



EQUIPPER

The monthly e-magazine from the Ministry Development Team of
Grace Communion International, Church Administration and Development USA

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Dear minister on mission with God:

Last month we examined our calling to be faithful and wise stewards of our God-given resources. Doing so is vital to effective and active participation in God's mission. However, because many of our churches are small, scattered and aging, some ask, *How can we make a meaningful contribution to God's mission?* Consider these points:

1. God does amazing things with what may seem like insignificant resources. He truly is *Jehovah Jirah*, the God who provides (Genesis 22:14).
2. God the Father is actively fulfilling his mission through the ministry of his Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is God's mission, and he will complete it.
3. *We are included!* God enables our participation with him in mission. He does not ask us to do what we are not able, or to produce resources that we do not have. However, he does call us to take what we have and put it to use—in faith and with generosity—to advance his mission to our world.



Pastor Eric Larison

We recently interviewed Eric Larison, pastor of our Syracuse, NY church. His church is small, and its members are mostly seniors who are scattered across a wide area. To some, this might seem like a hopeless combination. Nevertheless, Eric and his church have hope. They understand that they can engage in what Jesus is doing in their families, their local communities and globally. They also understand that they can engage in what Jesus is doing in their denomination. By supporting **GC Next** (see p. 2), they are **leaving a legacy**—helping advance the move of the Holy Spirit in and through GCI. I invite you to view Eric's comments at <http://gci-usa.blogspot.com/p/seeking-lost.html>.

This is a challenging time, but one with exciting possibilities. It is my privilege to journey with you.

Blessings in Christ,
Dan Rogers, CAD director

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Resources

- The new *Church Development* page at GCI.org (www.gci.org/church/development) provides an index of services provided by the GCI, U.S. Ministry Development Team.
- *Eight Ways to Easily be Missional*, a helpful article on mission, is available at www.gcmcollective.com/mediafiles/8-easy-ways-to-easily-be-missional.pdf
- GCI's new *church ceremonies* are posted at www.gci.org/pastoral/ceremonies.
- You might be interested in *Twelve*: an online conference in September. It trains for small group ministries (see <http://www.saddleback.com/conferences/twelve/>).

Outfitting churches, ministries, pastors and ministry leaders for ministry on journey with Jesus.

Progress toward GC Next

By Ted Johnston, CAD communications and ministry development

GCI's U.S. *Ministry Development Team* provides training and consulting services to pastoral districts and individual churches. The common focus of all these services is to help churches journey to *GC Next*—*making disciples with Jesus in all generations, many cultures and new places*. The journey is challenging, but we see much progress. Let me share some of what we see (and for pictures and videos, go to <http://gci-usa.blogspot.com/>).

Trinitarian vision

More and more of our churches are embracing our Trinitarian, incarnational theology. Doing so “fires” their imaginations as they understand that God has included all people in his life and love. Also, they are understanding that God invites them to share actively in what he is doing to help people *know his love* and, as followers of Jesus, to *live loved*.



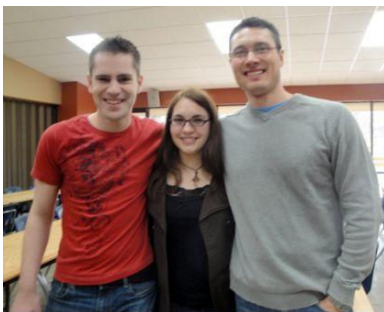
Revitalizing existing churches

More and more of our churches are being revitalized as they share in God's love for all people by reaching out to the unchurched around them. This outward, missional step is no small one, but as churches take it, fruit is borne. We are helping some of our congregations strategize this and related missional steps. One of the tools we use is the *Transformational Church Assessment Tool* (TCAT). Several of our ministry developers are being certified by LifeWay to use the TCAT. If you would like to learn more about it, contact any of us on the Ministry Development Team (look under ‘contacts’ at www.wcg.org/mindev/services.htm).

Starting new churches

A key focus of our *GC Next* domestic mission is to support individuals and teams that are called by God to start new GCI churches in the U.S. Over the last several years, GCI's Church Multiplication Ministries has been building a support infrastructure. Now new churches are being planted! Learn more at <http://cmm.gci.org/> and at <http://gci-usa.blogspot.com/p/multiplying-leaders-ministries-and.html>.

Passing the baton



GCI Pastoral Interns

An increasing number of our churches are sharing in what Jesus is doing to call and equip emerging young leaders to lead our movement into its next generation. This ‘passing the baton’ of leadership is vital and exciting. It is evident in the ‘leadership incubator’ of our GenMin camps and short-term mission trips (go to <http://genmin.gci.org/campministries.htm>). We also see this happening in our *Pastoral Internship Program* where we mentor young men and women with a call from God to pastor an established GCI church or to start a new one (go to www.wcg.org/mindev/internships.htm).

Leaving a legacy

One of the ways your congregation can help our entire denomination journey to *GC Next* is by donating to the *GC Next Domestic Mission Fund* (go to <http://genmin.gci.org/donate.htm>).