the local level as well as through the district and globally. How can we describe district? There are district opportunities for kids, such as quizzing and summer camps. Global? Every four years we have a global quiz, where children from all over the world gather together to participate in a world-wide quiz. Additionally, as we talk about our missionaries who minister all over the world, they have an opportunity to learn about them and about how kids can be a part of missions as well.

### Objective:

To help children see the importance of the local church, the district church and the global church.

### Materials Needed:

Bible

Music player or smart phone with “Tis a Glorious Church” ready

Playdough for each child or paper and markers

Bubble Mixture: Mix ½ Dawn Dishwashing liquid, 1 gallon of distilled (preferred) water, 2-3

Tablespoons Corn Syrup or glycerin.

Bubble container for each child (optional); if possible print labels with memory verse and stick on bottles

Print positions of service on slips of paper for the Charades activity.

Print names of church leaders on slips of paper

### Scripture and Memory Verse: Matthew 28:19 (NIV)

“Therefore go and make disciples in all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

### Bible Story with Discussion: Romans 12:3-8

**Early Arrival Activity:** Find the hymn “Tis a Glorious Church” on YouTube, and play it for the children.

Give the students play dough, or paper and markers, and ask them to make or draw something about church that they like. Tell them it can be a person, an activity. or a thing. Ask them if you can take their picture with their project once they are finished. *(Take a picture of them on your phone. It might be fun to share these with your pastor or SDMI board at a later date. It also makes your students feel important that you would take a picture of what they have made.)* As an added touch have, “Tis A Glorious Church” playing in the background. Some of your students may never have heard this song before.

### **Bible Story Introduction Activity:**

**Ask:** Has anyone ever heard the song that was playing? *(Most likely it will be unfamiliar.)*

**Say:** The name of it is “Tis a Glorious Church.” This is how God feels about the church. He created the church. The church is His idea! He loves the church and what it stands for. One of the reasons for the church is to make disciples.

**Ask:** What is a disciple? *(A follower of Jesus)*

**Say:** Our memory verse talks about this: “Therefore go and make disciples in all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19, NIV).

**Ask:** Are you a disciple? Do you think I am a disciple? Do you think our Pastor is a disciple?

**Say:** So, if you are a follower of Jesus, you are a disciple. I am a disciple. Pastor is a disciple. We follow Jesus. This is one of the purposes of the church: to equip and train people so that we, as the Church, can go and tell others about Jesus and they will want to be a follower of Him too.

I have an experiment for us to do.

**Activity:** Students will use 3 ingredients to make a bubble solution. Emphasize that these three things are different, yet they are going to form one thing.

1. Mix ½ Dawn liquid dish soap
2. 1 gallon water, preferably distilled
3. 2-3 tablespoons corn syrup or Glycerin.

This works best if it has time to sit for a while. Maybe mix a batch the day before and use that batch when blowing bubbles. You can blow bubbles from this mixture, or you can have them come up and take turns blowing bubbles.

**Option:** Purchase one small bottle of bubbles for each child, attach a label on it with the memory verse to be taken home.

**Say:** While bubbles are far different from the church, there is something in common between the two – each uses the number three. Three ingredients are needed to make bubbles, and there are three different ways to describe the Church of the Nazarene: a local church, a district church and a general church.

We are sitting in our local church – it’s the church you attend. In our local church we have leaders and a church board that helps guide us and make decisions. *(Describe who leaders may be in your church and what their roles are, including clarification of a church board.)*

A district church, and we usually just call it the “district,” is a group of areas and churches grouped together. (*Describe your district and what cities would be a part of your district.*) Like a local church, we have a leader called the District Superintendent and a board called the District Board that assists our pastor when needed. (*Tell the students the name of your District Superintendent.*) Our district is like a bigger family. Kind of like your family, your Mom and Dad and brother and sisters is like our local church. Then if you add your aunts and uncles and cousins - that is kind of like our district Church.

If you add your cousins, and their cousins and their cousins, that’s kind of like our general church. Our general Church of the Nazarene has General Superintendents and a General Board who help guide and lead the Church. It is a blessing to be a part of such a large family. It makes it easy for each of us to do our part to make disciples in all the nation. No one could do this all alone. Even if all our local church came together, we wouldn’t be able to reach everyone in all the nations. That is the advantage of joining districts everywhere together and forming the general church. When we all come together, we have a lot more gifts, money, and resources to reach a lot more people. Think about our bubbles. We mixed three things; when they combined, they turned into something different. That’s what happens when all our churches come together. That’s also what happens when different people in a local church come together.

*“<sup>4</sup>For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your<sup>[a]</sup> faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,<sup>[b]</sup> do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully” (Romans 12:4-8).*

**Say:** Different people have different gifts.

**Ask:** How many of you are good at painting? How many of you are good at Math? How many of you like to spend time outside? (*Come up with some other questions so that every child will have a chance to raise their hand.*)

**Say:** Each of you are different and God made you each to be very unique. As we all come together within the church we get to use our different gifts to make up one body, one church. Not one person can do everything. God helped some people to preach, some to teach classes, some to smile and welcome us as we come in, and some who can run the vacuum and keep the church clean. Every part is important and useful when we use our gifts and talents for God.

**Review Game:** Charades (Church-Style)

**Objective:** To enforce the concept that we are all needed in the body of Christ and in the church, no matter what gifts God has given us. On different slips of paper, write the names of different roles in the church: pastor, music leader, greeter, Sunday School teacher, children’s pastor, janitor, usher, pianist, choir member, etc...

Have children take turns drawing slips and acting out (charades style) the role they have chosen.

**Take Away:**

Send children home with a prayer sheet that has the names (pictures as well would be a great visual for them) of their pastor, their district superintendent and the six general superintendents. Remind them to pray for those people who lead the church. Leave spaces and help them add others who help make their local church a special place to be (Sunday School teachers, ushers, servants of the church). Ask children how they would like to serve their church.

**Prayer:**

Dear God, thank You for our church. Help us to understand how each of us can serve others in our church. In Jesus' name, amen.