

Nazarene Cowboy Church Network (NCCN)

Original document developed by New Church Specialties and the Dallas District in 2008
Updated by Bill Wiesman, February 2011

Designed to Address the Following Key Areas: 1) Our Mission, 2) Identifying the Culture, 3) Our Values, 4) Our Vision, 5) Our Focus, 6) Action Steps

I. **Our Mission** - What is our purpose?

“Making Christ-like disciples in the western heritage culture.”

II. **Identifying the Culture - Who is in the Western Heritage Culture?**

1. **Working Cowboys** - makes all or part of their living on horseback, they represent a small part of this population and they may be the hardest to reach.
2. **Professional Rodeo Cowboys** - make all or a part of their living on the rodeo circuit and again are very few in number.
3. **Arena Cowboys & Cowgirls** - makes his or her living somewhere other than the ranch or rodeo but they love arena activities such as team roping, barrel racing, team penning, ranch rodeo, sorting, cutting, play day etc.
4. **Cattle people** - these may be large ranchers with hundreds or thousands of head or people who own a few cows or even one FFA steer. They may or may not use horses.
5. **Horse people** - these people love horses, they may trail ride, western pleasure, show horses, raise horses, race horses or just have a few nags in the pasture and they may or may not care anything about a cow.
6. **Cowboys at heart** - people who just love the cowboy and what he stands for. They wear boots, jeans and a cowboy hat, they listen to country music, have all of John Wayne's movies on DVD and Capt. Augustus McCrae and Capt. Woodrow F. Call are their heroes.
7. **Cowboy mentality people** - these folks may be linked to the culture through their past, parents or family, they are people who live by a code, your word is your bond, a honest days word for an honest days pay, they may be electricians, carpenters, law enforcement officers, firefighters, business men, working folks, country folks, people who love the land, farmers, hunters and fishermen. Even to the extent as one put it, those who have ever watched a western.

The further you go down this list a larger number of these folks are in the population. These are the people God has called us to reach that traditional churches have failed to reach in large numbers.

III. **Our Values - What is important?**

Simplicity with excellence – Mark 7:37

Non judgmental – John 8:1-11

Empowerment with accountability – John 20:21, Eph 4

Cultural relevance - 1 Cor 9:19-23

Intentional Reproduction – Matt 28:19-20 - teach private fishing and public fishing

Christ Centered out riding

IV. **Our Vision - Where does God want us to go?**

In the next 10 years what the Nazarene Cowboy Church movement look like?

- 100 healthy, growing, reproducing Cowboy churches
- 25,000 people on average attending per week
- 5,000 people coming to faith and being baptized annually
- \$2 million brought in annually for worldwide Nazarene work
- 2 fully organized training sites
- \$12.5m total annual giving
- The cowboy church touching approximately 100,000 people annually
- The cowboy church developing 150 cowboy church pastors within the farm system
- A training and self-development system in place
- A lay leader development system
- A viable vaquero movement alongside this movement
- A vaquero strategic readiness committee

V. **Our Focus - How do we reach the Western Heritage culture?**

If you focus at the **top** of the Western Heritage Culture list in most cases, you won't leave anyone behind. The working cowboy may be the hardest to reach. If you can do church in a way that he will come, you will reach everyone else on the list. If you can reach those that are die-hard in the culture, they will draw others like themselves. They will draw those who admire their lifestyle. Again it is using the culture as a tool to reach more people for Jesus.

The Cowboy church takes a different approach to starting new ministries. It is all right to plant where such churches exist, but it will be more effective where there are currently none. It will be more of an anomaly.

Demographics are important. Yet different areas are researched versus when starting a traditional church. They are more telling by the extent of the population connected with various associations such as; AQHA – American Quarter Horse Association, American Paint Horse Association, American Buckskin Association, Pinto Association, Cattle Breeders Association and Cattlemen's Association. These associations come together for national shows and events. They rent coliseum for major events.

VI. **Action Steps- What do we do next?**

1. **Form the Nazarene Cowboy Church Network**

2. Recognize there may be different ways of “being” the church. Structures may be different. We constantly need to realize that the purpose of the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene is not to impede ministry, but keep us out of trouble. Structures are a means to an end. Organizational structures are not neutral: some impede and some facilitate. The key is each district superintendent in each district. The DS has got to be our best friend. The structures are the new wine skins. We will need to change them as you go along. We need accountability with the districts involved. Accountability gains respect and support. When we are connected and accountable we gain credibility.

3. Set goals. It is our goal to have 100 cowboy churches of the Nazarene in 10 years. The Dallas District’s goal is to have 10 of those. Other districts will set their own goals.

4. Embrace current productive and fruitful cowboy ministers and ministries. Experience is paramount. **Jon Coe** is currently pastoring Lone Star Cowboy Church of Ellis County, Texas. The church regularly has 300 in morning worship attendance. He has started 5 other Cowboy Churches from his original church. This entrepreneurial experience is invaluable as we embark on a movement of Nazarene Cowboy Churches.

5. **Develop Cowboy Church University**

6. **Identify our readiness as a ministry.**

a. What are our strengths?

- Connectional system with DS and Leadership
- Church of the Nazarene Foundation is sympathetic
- USA/Canada New Church director knowledgeable and willing to talk on our behalf
- Nazarene Cowboy Church Network
- Local proven model
- Coaching system is already in place through New Church Specialties
- Web-site in place at www.usacanadaregion.org
- Leaders who are a part of, understand, and are sympathetic to the movement
- Teaching system is in place
- Similar models to learn from
- Beginnings of a farm system for leadership
- Less initial investment for a cowboy church than traditional church
- Local church driven vs. district driven
- DNA is missional minded and reproductive

b. What are our constraints?

- An undeveloped farm system
- National ignorance about the western culture
- Lack of exposure

- No compiled summary of the movement in other denominations etc.
- A lack of cultural understanding of the western culture in the church at large
- Infrastructure – fielding questions, communications, system development, information to action, and training
- Resources financially and structurally
- Assessment tool specific to Cowboy church (needs to be developed)

c. What are our opportunities?

- Untapped culture
- Spanish vaquero churches
- Multinational expansion possibilities
- National collaboration

d. What are our threats?

- Quality control in multiplication
- District superintendents as of yet not informed or on board
- Others who want on board that aren't qualified
- Others that have country churches that want to call them cowboy
- Finances
- Existing church apprehension
- Western heritage ignorance
- Lack of following a model

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