

Fastest-Growing Churches Reveal Their Best-Kept Secrets

You can learn from best practices of churches succeeding in outreach and evangelism—and see what God might want to do in your city.

The Outreach Summit is a gathering of pastors of the fastest growing churches—plus leading church thinkers—that focuses on outreach, evangelism and best practices of healthy, growing churches.

It's my favorite conference, because I can hear what other churches are doing to lead people to Jesus.

Here are some of the ideas, principles, thoughts and practices that I picked up at the Outreach Summit last week. See what God wants to speak into your life today.

Ray Johnston, Senior Pastor, Bayside Church, Granite Bay, California

2019 No. 1 Fastest Growing Church in America:

What do you care about more (or less) as you get older? How do you stay healthy and growing? How do you stay hot?

The American church started by setting up churches for themselves. Most churches are set up for themselves. Not fishers of men, but keepers of the aquarium.

Nothing great ever happens through you until it happens in you.

What's the most important thing to do as a leader? Make sure you stay encouraged.

There are two things in an organization: mission and morale. The No. 1 core value is the health of your church. It is more important than growth.

Disgruntleds can't be on your staff.

Are we letting God do new things? The key to momentum is *new*, not tweaking.

Have we lost our nerve? The new idol in America is the idol of safety.

Most Christians don't tithe or serve because it doesn't feel safe.

Every single thing you want is on the other side of fear.

Never listen to criticism from somebody you wouldn't turn to for wisdom.

See Ray's book: *Jesus Called—He Wants His Church Back: What Christians and the American Church are Missing*.

Todd Elliott, Beach Church, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

—Structure your church calendar to get people connected.

—Calendar like a lazy river. Like a lazy river at your favorite water park, have jets in the calendar to propel people into community.

—Plan constant momentum, always looking for the next event to bring people together.

—Share Christ at the end of your message every Sunday.

—Allow God to break your heart for your city.

T.J. McCormick, Founding and Lead Pastor, Coastal Community Church, Parkland, Florida

Know the pain in your community. And find a way to meet it. Be present and available. God will use your church in your city's tragedy.

To be ready for a move of God:

–Pray.

–Prepare your systems and processes.

–Plug people in so when the harvest comes, you can take care of the harvest. God won't send us people who we're not prepared to take care of. For every volunteer on Sunday morning, they can reach three more people.

–Push forward when momentum happens, so you'll go faster up the next hill.

Dave Vance, Lead Pastor, Crossroads Church, Mansfield, Ohio

Cities don't ask churches for help because they don't think the church is willing to help.

What are you willing to commit and to measure?

Do I just want to grow my church, or do I want to see my community better?

Cast a compelling vision: We want to lead a church that pastors a city.

If you reach the people no one wants to reach, you'll reach the people everyone wants to reach.

Charles Stone, Author, StoneWell Ministries

Cultivating inner quiet is necessary for a healthy soul. If your soul isn't healthy, you can't lead well. If you can't lead well, you can't sustain church growth.

How to cultivate inner quiet: holy noticing.

Inner quiet is holy noticing. It's an art—noticing with a holy purpose God and His handiwork, our relationships and our inner world of thoughts and feelings.

See Charles' book: *Every Pastor's First 180 Days: How to Start and Stay Strong in a New Church Job*.

Brady Boyd, Senior Pastor, New Life Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado

"He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay what he has given" (Prov. 19:17).

Where are the greatest areas of pain in our city that are not being met? If it's not being met, can we help?

Don't do things that are already being done.

See Brady's book: *Remarkable: Living a Faith Worth Talking About*.

Glenn Packiam, Lead Pastor, New Life Downtown, Colorado Springs, Colorado

—Join people on the journey. Listen to their pain. Understand their stories.

—Tell a more beautiful story. God's story begins with a beautiful creation and has a hopeful ending. All things will be made new.

—Offer radical hospitality. Place us in different settings so we can grow hearts for people who are different from us.

See Glenn's book: *Blessed Broken Given: How Your Story becomes Sacred in the Hands of Jesus*.

Chip Bennett, Founding and Senior Pastor, Grace Community

Church, Sarasota, Florida

What's a win at your church—in each department?

Their Win: People are engaged in ministry *in* the church and engaged in ministry *outside* the church. How many people are involved in ministry *in* and *out*?

Service is what really keeps people engaged. {eoa}

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