

NAZARENE ESSENTIALS—WEEK EIGHT PARENT’S GUIDE

Church Development

To Parents: Weeks four through ten explore each of seven characteristics in kid-friendly language. These traits depict what should characterize every local Church of the Nazarene. *Church Development* means we create new churches around the world.

A church is a group of people who gather regularly to learn about Jesus and share His love. Through this lesson children will understand what a “church” is. Students will learn to define a church, what makes it healthy, and how to help it grow and multiply.

In *Nazarene Essentials*, we find the following: “In the Church of the Nazarene, our definition of a church reads: Any group that meets regularly for spiritual nurture, worship, or instruction at an announced time and place with an identified leader, and aligned with the message and mission of the Church of the Nazarene may be recognized as a church and reported as such for district and general church statistics. In other words, a church is a cluster of believers, not a building or a property.”

Pray about how God can use you, your children, and your church to be an extension of His hands, feet, and voice in the world.

Lesson Objective: To help your children understand what a “church” is and to define a church, what makes it healthy, and how to help it grow and multiply.

Bible Story/Scripture with Discussion: What is the Church? Romans 12:6-8 (NIV):

⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith;⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach;⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”

Discussion points:

What do you think this scripture is trying to teach us about being a part of the church? God asks us to recognize that each person is important. Jesus loves and values all people regardless of their gifts and talents. They are all important in the church.

“The Church of the Nazarene says that a church is a community of people that confess Jesus as Lord. The church is called together by the Holy Spirit. It should be united, worship together, hear preaching, participate in communion, baptize people, and help people.”

What are some things your children have participated in at church? When the church comes together, there are a lot of different ways the people can work together to make a difference in the world. What are some of the ways the people work together at your church? What are some ways you can join in the work of the church?

Scripture Memory Verse: Rom 10:14-15 (NIV):

¹⁴ 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?

¹⁵ And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

The Church of the Nazarene is focused on spreading the good news about Jesus by developing new churches around the world. We like to plant churches in places where there are no other churches. We have missionaries who go into many different areas of the world and plant churches. But we can also plant churches right here in our country. How do you think our church could help build a new church?

Personal Challenge:

God calls us to make disciples in all nations. That means that we need to build new churches, both here in our own country and in other countries. As we work to spread the word of God in our neighborhood, we're working to bring people into the one body of Christ.

Prayer:

Dear Father, help us to be united as a Christian body, to go and make disciples. Help us to be willing to use all our talents and resources to spread the Good News about Jesus and build Your church in all the world. Our church belongs to You. Show us how You want to use us. In Jesus' name, Amen.