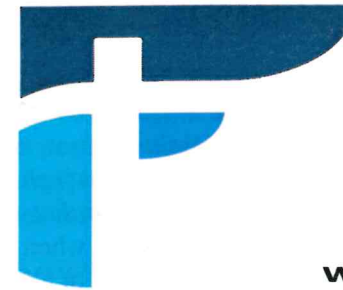


The Fountain
1023 N Chinowth St.
Visalia, CA 93291



THE FOUNTAIN CHRISTIAN CHURCH

www.thefountaincc.org

Depth in Love, Truth, and Life



*The
Fountain
Christian Church*

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Mon-Thurs 9:00 AM— 4:30 PM

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10 Things I Won't Do To Grow a Church

By Sam Sears

The Bible clearly calls us to be on mission. Matthew 28:19-20 records the command, *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* Despite this clear call, some of us get nervous when we hear churches talking about outreach, evangelism, growth, or — worst of all — numbers. Why is that? From my experience, it's usually because we have seen individuals who mean well, but use the wrong methods, or individuals with the wrong motives who, in some cases, even hurt others, rather than love and serve them in a Christ-like way.

Both the staff, and the group of pastors I am having a zoom meeting with weekly, are going through the book, *U-Turn Church*. We went through the book as a Sunday School class not long after I arrived here in California. The zoom class chose it, in part, because COVID-19 and the lockdown associated with it has brought about changes and challenges. Many are more aware of their own need for God, as well as worried about the future, and that brings about a natural concern for their loved ones and eternity. Beyond impacting individuals, churches are trying to refill pews or the bank after COVID hit them hard. *U-Turn* reminds its readers that evangelism, outreach and sharing the gospel to the world must be done, should be done for the right reasons, and should be done in the right ways. With that in mind, I thought it might be fun to list 10 things that I would avoid doing to grow a church, as a way to recognize that what some folks worry about when they hear key phrases like "church growth" have some legitimacy.

10. I won't build false unity by tearing down others.

It's an old tactic to unite individuals: give them a common enemy. We are trying to spread the Good News to the lost, and although spiritual warfare is very real, it's difficult to see, so, sadly, some churches have seen themselves in competition with other local bodies, becoming overly passionate on non-essentials and tearing down brothers and sisters in Christ.

The "We have it all right" idea, can become a club, in a dangerous way. I grew up in the Bible belt and I served at an outreach center that ultimately got funding from a different denomination than I attended. I can recall the "us vs them" mentality that isolated Christians based on where they went, rather than taught them to love and serve together. It was odd for my ministry at the outreach center to become a barrier to ministry in my local church!

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We can call out false ideas and, when necessary, even false teachers, without giving the impression that we are the only option for biblical believers in town, or that we must rally to stop other Christians, rather than rally to go about our mission.

9. I won't ignore worship lyrics. They matter.

We launched a contemporary service in 2020, and I'm aware that some folks still don't like that music, while other folks don't enjoy old hymns. The key to both is lyrics. I am aware of current trendy worship songs that are played on the radio that are great! I'm also aware of some with deep theological problems, but amazingly catchy tunes. Even if it will make us less "trendier," we will continue to worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), which means that we will avoid some songs that are popular.

8. I won't let us serve two masters, so we won't incur massive debt.

The *U-Turn* book discusses the "If you build it, they will come" attitude of many churches, and it often doesn't work. I will share with you that plenty of visitors to our building have pointed out what "looks old fashioned," and there are many things in need of a repair or touch up. The reality is, even if we did fix everything that needed to be fixed, God's primary intent is to work on us and through us, not the building itself, and many beautiful buildings are empty, so risking deep debt isn't worth it.

7. I won't embrace over-emotionalism.

Emotions are like the icing on the cake. They can make a good thing better. Our emotions should be in response to the good things God has done and how good He is, but too often emotions are in the driver's seat in our culture. The church is ultimately counter-cultural. Although we must find ways to effectively communicate to those outside of our walls, we can't just give them more of the same.

If God calls us to worship Him with our mind, I can't just focus on what makes people feel good. Sure, making folks feel good may make them want to come back, but what if we leave out something they need to hear?

6. I won't lower standards.

One of the most impactful chapters of *U-Turn* is the chapter on high expectations. It seems counterintuitive, but having higher expectations for vol-

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10 Things I Won't Do To Grow a Church

By Sam Sears

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unteers, as long as they are clearly laid out, actually increases volunteer satisfaction and engagement. We are all called to serve, and some churches, in their effort to have as many volunteers as possible, to run as many programs as possible, let folks serve before they are ready, or before they really know the congregation or church culture, or in ways they are not skilled enough to do so. It can get bodies in place, but it's not good on the volunteers, or those they serve. After going through U-Turn Church again I feel encouraged to focus on equipping our volunteers in the best way possible, even if it means doing it slower.

5. I won't put programs before people.

A well-oiled machine is reliable, but the church isn't a machine, it's a living organism. Sometimes that means being interruptible as we serve people. Something may need to change at the last minute so we can publicly pray for someone. I may be late for a meeting, because someone has a greater need in the moment. It takes wisdom as such issues are encountered, but we can't be so mechanical that we put our schedule or plan on a pedestal and let individuals slip through the cracks.

4. I won't avoid hot-button issues.

If making people feel happy will make them come back, making people mad can do the opposite. The reality is that Scripture talks about the issues our society is dealing with now; we can't ignore that. I'm aware that some churches try to limit talking about issues on Sunday mornings, and address them in small groups, but that feels like a bait and switch to me.

3. I won't adopt society's view over the Bible.

Telling everyone what they want to hear might make a church popular in the short term, but it can do damage to God's people and to those who are being falsely instructed. "Ideas have consequences; bad ideas have victims."

2. I won't serve just spiritual milk.

Paul mentions spiritual milk in 1 Corinthians 3:2. It was his desire to give them content with spiritual depth and share that goal. A quick superficial look may be easier to agree on. It might be more palatable, but church growth shouldn't just be about width, but it should also be about depth.

1. I won't forget the people who are already here.

10 Things I Won't Do To Grow a Church

By Sam Sears

There is a tough balance in reaching new people and continuing the process of discipleship with those already present. While I continue to organically outreach, I also spend time with my church family. Some who attend here now have shared the hurtful story of feeling "pushed aside" after they were aging past the "target demographic." We should have "Timothies" in our various ministries; we should pass things on; we should rotate; but we shouldn't cast people aside as if they have an expiration date. U-Turn itself records folks who were hurt when the classic/ traditional service got cut in bigger churches because the contemporary one draws more people. That's not something I'm willing to do. A healthy church should have multiple generations in it. Yes, maybe one service leans towards older and another skews younger, but just one or the other is lacking something each can provide. Even as new people join us, there is still a place for you here!



Service time
changes begin

9/5/2021

New times are

9:00

And

10:30

more details soon!

July 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
SUMMER AT 7:00! WEDNESDAY NIGHTS...				1 10:00 Berean Watchmen	2 6:30 Men's Group	3
4 8:30 Worship 10:15 Worship 2:00 Men's Bible Study	5 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	6	7 7:00 Family Night Yard Games!	8 10:00 Berean Watchmen	9 6:30 Men's Group	10
11 8:30 Worship 10:15 Worship 2:00 Men's Bible Study	12 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	13 10:00 Staff	14 7:00 Family Night Decorating for Kids Camp	15 10:00 Berean Watchmen	16 6:30 Men's Group	17
18 8:30 Worship 10:15 Worship 2:00 Men's Bible Study	19 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	20 10:00 Staff	21	22 10:00 Berean Watchmen	23 6:30 Men's Group	24
Kid's Camp - July 19th through 23rd - 5:45 to 8:00 pm						
25 8:30 Worship 10:15 Worship 2:00 Men's Bible Study	26 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	27	28 7:00 Family Night Board Games & BBQ	29 10:00 Berean Watchmen	30 6:30 Men's Group	31 Youth - Shaver Lake Trip

July is Here!

By Carrie Guy

This month has a lot of exciting happenings for our church and community. We are in the middle of *Wednesday's Summer at 7:00!* We are doing this to not only stay connected with our church family, provide fun things for us to do, but also as a way to reach out to people who may find church intimidating.

FOUNTAIN SUMMER AT 7:00!

WWW.THEFOUNTAINCC.ORG

WEDNESDAY FAMILY NIGHTS

ALL EVENTS (EXCEPT KIDS CAMP) START AT 7PM

JUNE

23RD - MOVIE 

30TH - PRAYER NIGHT

JULY

7 - YARD GAMES

14 - KIDS CAMP DECORATING & PIZZA

28 - BOARD GAMES & BBQ 

AUGUST

4TH - WORSHIP NIGHT

11TH - MOVIE & TACO TRUCK

KIDS CAMP - JULY 19-23 - REGISTER FREE ONLINE

AWANA STARTS UP SEPTEMBER 8TH. REGISTER NOW OR AT THE OPEN HOUSE ON THE 1ST!

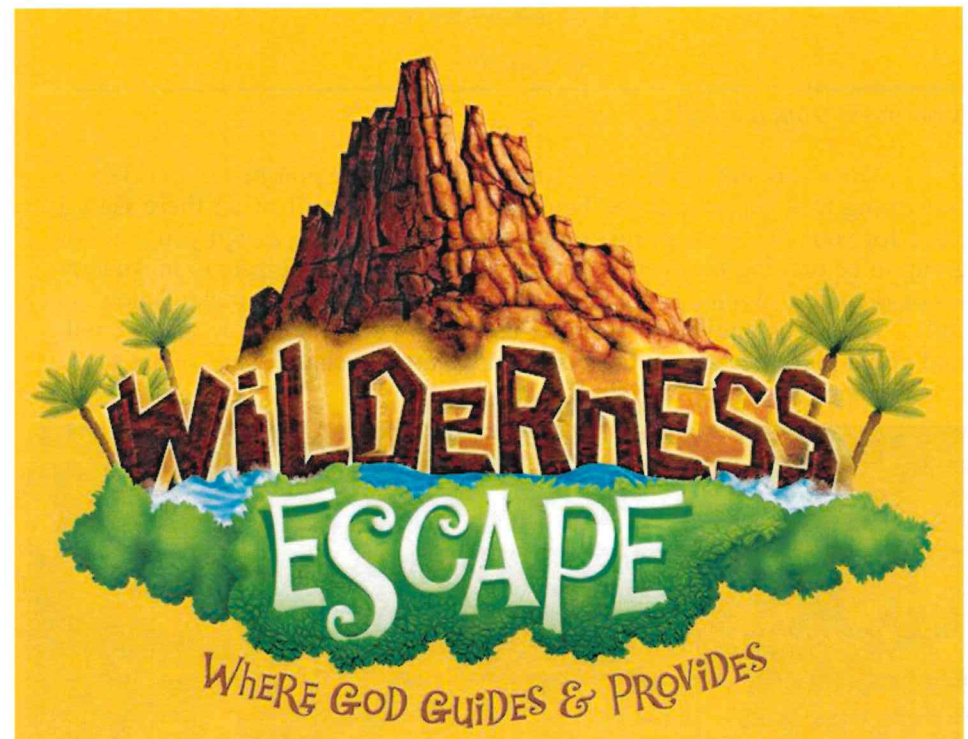
July is Here!

By Carrie Guy

Who do you know that you would be able to invite to something happening here at church? Do you have a neighbor you'd like to get to know better? Is there an acquaintance that you know from a community group that you could invite? Or a friend that you know doesn't know Jesus, but you love them dearly? Do you have a cousin or a brother that could come with you and get to know our church a little better? Our Wednesday night experiences are prime time for relationship building and opening our doors in a less daunting way.

The first Wednesday in July is yard games - things like Frisbee golf and Corn Hole. The second week we will be eating pizza and decorating the church for Kids Camp. This will be a fun time to work together. The third and final week we will be inside for Board Games and BBQ!

That isn't the only thing happening this month. We will also have *Vacation Bible School* which we are now calling *Kids Camp*. If you haven't volunteered before, you may not know how wonderful this week can be! We often see kids grow to know Jesus in the week and make decisions to follow him by the last night, Friday! To see Jesus through the eyes of a child is a magical experience.



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Attendance & Giving

June 2021

Date	Attendance	Giving
June 6.....	104	\$5,941.21
June 13.....	108	\$5,276.00
June 20.....	106	\$2,396.00
June 27.....	89	\$3,776.00
	Online Giving	<u>\$4,998.00</u>
	Total	\$22,378.21



July is Here!

By Carrie Guy

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You may not be in a life stage of jumping in and being involved in everything that happens at the Fountain but that doesn't mean there isn't a place for you. We need people praying and we'd love to assign you a kid or group to be praying for over Kids Camp week, we need helpers to make copies or organize supplies. We need people to help set up or make follow up calls. The list is endless. Please let us know what you can do and we will find you a place because at the Fountain we are the church and we are family. We hope this is a great July for you!



Birthdays & Anniversaries

July 2021

Kale Wilson	2	Madeline Morrow	27
Joyce Hogan.....	4	Robert Rouch.....	27
John Lauffenberger.....	4	Jude Sanchez.....	27
James Gatto.....	5	Virginia Huff	29
Brad Yale	5	Sharon Turl	31
Ed Kesterson.....	12		
Frankie Parker.....	12		
Heather Sears	17		
Cienna Reynaga	19		
Mona Rouch.....	19		
Phil Parker	23		
Jim Barlogio.....	25		
Bexleigh Stowers-Quilantan...25			

Happy Anniversary!

Don & Peggy Jones	24
Roger & Ann Johnson	27

Happy Anniversary

Prayer Concerns

July 2021

Pray for the desire and opportunity to effectively share your faith!

Our Nation and Leaders

Teachers & Students in Visalia

Health

Ana Morales, Ashley Banuelos, Barbara Grant, Cindy Marks, Donna Eastin, Frank Henley, Harold Hoppert, Jean Lamb, Jina Sevier, Kevin Guy, Marilee Douglass, Pam Shattuck, Pauline Gurule, Rick Hamilton, Fred Wilder

Cancer

Al Stone, Charles Douglass, Hazel Bahrenburg, Jiggy Greene, Jim Shackelford, Joe Grant, Joe Ryan, Keith Moore, Michael Elder, Mike Brazil, Mike Gunning, Olly Ajluni, Peggy Pryor, Sam Tomanio, Sandra Campbell, Shannan Ajluni, Susan Jacquez, Jamie Harp

Other Needs

Hoppert & O'Leary family (comfort in loss), Jessica Morrow (Recovery from Surgery), Nina Suttles (Vision)

Military

Andie Richwine - Marine, Brett Boland - Virginia, Jason Mariel - Afghanistan, Matthew Calhoun - Fort Knox, Michael Reid - Air Force, Preston Correa - Marine, Tyler Richwine - Marine