

THE FIVE STAR GREAT COMMISSION CHURCH

It has been said, *“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”* This means no matter how big the task; one must take the first step.

To fulfill the Great Commission is a long journey and one can easily become distracted or overwhelmed in where to start.

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

In the West Central District we are encouraging each church to become a **“Five Star Church.”** Each star represents a practical step in fulfilling the Great Commission given to us by Jesus. Some of our churches have excelled in these steps and are already functioning at the level of a **“Five Star Church.”** For many of our churches to become a **“Five Star Church”** this will stretch them and become a guide for them. The goal is for each church to become a **“Five Star Church.”** Each **“star”** requires a unified effort by all of the church to accomplish what Jesus laid out for us to do.

Thank you so much for being a part of something that is much bigger than we are. It requires taking steps of action and watch how Jesus begins to bless and bring His favor to us.

HOW TO BECOME A “FIVE STAR GREAT COMMISSION CHURCH”

In order for a church to qualify in earning a star, two action steps are required. Each star will have a minimum of two action steps. To become a “Five Star Great Commission Church” it will require two action steps in each of the Five Stars, thus a minimum of ten action steps in one year.

This will be a guide and a journey to follow. It may take several years to reach a “Five Star” rating, but it is worth the effort and many good things will happen as a result of this. For smaller churches, consider just one or two stars per year and build upon that.

Encourage the whole church to embrace this journey. Take time to think through these “Five Stars” and ask God to show you where to begin. The action steps suggested under each star is not the only way or method to fulfill the requirements for that star. If there are resources or other sources that will accomplish the same goal, please use these also.

STAR #1: THE PRAYER STAR

Jesus said His house is called “A house of prayer” which meant that prayer was essential and frequent. This step requires the church focus on having a prayer ministry.

Please choose two action steps to accomplish the “Prayer Star.”

- 1) Have a “21 Day Daniel Fast.” This can be modified for those who have health concerns, but 21 days of seeking the face of the Lord.
- 2) A 12 hour prayer vigil on a Saturday. Have 30 minute slots for people to pray over a prepared prayer list.
- 3) Contact Dr. Mark Arni to do a weekend prayer ministry at the church.
Phone # (740) 497-8195
- 4) Preach a series of messages on prayer. End that series with a “Prayer Concert.”
- 5) Show the film, “War Room” and follow up with the study guide.
- 6) View the series by Jim Cymbala, “Life-Changing Prayer” along with the workbook.
- 7) There are other ways to focus your church on prayer. These also can serve as action steps.

STAR #2: EVANGELISM STAR

We are called to share the gospel with those around us and to all the corners of the world. It is important to equip our church to know how to share their faith.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

- 1) Teach or preach messages from one or several of the books listed. Most have study guides that go with them.
 - A. *"God Space, Where Spiritual Conversations Happen Naturally"* by Doug Pollock
 - B. *"Purple Fish, A Heart for Sharing Jesus"* by Mark O. Wilson
 - C. *"B.L.E.S.S. 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World"* by Dave and Jon Ferguson
- 2) Invite Scott Hobbs to come to your church for a weekend to train and equip to share their faith. Phone # (937) 423-0697
- 3) Contact Rev. David Dean, head of the Department of Evangelism for the Churches of Christ in Christian Union for resources. Phone # (740) 474-8856

STAR #3: DISCIPLESHIP STAR

Learning to walk with Jesus is becoming a disciple. What we learn about Jesus we are to share with others so they too can have "abundant life."

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." II Timothy 2:2

What does your church have in place to disciple young Christians? Choose two resources to share with your Leadership Team, Sunday School Class, Bible Study Groups, or a Sermon Series.

- 1) A study guide to match a mature Christian with a new convert: *"The Journey", Basic Bible Studies for New and Growing Christians and Basic Bible Studies for the Spirit-Filled and Sanctified Life.* ---Charles "Chic" Shaver
- 2) Read and follow the teaching of discipling a person, *"The 5Q Method of Discipleship"* ---Matt Friedeman
- 3) Use the method by Dann Spader, *"4 Chair Discipling", Growing a Movement of Disciple-Makers.*
- 4) Read the book by Rick Warren, *"The Purpose Driven Church"*. There is a study guide to go with this book.
- 5) Have a weekend retreat for new Christians. Spend a couple of days covering the basics of the Christian life.
- 6) Develop some accountability groups for men and women. John Wesley's class meetings is a good place to read.
- 7) Learn from the Navigators, Campus Crusade and others who focus their ministry around growing up Christians.

STAR #4: CHILDREN'S STAR

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

Our children need to know Jesus. They need to learn of Him and follow Him at a young age.

How can your church focus some of its attention and finances on Children's Ministry?

- 1) Provide a Sunday School / Children's Church each Sunday for your children. The more classes offered for different age levels the better.
- 2) Put into the church budget money for curriculum, activities, classroom supplies and classroom furniture.
- 3) Give special honor and recognition to Children's Volunteers, teachers and workers at least twice a year.
- 4) Have a V.B.S. or Kids Week each year in the church.
- 5) Give children an opportunity to share with the combined church family what they are learning in their classes.
- 6) Contact Pastor Dan Coy and start a "School Ministries Ohio". Phone # (740) 351-7848

Make your Children's Ministry the best event your children will have all week.

STAR #5: HOPE STAR

Rev. Bob Kline once said to a group of us pastors, "Your church should be the hope of your community."

Giving hope in practical ways is becoming a "Life Changing" focal point in your community.

"Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it unto me." Matthew 25:40

- 1) Read and take the church leadership through the book and study guide, *"The Neighboring Church"* by Brian Mavis and Rick Rusaw.
- 2) Start a "Blessing Box"
- 3) Have a food pantry, clothing center or a free oil change for those in need. Offer a free meal per week.
- 4) Start a "Celebrate Recovery" group in the church.
- 5) Have a ministry for single mothers or the elderly.

Find a place in your community where Jesus is desperately needed and ask God what He would have you to do.