



Faith is the Starting Point

This month's article is provided by Pastor Caleb Kaye of Revive Church. He and his wife Melissa are longtime Evana Network members, and their efforts reflect our own passion to see our communities transformed by Christ.

The vision of Revive is to be a safe place to develop authentic faith. Through collaboration and teamwork, we believe authentic faith can be developed. Revive wants to be known as good news in action through creative gatherings for children and adults, shame free conversations, and action oriented community service where we live, work, and play!

We spend much of our time using and teaching about the word "Faith." Faith is the starting point for many who have walked away from church but still retain space in their hearts for Jesus. Revive uses this openness to faith as a catalyst to explore where faith comes from and how we connect to Jesus. Each person has a particular journey with faith, and our goal is to continue creating unique and compelling opportunities for people to experience the Holy Spirit, who reveals the life-changing good news of life given to Jesus.



I am reminded of Matthew 14:33, "And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!" These men were already engaged with Jesus. But in this exchange, they made a declaration of Jesus' divinity. As we meet online, in person at parks, pubs, or patios, may others have a unique faith experience and say, "You are certainly God's Son!"

Our path towards a church plant began in ways similar to many others. In early 2020, we were building a team, planning to meet in a local school and designing a trailer to bring in needed items for set up and tear down each week. Then the pandemic began and we pivoted for the moment, hoping this reality would soon pass. We began live-streaming to stay connected to the community and team that we had started to build. We also began serving with a local pop-up pantry to meet community needs. It soon became clear this new reality might stay longer than we had hoped. So, in the middle of a pandemic, we decided to launch on our originally planned date in September, but completely digitally.

Revive has the vision to live life connected to Faith, people, and our community. And all of those things can be done both inside and outside of a church building on a Sunday morning. But the question is, how? We hosted digital gatherings and created a "Mobile Resource Center" that distributes resources into needy communities and gathers resources from people with extra. In these acts of giving and receiving, we are seeing deep community being formed.

As we note how Jesus was practical in relating out to those in need, we believe the Western church should be focused on how God calls all of us to be missionaries in backyards, grocery stores, and local pubs and deeply rooted in relationship. People are desperate to feel connected to something, to feel a sense of purpose. Our job is to do all we can do as creatively as we

can to build spaces for community and purpose to thrive.

We see this digital/physical hybrid of church planting having the potential to be a catalyst to the restoration of the "neighborhood church." We strive to be a church that listens to each individual

neighborhood's need. While we are learning and bringing resources into local communities, we are also looking for persons of peace that God has already placed in those neighborhoods so we may train, equip, and resource them to become their local neighborhood pastor leading a micro-localized congregation. Our goal as we live in this "Phygital" (digital and physical) reality is that we never lose sight of introducing people to power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to work with the Holy Spirit while seeking restoration for the local community.

While we all have been going through a season of uncertainty, we are confident the Holy Spirit teaches us how to live and lead differently in the future. I believe we are all being offered "New Wine," (as the recent ReGen 2021 covered) and God is asking, "What will you do with it?" Mark 2:22 says "And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."

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So, how are we embracing this “new wine” and what might be our “new wine skins”? Are we willing to try new things, ask fresh questions, and run in any direction we see the Spirit of God moving in? Each journey will look different, and that is precisely the beauty of what it means to be a multiplying movement.

A longer version of this article appeared in LMC's Shalom News Oct. - Dec. 2021. If you or your congregation would like to partner with Revive Church in their work, visit <https://www.revivefaith.life>



At Evana Network, we are committed to seeing pastors thrive in their walk with congregations, family, neighbors, and God. As part of this commitment, we offer an annual retreat for pastors, church planters, ministry leaders, and spouses from various denominations and backgrounds.

Ministry workers find encouragement through worship, rest and relationships. And in order to facilitate that, our retreats are set up with dedicated times of worship, rest and equipping. If you or someone you know is a pastor who desires an encouraging space to encounter the Lord be sure to consider Flourish 2022

The 2022 Flourish retreat will take place Thursday through Monday, February 17-21, 2022 in Bradenton, FL. Attendance is not limited to members of Evana Network. In addition, pastors and their spouses may elect to stay one 24 hour period for free and attend seminars on financial literacy and congregational generosity provided by Everence Financial and funded by a Lilly grant for financial wellness for pastors.

Visit evananetwork.org/Flourish2022 for more info on content, accommodations, and more. Early Bird pricing ends October 31, 2021.

Worship services will be led by Marcus & Marketo of Adoration Worship, and will feature special sessions from Pastors Timothy David Miller, Greg Neumayer, Nemi Chigoji, and Wes Furlong. Learning tracks will have content from Pastors April Heflick, Jim Bartholomew, Greg Neumayer, Joel DeMott and more.

Registration Note: If you wish to receive an invoice instead of using online payment, please use following codes while selecting tickets. If member, use `invoicemember`. If non-member, use `invoicenonmember`.

Evana Network is Hiring!

Visit EvanaNetwork.org/jobopenings for a description of a new Director's Assistant Position.

Tractor for Peace Update

Kaufman Mennonite Church (Davidsville, PA) was blessed to host Pastor Nehemiah (Nemi) Chigoji from September 29 - October 4. A former professional soccer player, he was excited to share at Johnstown Christian School during Jr. High and High School chapels and ride along for a Girls Soccer game. Pastor Nemi also helped lead a series of local revival meetings. On Saturday Nemi shared about the work of the Anabaptist Peace Center in his home town in Nigeria. He is working with widows whose husbands have been killed due to the conflict between Muslims and Christians. (All of the widows' husbands were Pastors.)

Currently they are helping these women with Micro Business loans, housing and stipends for a two year period in order to help them get reestablished, and farming in order to grow food. In addition to the material needs, they are also helping them with counseling and health care costs.

A few of the Kaufman men who attended Nemi's Seminar at ReGen 2021 were so inspired by his sharing there about the farm work at the Peace Center that they committed to helping raise funds to purchase a new tractor for the work. Part of Nemi's visit was to celebrate this accomplishment and to help him learn how to use the tractor. Thank you to the other Evana Congregations who sent gifts to help us reach our goal. The tractor has been purchased and will be delivered later this winter once all the paperwork is completed!

- Michael Dean, Pastor



If you wish to join us in supporting pastors and resourcing congregations from a distinctly evangelical Anabaptist faith perspective, consider clicking “Donate” on EvanaNetwork.org or send a contribution via mail.

- Matt Hamsher, Executive Director