



Growing Your Congregation in Discipleship and Evangelism (A Journey of Organic Disciples)

Every local church is beautifully unique and has its own culture, calling, and community it serves. Having been in local church ministry for four decades now and having had the privilege of partnering with churches all over the world through the ministry of Organic Outreach International, we recognize there is no rigid pathway that fits every church the same. However, there are general patterns and practices that can help every biblical ministry thrive and move people forward as disciples and equip them to share the Good News of Jesus.

If you want to grow your congregation in *both* discipleship and evangelism at the same time, this resource will help walk you through some key steps you can take that will fully leverage the tools we have developed to grow *Organic Disciples*. Of course, you will need to shape and contextualize everything for your church, movement, or denomination. We encourage you to pray a lot, look closely at the believers you serve, and get to know the people God has called you to reach with His amazing grace. Ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Then, use these ideas to design the best way forward for your ministry to have a dynamic experience growing *Organic Disciples*.

We delight to partner with you in loving Jesus, serving His Church, and reaching the world that Jesus came to save,

Kevin and Sherry Harney

Starting the Adventure: Every journey begins with first steps. Here are some of the things you can be doing to prepare your heart, leadership, and congregation for life-impacting growth in both discipleship and evangelism.

Ideas and Resources to Prepare for an Eight-Week Organic Disciples Journey

(3-6 months before your eight-week church-wide journey of Organic Disciples)

- 1) **Pray for a powerful work of God!** God desires to see His children growing deep in their relationship with Him. He also delights when we shine His light and scatter the seeds of the Gospel. Begin praying right now. Literally stop right now and cry out to God that this experience will lead to lasting growth in discipleship and evangelism in your life, the lives of your leaders, and in every person who is part of your ministry (regardless of their age). Then, mobilize a team of people in your church to pray for a revival and fresh work of God.
 - **Timing:** Now and weekly through and beyond your eight-week church journey of Organic Disciples.
 - **Resources:** Use the prayer guide ([here](#)) and get this to your board members, staff, and church prayer team and prayer warriors.

- 2) **Start with Your Leaders.** Begin by teaching your church board members, staff, and key leaders about the Four Generations of Discipleship, the Seven Markers of Maturity, and the Relationship of Discipleship and Evangelism. This will set the stage for the whole church learning some core concepts about the life of an Organic Disciple. Read the book, *Organic Disciples*, together and pray, plan, and dream about what your church could look like if every believer truly lived the adventure of discipleship. You might want to use the small group videos and content with your church board, staff, and key leaders as you get ready. This way, you could mobilize some of them to lead small groups during your eight-week journey through *Organic Disciples*.
 - **Timing:** Ideally, begin this 3-5 months before your eight-week church experience.
 - **Resources:** Book, *Organic Disciples* (available in hard copy, e-version, and audio book). *Organic Disciples Small Group Guide*.

- 3) **Introduce the Organic Disciples Self-Assessment Tool** (for students and adults) to your church leaders. Have them each take a self-assessment and have conversations about the importance of seeking to grow in each of the markers of maturity for all of our life.
 - **Timing:** Do this around 2 months before you launch into your eight-Week church experience or whenever you begin training your leaders. You can do it together in a board meeting, a staff meeting, or in any setting you feel works in your context.
 - **Resources:** See the free self-assessment resource for adults and students [here](#).

- 4) **Recruit Discipleship Advisors** and have them do the brief video training we have created for you. We have a fifteen-minute video-training to help you equip some leaders who can take your church members walk through a process of evaluating their self-assessment results, celebrating where they are experiencing growth and maturity, and walk them through a process of setting personal goals for spiritual growth.
 - **Timing:** Do this around 2-3 months before you launch into your eight-week church experience.
 - **Resources:** See the training video with Sherry Harney (Sherry has been leading this process and training “Discipleship Advisors” for the last couple of years), available [here](#).

- 5) **Invite your congregation to be part of this journey** of spiritual growth. Take time to share what is coming up. Encourage everyone to be engaged. Offer sign-ups for small groups. Encourage people to attend the eight-week series, be in a small group, read the book, do the self-assessment (when it is offered during week one of the series), and take steps forward in growing in ways that will honor Jesus, bless them, and impact the world with the Good News of Jesus.
 - **Timing:** Begin 3 months before you launch your church-wide Organic Disciples series.

- 6) **Order and distribute *Organic Disciples* books and *Small Group Study Guides*.**
 - **Timing:** Order resources for your leaders 6 months before you launch and then order for church members 3 months before you

launch. Distribute to church members 1 month before you begin the preaching and small group series.

- **Resources:** For the best prices on purchasing [books](#) and [small group studies](#), we recommend ChurchSource.com. For bulk pricing, contact Alicia Lowery, Church Account Manager - ChurchSource (615.902.2105 Central Time) or Alicia.Lowery@harpercollins.com

7) **Recruit and train small group leaders** and invite existing small groups to focus on Organic Disciples for the eight weeks of your series -

- **Timing:** Begin this process at least 2-3 months before you launch your eight-week series. Use your church's normal process for training your leaders and recruiting new people to be in groups. You will find some promotional ideas in the communication resources in the link.

8) **Engage your children's and youth ministry** in the eight-week series. Imagine all of your children, youth, and their teachers/leaders growing in their understanding of what it means to be taking regular steps forward as a follower of Jesus who naturally shares faith with others. Wow! Take time to talk and pray with those who lead these ministries and review the resources provided for youth and children on the website.

- **Timing:** 3-4 months before you launch.
- **Resources:** See the children and student resources on the website. If you develop additional resources for this age group, please contact the Organic Outreach International offices if you are willing to share them with others. We want to help churches support each other by sharing biblical and practical resources.

9) Engage **Children** on the Journey- The best way to take children through the Organic Outreach resources is to have your children's leaders read the book, review the small group videos and study guide, and develop simple teaching for the children in your church out of the resources. We are creating some simple tools for children at Shoreline and will have these posted at the link below by the middle of February.

- **Timing:** Develop these resources from the content provided 2-3 months before you start the Organic Disciples journey.

- **Resources:** Use the links above for the book and small group study as source material. Then, use the tools provided on the website.

10) Engage **Youth and Students** on the Journey- The best way to take youth through the Organic Disciples resources is to have your youth leaders read the book, review the small group videos and study guide, and develop simple teaching for the youth in your church out of the resources. Most of the content is usable for students.

- **Timing:** Develop these resources from the content provided 2-3 months before you start the Organic Disciples journey.
- **Resources:** Use the links above for the book and small group study as source material.

An Eight-Week Growth Experience of Organic Disciples

For eight-weeks you will dive deep in discipleship and outreach with your congregation. During these weeks, make this the focus of your sermons, small groups, and other growth times for your congregation. You can even provide daily Bible reading that follows the biblical themes in each of the eight-weeks of the series.

- 1) **Preaching Series-** Preach for eight-weeks on the topic of *Organic Disciples*. Each week of the series is based on the free preaching resources provided on the *Organic Disciples* website. Be sure to use the book and small group guide for additional ideas for your preaching.
 - **Timing:** Eight consecutive weeks of gathered worship services.
 - **Resources:** [Preaching resources](#) that you can shape into a topical or expository sermon for your congregation. There is also a general [guideline](#) for using these resources to develop your own unique message that fits your congregation and ministry setting. You will also find some beautiful options for sermon slide projection backgrounds that fit with the artwork of this series ([green slide](#), [blue slide](#), [grapes slide](#)).
- 2) **Small Groups-** Take your congregation deeper into discipleship and evangelism by connecting them to eight weeks of small groups where they will pray, connect with other believers, study the Scriptures and develop patterns of

accountability for spiritual growth and shining the light of Jesus in your community.

- **Timing:** Each week, for eight weeks, following each of the Organic Disciples sermons.
- **Resources:** [Small Group Organic Disciples Study Guide](#) and [Organic Disciples Small Group Study Guide Videos](#).

3) **Connecting People to Growth Opportunities-** Each week of the Organic Disciples series there is a specific focus for spiritual growth that leads believers closer to Jesus and deeper into the world with His amazing love and grace. Connect your church members to opportunities for growth and engagement in the ministries of your church. For example, during the week you focus on Bible Engagement, highlight and promote opportunities like Bible studies, Bible classes, Bible memory programs, or anything happening in your church that will connect people to opportunities where they can grow in the Scriptures (this includes children and youth). On the week you teach about the spiritual marker of Humble Service, build bridges to service opportunities in your church and community. During the week you focus on the growth marker of Joyful Generosity, highlight ways to give to your church and other ministries you support. You can help children and students learn to give by planning a special project for them to support. You get the picture. Don't just teach on each of the seven markers of spiritual maturity, give people ways to take meaningful steps forward in their own growth in the life of your church.

- **Timing:** Focus on this every week of the Organic Disciples series and prepare for this 2-3 weeks before each of the sermons on the seven markers of maturity. Check in with staff and key volunteers to see what ministries and connections can be built during the series.

4) **Provide Weekly Bible Reading and Growth Opportunities-** At Shoreline Church we create weekly Bible reading guides, prayer guides, and other resources for personal growth. We have attached these so you can use them (with some editing) or create your own for your congregation using the examples we provide.

- **Timing:** Provide these weekly during the eight-week journey... in hard copy and e-copy.

- **Resources:** Download the [eight examples](#) of weekly Bible reading, prayer direction and other resources we have created for you to use. Here is an example of how to share these weekly at [Shoreline Church](#). You will find resources going back for years.
- 5) **Keep Praying-** Don't just start with prayer, continue praying all through the series. Each week offers an opportunity to invite your leaders and prayer warriors to lift up the work God is seeking to do in your church and through your congregation.
- **Timing:** The beginning of every week of the series. Share an email, text, or hard copy of prayer direction.
 - **Resources:** We have put together a simple [prayer guide](#) for each week of the Organic Disciples series. It is five or six prayer suggestions you can send out to your leaders and prayer team at the start of each of the eight weeks of your church-wide journey of Organic Disciples. Just cut and paste the weekly prayer directions and send them out at the start of each week.
- 6) Use the **Organic Disciples Visuals-** We have created two sets of visuals. One is a symbol for each of the seven markers of spiritual growth. The other is all seven symbols with one of the markers feathered. See the examples below for Bible Engagement and see the others for the rest of the markers of growth. These are found at the link below.
- **Timing:** Begin using these as you start the series and feature each visual for the week it represents. We use these with our children's, youth, and adult ministries.
 - **Resources:** We have seven icons, one for each marker of maturity. We also have seven badges with all seven of the visuals and one of them featured. Learn more [here](#), and select "Badges and Graphics"
- 7) Engage **Children** on the Journey- The best way to take children through the Organic Disciples series is to use the resources developed in the pre-launch phase each week of the 8 week series.
- **Timing:** Each week of the eight week series.

- **Resources:** Use the links above for the book and small group study as source material. Then, use the tools provided here...they will be live by March 1, 2022.
- 8) Engage **Youth and Students** on the Journey- The best way to take youth through the Organic Disciples resources is to use the resources developed in the pre-launch phase each week of the 8 week series.
- **Timing:** Each week of the eight week series.
 - **Resources:** Use the links above for the book and small group study as source material. Then, use the tools provided here...they will be live by March 1, 2022.

Continuing the Journey: After the eight week journey, don't stop your focus on discipleship and evangelism but continue the growth journey with commitment and enthusiasm!

- 1) Plan for a **New Believer's Growth Experience** in Organic Disciples- We have developed the small group study guide and video to serve as an ongoing new believers class/learning experience. Once someone places their faith in Jesus, the best thing you can do is teach them how to study the **Bible**, grow in **prayer**, engage in **worship**, **serve** with humility, give with **generous** joy, engage fully in the **community** life of the church, and begin **sharing their faith** in organic ways. Consider taking all new believers through an eight-week growth experience of Organic Disciples.
 - **Timing:** Ongoing...Plan this as a consistent class offered 2-4 times a year.
 - **Resources:** See the [small group study guide](#) and [teaching videos](#)

- 2) Plan for a **"Going Deeper" Class** Through Organic Disciples- As new members join your congregation and come from different church backgrounds and traditions, be sure to help them learn about the relationship of discipleship and evangelism. Also, teach them about the seven markers of spiritual maturity and help them begin growing in each area. Offer an eight-week class based on the Organic Disciples small group guide and video teaching, also using the self-assessment tool.
 - **Timing:** Offer this class 2-4 times a year.

- **Resources:** See the [small group study guide](#), and [teaching videos](#) and [self-assessment tool](#).
- 3) Continue **Using the Organic Disciples Visuals**- If you find the seven visuals for the growth markers helpful (and the seven badges with all seven markers and one featured), use them on your website, emails, children, youth, and adult communication. What we do is tag each event with a visual that shows this is about: Bible Engagement, Passionate Prayer, Wholehearted Worship... all seven of the markers.
- **Timing:** Use these regularly in an enduring way moving forward. They are powerful visuals.
 - **Resources:** See the seven visuals and seven badges [here](#) (select “Badges and Icons”).
- 4) Do the **Church Outreach Culture Assessment**- Organic Outreach International has developed a powerful tool to help churches do a deep dive to evaluate where they are in terms of developing an effective culture of outreach that is enduring and bears kingdom fruit. If you want to take next steps in combining organic outreach (evangelism) to the discipleship ministry of your church, contact the Organic Outreach International offices and set up a consultation.
- **Timing:** In the middle of your eight weeks of Organic Disciples, talk with your board about this. If you are interested, contact the OOI offices around week five of your Organic Disciples journey.
 - **Resources:** Church Outreach Culture Assessment (for more information, contact Blake Kelly - blake@organicoutreach.org).
- 5) Explore the **Free Seven-Year Evangelism Infusion Curriculum**- Most discipleship ministry seems to continue on through the good and hard times of church life and ministry. Sadly, most outreach activity seems to stall or go away if we don't infuse more passion and add fuel to the fire every 30 days. With this in mind, we have developed a seven-year curriculum of monthly infusions focused on the four key elements needed for outreach to continue thriving in a local church. We have this in three formats (A 90 minute training- “The Full Meal,” a 30-minute conversation, “A Cup of Coffee,” and a 15-minute infusion called, “A Shot of Espresso.”) If this would be helpful for you, please look it over on the OOI website. If you want help, please call the OOI offices.

- **Timing:** Do these infusions with your key ministry leaders (volunteer and staff) every 30 days until Jesus returns!
 - **Resources:** You will find the three-versions of the Outreach Influence Infusions (ranging from 5-7 years of curriculum). (for more information, contact Blake Kelly - blake@organicoutreach.org).
- 6) Start an **Outreach Influence Team**- If you want to see meaningful and lasting culture-change happen in your church that will keep outreach on the front burner of your ministry, begin an Outreach Influence Team. The full model for doing this can be found in the book, **Organic Outreach for Churches** and also in the Organic Outreach Intensive Training (This is available on video and also in in-person training events).
- **Timing:** Look into this after your Organic Disciples eight week journey is completed.
 - **Resources:** The book, [Organic Outreach for Churches](#), the [Intensive Training](#).
- 7) Get an **Organic Outreach Coach** or **Join a Cohort** with other leaders- If you want monthly support, learning, and encouragement for the next year (for a pastor or key outreach leader), please contact the OOI offices or look on the website to learn more about these resources.
- **Timing:** Look into this after your Organic Disciples eight week journey is completed.
 - **Resources:** Information about Organic Outreach coaching and cohorts (for more information, contact Blake Kelly - blake@organicoutreach.org).

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