Small Church

Embrace the Small Season

Grow as a family; then grow in numbers. Build the relationships, shared ministry, and leadership that will support healthy growth.

Supporting Scripture quotations: World English Bible (WEB)

1. Things I Would Build

1. Genuine Family & No Man Left Behind

- Know and value every member; build relationships beyond the weekly gathering.
- Notice when someone is missing or struggling; pursue one another in love.
- Carry burdens together; when one member suffers, the whole Body responds.
- Make care a shared responsibility rather than leaving it to one leader.

  John 13:35 — “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

  1 Corinthians 12:25–26 — “that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. When one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”

2. Room for Faults

- Expect personalities, weaknesses, and friction as relationships become genuine.
- Make allowance for faults; practice patience, forgiveness, humility, and grace.
- Address conflict promptly and directly; coach reconciliation rather than letting offence grow.
- Let relational challenges deepen prayer for one another.

  Colossians 3:13 — “bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, if any man has a complaint against any; even as Christ forgave you, so you also do.”

3. Activate Every Gift

- Identify and encourage the spiritual gifts in every member.
- Create opportunities for worship, teaching, prayer, prophecy, encouragement, and service.
- Help members recognize one another’s gifts and know whom to call upon.
- Invest in equipping people and match responsibilities with gifting, not merely vacancies.

  1 Corinthians 14:26 — “What is it then, brothers? When you come together, each one of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has another language, or has an interpretation. Let all things be done to build each other up.”

4. Worship & Presence

- Make corporate worship a central, intentional part of gathering.
- Use the freedom of a small church to make room for prayer, singing, and response to the Holy Spirit.
- Do not let the absence of a formal worship team or schedule lead to neglected worship.

  Colossians 3:16 — “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord.”

5. Communion & Fellowship

- Practice communion frequently and intentionally, remembering Christ together.
- Share in the bread and cup as an expression of fellowship and unity.
- Practice foot washing and humble service toward one another.
- Make room for shared devotion, prayer, and meaningful fellowship.

  1 Corinthians 11:26 — “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

  John 13:14 — “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”

2. Things I Would Flee From

1. Church-Hurt Identity

- Do not build a congregation around disappointment with other churches.
- Reject bitterness, repeated complaints, and gatherings centred on old wounds.
- Pursue forgiveness and a Christ-centred foundation.

  Ephesians 4:31–32 — “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outcry, and slander be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God also in Christ forgave you.”

2. Kingdom Competition

- Do not badmouth churches or cultivate superiority because of size or format.
- Do not build attendance by pulling people from healthy congregations through criticism.
- Champion other churches; speak positively, celebrate their strengths, and seek partnership.
- Remember the unity of the Body of Christ.

  1 Corinthians 1:10 — “Now I beg you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

3. Passive Christianity

- Do not recreate an audience gathered around a single preacher.
- Come ready to contribute rather than only receive.
- Share responsibility for prayer, encouragement, worship, and ministry.
- The Body should continue serving when one leader is occupied.

  1 Peter 4:10 — “As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms.”

4. Chronic Division

- Address recurring offence and divisive behaviour instead of allowing it to govern the gathering.
- Correct issues promptly; pursue repentance and restoration.
- Protect the church’s unity, spiritual depth, and ability to disciple others.

  Titus 3:10 — “Avoid a factious man after a first and second warning,”

3. Don’t Waste This Season

1. Culture Before Crowd

- Grow as a family before pursuing growth in numbers.
- Establish unity, intimacy, vulnerability, brotherly love, and shared care now.
- Identify and develop leaders before increased size brings complexity.
- Put people before programs; protect these foundations as the church grows.

  Acts 6:1 — “Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, a complaint arose from the Hellenists against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily service.”

  Galatians 6:2 — “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

2. The Greenhouse

- Give people opportunities to exercise their gifts before they are polished.
- Discover gifts through participation, encouragement, training, and coaching.
- Intentionally involve children in worship, prayer, service, and ministry.
- Recognize potential early and raise up future leaders.

  Ephesians 4:16 — “from whom all the body, being fitted and knit together through that which every joint supplies, according to the working in measure of each individual part, makes the body increase to the building up of itself in love.”

  Acts 2:17 — “It will be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams.”

3. Serve Together

- Respond together to needs through practical service and shared projects.
- Let members’ gifts and initiatives become opportunities for the whole church.
- Build unity and brotherhood by serving shoulder to shoulder.
- Reach people beyond the congregation, and equip faithful members to disciple others.

  1 John 3:18 — “My little children, let’s not love in word only, or with the tongue only, but in deed and truth.”

  2 Timothy 2:2 — “The things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit the same things to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

4. Generosity & Stewardship

- Cultivate faithful generosity toward people in need and the mission of the Church.
- Steward giving with integrity and transparency.
- Use available resources to serve, support, and strengthen others.

  Galatians 6:10 — “So then, as we have opportunity, let’s do what’s good toward all men, and especially toward those who are of the household of the faith.”