

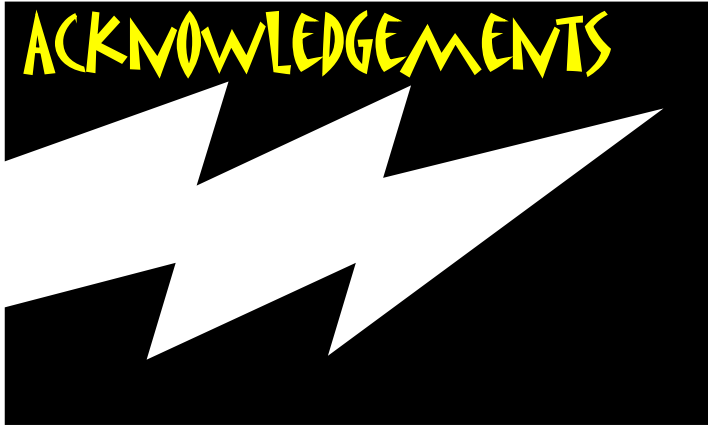


JUMP-STARTING THE ESTABLISHED CONGREGATION

Instructor's Guide

**Vibrant Church Renewal
USA/Canada Evangelism Ministries
Church of the Nazarene, International**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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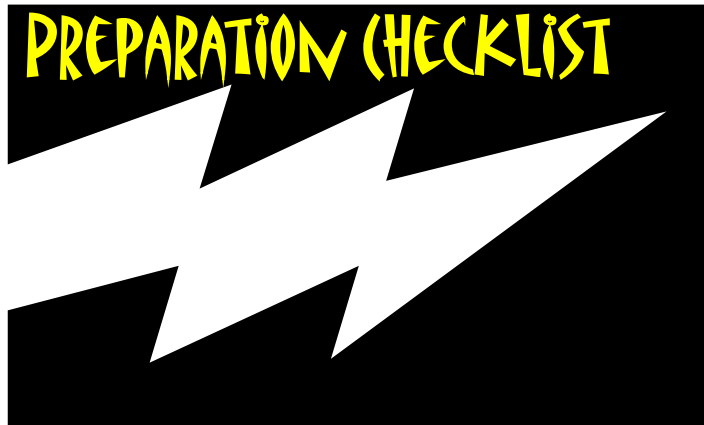
JUMP-STARTING THE ESTABLISHED CONGREGATION

Section	Time	Page	Brief Description
I. Introduction	5 min.	5	Introduce objectives, outline.
II. Lecture	20 min.	6	Facilitator presents information that will help participants assess their congregation and identify areas for growth and development.
III. Self-Assessment	10 min.	9	Participants work individually to reflect on the information presented in the lecture and begin applying the concepts.
IV. Action Planning	15 min.	10	Participants share thoughts about the information presented and plan how they will utilize the new concepts in their church.
V. Wrap-up	5 min.	11	Close the module with your final comments regarding the topic.
Total Time: 55 min.			

The table above identifies each module section, the time allotted for each section, and a brief description of the section's objective. When you are familiar with this module, you may want to teach from this page rather than the detailed information.

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PREPARATION CHECKLIST



Build enthusiasm for the training module. Vibrant Church Renewal requires buy-in from people in the church. Use announcements, fliers, posters, etc. to prepare participants for the topic and build their interest. Speak to key stakeholders in person to encourage their support of this initiative.

Review the material in this guide and make notes of specific areas for special emphasis.

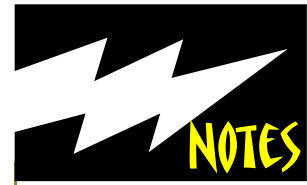
- This guide includes notation of corresponding slides to help you facilitate the presentation.
- Make copies of the participant handout for each person. This handout includes “fill-in-the-blanks” sections. The appropriate answers are underlined in this instructor guide.

Check the classroom for:

- Computer/projector
- Chalkboard or flip chart
- Sufficient tables and chairs for the participants
- Copies of the participant handout for each person
- Pens/pencils for participants

Arrange the room so that each church team sits around an individual table and you have ample room to move among the teams.

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I. INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Prior to the beginning of the session, adjust the projector and show slide #1 (Jump-Starting the Established Congregation).

Distribute participant handouts.

Let the participants know the material is theirs to keep and encourage them to take notes. The participant material includes:

- purpose
- objectives
- “fill-in-the-blanks” for the lecture
- application exercises

The purpose of this module is to empower congregational leaders to provide vision, motivation, and inspiration for the established congregation.

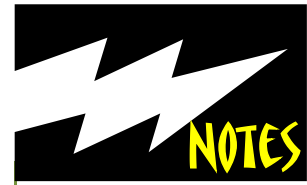
The outcomes of this module are:

- Discover ways to bring local congregational leaders together.
- Focus on mission and spiritual vitality.
- Engage in holistic and integrated ministry.
- Breathe new life into tired structures and weary workers.

Slide 1

Slides 2-3

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Review the schedule for this module:

Introduction	5 mins.
Lecture	20 mins.
Self-Assessment	10 mins.
Action Planning	15 mins.
Wrap-up	5 mins.

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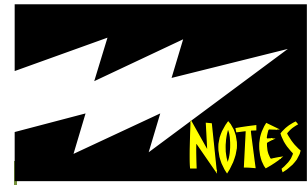
II. LECTURE (20 MINUTES)

Every congregation will experience times of declining energy, sagging attendance, leadership turnover and mission-drift throughout its life. We should not expect otherwise. To scold or to condemn is counterproductive. How should a congregation handle these difficult and even distressing periods?

1. Assess the spiritual vitality of the congregation.
 - a. The spiritual life of a local church is of utmost importance.
 - b. If assessment reveals that a congregation is wandering off mission, renewal is absolutely essential.
 - c. Spirituality cannot be measured by feelings only. Obedience does not guarantee good feelings; cross-bearing is painful. How we feel about our relationship with God is not unimportant, but we must add some other evaluative measurements, too.
 - d. Our relationship with God cannot be assessed by levels of activity either.
 - i. Tangible measurements: times of prayer; fellowship occasions; teaching the Word; compassionate ministries may be indicators, but not proof of renewal.
 - ii. Intangible measurements: results of

Slides 5-9

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prayers; satisfying fellowship; impact of teaching; physical and emotional needs met may be better measuring sticks.

- e. A couple of warnings are warranted:
 - i. The devil is real, but must not be blamed. When we blame the devil we excuse ourselves from the responsibilities we have. Because we cannot remove or restore the devil, we distance ourselves from the problem since the difficulty exceeds our ability to manage. We become helpless victims and the spiritual climate is unchanged.
 - ii. We dare not become problem-focused. We choose to be solution-focused. We know we face spiritual opposition. Asking what is wrong is not as powerful as discussing how we can “get God’s glory” on us.
- f. How does God wish to revive us?

- 2. Appraise morale and ask “How do we raise the joy level?” (Read Acts 2:42-47)
 - i. Praise God.
 - ii. Enjoy the favor of the people.
 - iii. Fellowship with glad hearts.

(For more information: visit www.missionevangelism.org and select the training module, “Raising the Morale of a Plateaued Congregation.”)

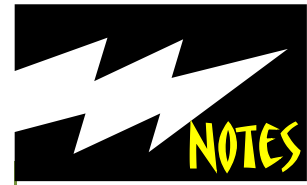
Slides 10-12

Slide 13

Slide 14

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-27, NIV

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3. Determine available leadership skills by conducting a leadership study to see who is presently serving. Evaluate teen and adult attendees using the following considerations:

Willing and able	When people are willing and able, delegate the important tasks and encourage them.
Unwilling and able	When people are unwilling and able, inspire, inspire and inspire them.
Willing and unable	When people are willing and unable, train and educate them.
Unwilling and unable	When people are unwilling and unable, explain, train and inspire.

4. Evaluate your reputation in the community.
 - a. How well known is the church?
 - b. Ask random people, such as clerks, waiters, managers, teachers, “Have you heard of our church? What do you know about it?”
 - c. Ask yourself, “What are we known for?”
 - d. List the ways in which the church serves the community.

For example, one congregation holds a big Thanksgiving service with a meal for hundreds after the morning service. Each year that congregation expresses thanks to groups of people, such as teachers, city workers, school bus drivers, firemen, etc. The same congregation helps local grade schools by landscaping or painting. The community is becoming aware of the church’s love for them.

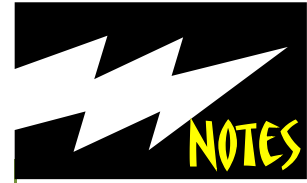
5. Ask: “What most needs to be done?”
 - a. Prioritize ministry. People in the congregation have a sense of what needs doing now. They want changes to be made that will improve ministries. Some will have a sense of new ministries that should be started.
 - b. Bring people together around a mission/ministry. People enjoy working together in meaningful ways

Slides 15-16

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- and for defined purposes.
- c. Consider these possible applications:
 - “Let’s Get Ready for Company” is a possible theme or emphasis.
 - Plan for spiritual renewal.
 - Re-energize leaders.
 - Ask: What can we change in favor of those not yet here? (e.g. signage, welcome, service times, free babysitting, etc.)
 - Improve physical plant.
 - Start new groups.
 - Enhance the worship experience.

III. SELF-ASSESSMENT (10 MINUTES)

This exercise provides an opportunity for the individuals to reflect on the information presented and begin to apply it to their own experiences and leadership roles in the church.

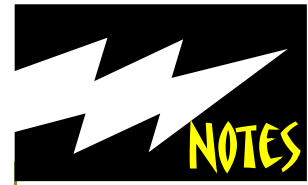
Work individually to complete the self-assessment questions on your participant handout. You will have 10 minutes to complete the questions. Feel free to focus on one or two or, if time allows, to answer all four. I will tell you when you have 5 and 2 minutes remaining. After this, you will have an opportunity to share your findings with a small group and begin developing an action plan for your congregation.

Remain available during the assessment time to answer questions. Announce to the participants when five minutes remain. Again announce when two minutes remain.

Slide 25

Slides 26-27

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IV. ACTION PLANNING (15 MINUTES)

Making an action plan provides an opportunity for people to share their thoughts about the lecture and to develop steps for participants to follow in the coming weeks. By developing consensus about the plan moving forward, each group can hold individuals accountable for action items on the plan and can continue meeting regularly to evaluate plan progress, share successes and challenges, and collaborate on next steps.

For this portion of the module, participants should work in small groups of three to five people. Once participants have settled into groups, point out that the first action step of the plan was completed in the self-assessment activity. Ask participants to spend five minutes sharing their self-assessments with each other.

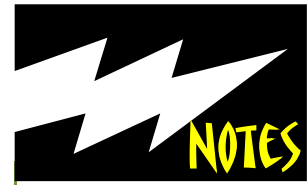
Next, instruct groups to use the remaining ten minutes to begin writing action plans for church renewal using the worksheet provided on the participant handout. If there is more than one group from each church present, divide the four objectives and have each group focus on one or two so there is not conflicting overlap of plans.

You may review the following applications from the lecture at this time so they are fresh in people's minds. (Review slide 13.)

- "Let's Get Ready for Company" is a possible theme or emphasis.
- Plan for spiritual renewal.
- Re-energize leaders.
- Ask: What can we change in favor of those not yet here? (e.g. signage, welcome, service times, free babysitting)
- Improve physical plant.
- Start new groups.
- Enhance the worship experience.

Slides 28-29

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VI. WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

This section provides an opportunity to close the module.

- Ask participants to share their thoughts about the module.
- The two statements at the end of the participant handout may be useful:
 - Two things I will do differently this week based on what I learned today
 - Two ways I will continue to inspire and support my fellow congregational leaders
- Answer any questions and provide encouragement for the next steps and improvements groups have identified.

Slides 30-31