



THE CONNECTION

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September 2005

Register today for the upcoming conference:

Preaching
Summit
2005

PREACHING
SUMMIT

OCTOBER 18, 2005



Dear Friends,

Our special article for September deals with an important and creative approach to worship in growing churches. Greg Nettle, Senior Minister at River Tree Christian Church in Massillon, Ohio writes our article on his recent experience in starting a Saturday night service. Greg shares important concepts and ideas which will shed light on this idea for anyone considering beginning a new service. We are also listing links which have interesting information concerning the beginning of a Saturday evening service.

God bless you in your ministry and service for Christ!

David Roadcup

Executive Director

Center for Church Advancement

Cincinnati Christian University



P.S. I want to encourage you to attend 2 events. **CCU is hosting the 3rd annual Preaching Summit.** We are happy to have Ken Idleman from Ozark Christian College and Jeff Walling from Providence Road Church of Christ sharing with us for the day. Visit <http://www.healthychurches.org> for details.

The second event is Kentucky Christian University's NexChurch Leadership Conference this coming weekend, September 16-17, featuring Leonard Sweet. Visit www.nexchurch.kcu.edu for more details.

CINCINNATI
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Saturday Night—To Do Or Not To Do?

Greg Nettle

Senior Pastor

River Tree Christian Church

www.rivertreechristian.com

When we made the decision to begin a Saturday night worship service we were already running three Sunday morning services. Our 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services were filled to 80% seating capacity. Our early, 8:15 a.m. service, however, was only reaching about 150 people, or 15% capacity.

Because we typically reach young families, which includes young children, we realized that the 8:15 service was going to be virtually impossible to grow. Saturday night, on the other hand, seemed a very viable option. Our biggest challenge? No one had, as of yet, pulled off a successful Saturday night service in our area.

We've been running our Saturday night service for a year now. Successful by our standards—more than 600 people attend! Here are some things we learned:

1. All three of our weekend services are identical. And I do mean identical. The *same* worship band, the *same* singers, *same* style, and *same* message by the *same* Teaching Pastor. Individuals can choose any of our weekend services and know that they will get the absolute *same* high quality.
2. We have “varsity level” children’s programs at all of our weekend services. It doesn’t matter which service a parent attends, they can be confident that their children will be provided an excellent atmosphere for care and learning.
3. A signed covenant helped us get everything up and running. We asked 300 of our regular attendees to commit to moving from Sunday morning to Saturday night for six months. We did the same with our children’s workers (This was a tough ask because it meant that they would serve on Saturday night and then return on Sunday morning to worship). Hundreds of people signed the six-month covenant. At the end of six months what happened? There was no decline in our Saturday evening attendance. People pretty much stayed where they had moved.
4. Adding a Saturday night service changes the lives of your staff forever. We encourage our staff to take every fifth weekend off. This is in addition to their normal vacation time. We learned to be especially careful in staff families where one person worked on our church staff and their spouse worked Monday through Friday in a secular job. A seven-day a week work cycle between the two of them presents some very serious challenges.
5. Not all of the changes have had negative affects on our staff. For instance, prior to adding a Saturday night service, my wife and I rarely did much on Saturday night. It was a time of final preparation for Sunday morning. We also knew that we would have to be out of bed very early to get ready for three Sunday morning services. Now, we finish with our Saturday night service at 6:30. There is typically some “tweaking” of the service that takes place, but generally we know that we have a meaningful service under our belt. We go out to dinner much more relaxed as a family and then have a more restful night of sleep before arising for our two Sunday morning services. (We’ve found that many of our families attend Saturday night and then go out to dinner together!)

Traditional structures often stand in the way of fulfilling mission. Leaders must be willing to revamp or throw out structure that hampers mission.

~Bill Hull
7 Steps to Transform Your church

If our responsibility is to be fruit producers in the kingdom and to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, then we just may have to see our community differently.

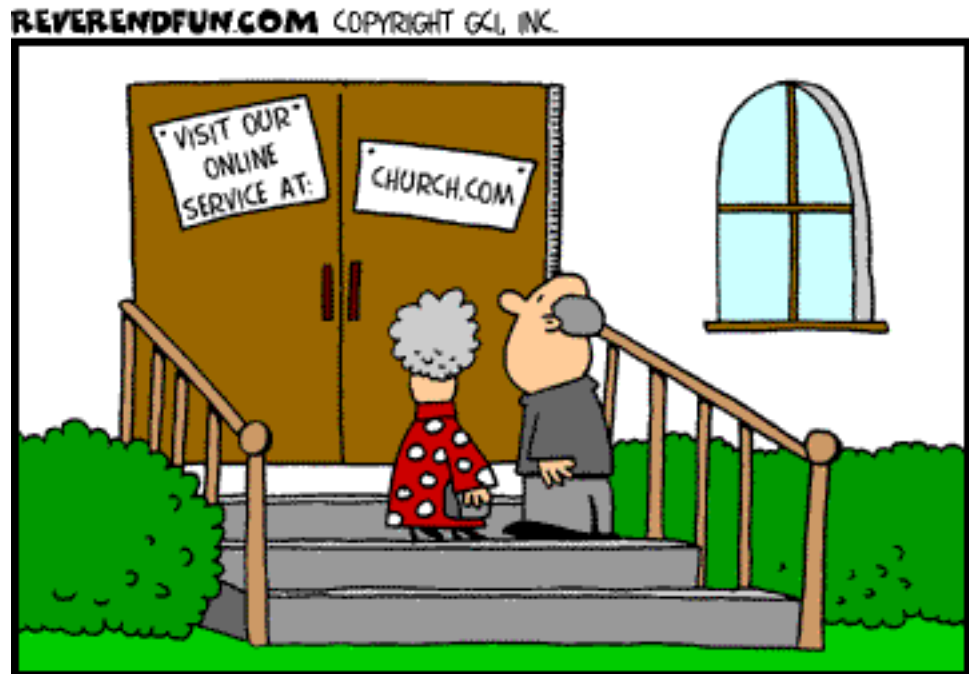
~Rick Rusaw; Eric Swanson
The Externally Focused Church

In a purpose-driven church, your purposes are the standard by which you evaluate effectiveness.

~Rick Warren
The Purpose Driven Church

6. There is a huge group of people out there who are not able to attend services on Sunday morning. They are, however, able to attend on Saturday night. I have had people in tears tell me how thankful they are that we have a Saturday night service. Because of their work schedule they had rarely been able to attend church in years. These are not people who are choosing to neglect their faith. They are typically individuals from the medical or service industry communities. A Saturday night service also allows people to regularly attend your weekend services, who for a whole variety of reasons, would have to occasionally miss on Sunday morning.

In short, shifting to Saturday night has allowed us to move from ministering to 2000 people a weekend to 2500. To do or not to do? You decide! †



Online Articles & Websites

Burnout and Songs in Minor Key 5 services = burnout?

<http://www.pastors.com/article.asp?ArtID=6506> An article by Rick Muchow.

10 Keys to Starting a Saturday Night Service [from Leadership Network]

<http://www.leadnet.org/allthingsln/archives/netfax/29.pdf#search='starting%20a%20saturday%20night%20worship%20service'>

Saturday night service? Amen: "Date night" Appeal Has Less-formal Feel at Mesa church

An article from the Arizona Republic online news

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/tempe/articles/0625tr-satnitechurch24z10Z10.html>

Leading in the Quest for Spiritual Renewal

A look at how one Church of God handled their Saturday Night Service:

<http://www.netsouth.net/lakeview/SaturdayNightAlive.htm>





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Advancement
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800.244.4CCU x 8183

E-mail:
CCAnewsletter@
CCUniversity.edu

Website:
www.HealthyChurches.org

Resources:

(in the CCA Resource Center)

Book: **How to Start a New Service** by Charles Arn

Audio tape: **Pastor to Pastor – Facing the Shifting Trends of Ministry** with H.B. London

Video Series: **Church Services for Postmodern Generations** from Leadership Network

Video Kit: **How to Go to Two Services** by Elmer Towns

(from Amazon.com)

[Emerging Worship: Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations](#)

by Dan Kimball, et al

[Dying for Change](#) by Leith Anderson

[Leading Congregational Change : A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey](#) -- by Jim Herrington, et al

www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com – Your sight for training Church Leaders. A service of Christianity Today.

