

The background of the entire page is a detailed architectural blueprint in white lines on a dark blue background. The blueprint shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements, including what appears to be a large hall or auditorium with a curved roofline.

BRING INVEST GIVE GO

DEPLOY

A JOURNEY OF BEING CORNERSTONE

*"...everyone to whom much was given,
of him much will be required..."*

Luke 12:48

*Remember to
bring this with
you to Life Group
through November*

Hi Everybody,

I'm grateful for the goodness and blessing God has given to our church. We have grown in number, but more importantly we've grown in passion of connecting people to Jesus. I continually witness you Being Cornerstone in your families and homes, at your workplaces and schools, and while you're serving others. But I truly believe our journey of Being Cornerstone has just begun.



God has given us a clear mission. He's called us to connect people to Jesus for transformed lives. We're working not only to introduce Jesus, but also to help people take the next step and truly transform into a fully committed follower of Jesus.

We're entering a two-year phase where we're asking you to Deploy and take the mission of Being Cornerstone to the next level:

MISSION TO BRING: Provide reasons for people to discover Christ & Cornerstone

MISSION TO INVEST: Help others understand how to accept Christ as their Savior

MISSION TO GIVE: Give my time, skills, and money to help others

MISSION TO GO: Help my neighbors, my community, my region and my world.

Are you ready to Deploy on the mission to connect people to Jesus for transformed lives? God has put us together as Cornerstone at this specific time and in this specific place to accomplish great work for His Kingdom. Let's join Him and Deploy on this mission together.



Ian Stamps, Senior Pastor



Dear Friends,

Before one decides to join the military you could say that he or she is a consumer of freedom. But the day comes when they make a decision to become a contributor to freedom. We're asking you to do the same. We're asking you to contribute to the mission and vision of Cornerstone, to Deploy to connect people to Jesus for transformed lives.



DEPLOYMENT IS AN HONOR. When our country deploys to accomplish a goal, it's an honor to be chosen as part of the mission. The brightest and the best are selected to use their skills and talents. God has truly blessed and given much to Cornerstone over the past years. I believe that God has placed you at this specific place and time for this specific deployment of connecting people to Jesus for transformed lives.

DEPLOYMENT IS A SACRIFICE. To Deploy also means giving sacrificially. Priorities change, schedules change, and we develop relationships to help accomplish the goal both on the field and at home. As we enter the Cornerstone Deploy initiative, we're asking you to examine your priorities, schedules, finances, and relationships. I invite you to ask God to show you what you can sacrifice and give generously.

ONE FUND FOR TWO YEARS. During the next two years the Deploy initiative focuses our generosity into one fund. This single fund represents operating expenses, mission partnerships, remodeling our current facility, and expanding our current facility.

These are exciting days at Cornerstone! I can't wait to see how God uses Cornerstone to connect people to Jesus for transformed lives. Get ready to join me in this journey of Being Cornerstone.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Adkins'.

Scott Adkins, Executive Pastor



A HISTORY OF CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JESUS FOR TRANSFORMED LIVES

1905 Lansdowne Church of Christ began in East St. Louis with 30 members.

Lansdowne moved to Fairview Heights and became Chapel Hill Christian Church.

1971

1985 Community Christian Church began in Belleville with 166 members.

Chapel Hill added classroom and connection space to the Fairview Heights church building.

1992

1995 Community Christian Church purchased 10 acres on Green Mount Road.

Chapel Hill Christian Church and Community Christian Church merged and formed Cornerstone Christian Church. Purchased 20 acres on Green Mount Road. Average attendance was approximately 350.

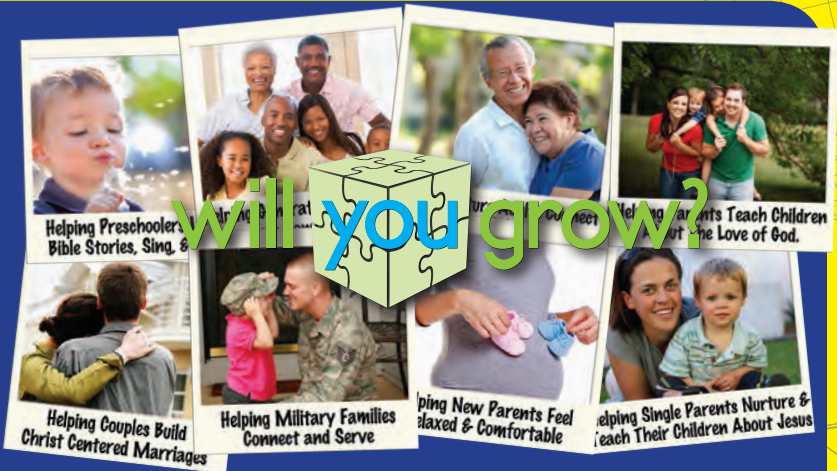
2000

2006 Cornerstone moved to Green Mount Road in Shiloh. First service held January 8, 2006. Average attendance was approximately 750.

Staff offices moved offsite to expand children's classrooms. Average attendance was approximately 950.

2009

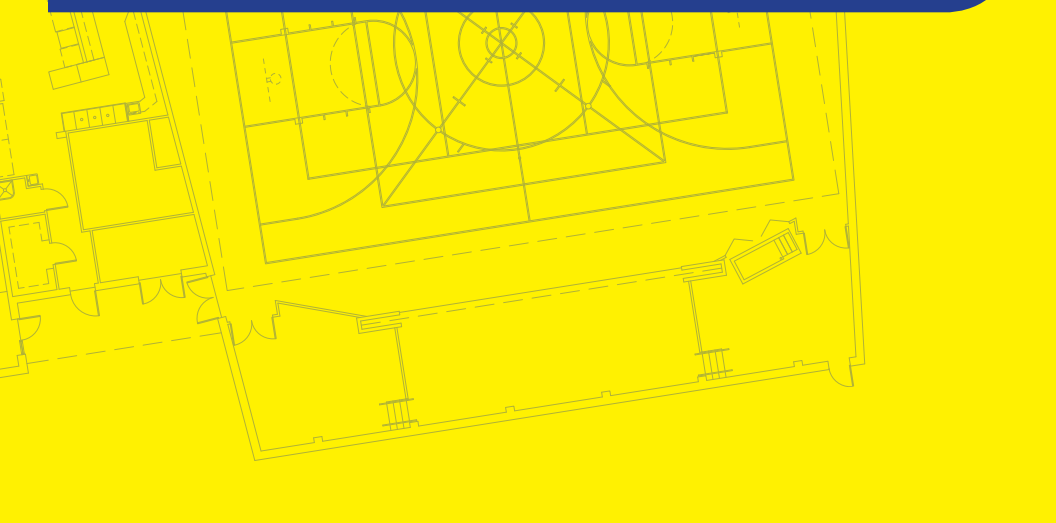
2011



"Will You Grow" changed the focus of giving at Cornerstone. Members were asked to estimate their giving plan for 2012 and then a spending plan was established. This took the focus off the need of the church to receive funds and put it on the need of the Christians to give according to God's instruction in the Bible.

We have four weekend services and an average attendance of 1350.

Today



Cornerstone Vision

The vision of Cornerstone Christian Church is based on Acts 1:8 of the Bible. Jesus tells his disciples that they will be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. As we implement that direction in our own locality, the geographic references from Bible times can be applied to our society today.

Near Our Home Jerusalem & Judea

This was the local area where the disciples were... their hometown. Within our local area, there are many organizations already meeting physical needs of many people. We're joining with them to meet these physical needs and provide an avenue to also meet their spiritual needs.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8

"Jerusalem and Judea" for the Cornerstone church body:

B
BEACON
Churches Serving Those In Need

**BOND
CHRISTIAN
SERVICE CAMP**

Close to Our Home

Samaria

These areas were places where local people would normally feel uncomfortable. This would have been areas of poverty, minorities, crime, and family crises. Today the Cornerstone building is located just 10-15 minutes from all these situations. East St. Louis and inner city St. Louis have great physical needs which need to be met before we can share the love and salvation of Jesus Christ. Some of Cornerstone's plans in this area are to partner with Christian church bodies in East St. Louis to provide the teaching resources, financial assistance, and volunteer support to help them prosper.

"Samaria" for the Cornerstone church body:



Worldwide Ends of the Earth

American Christians today are blessed beyond belief. We have Christian colleges, studies at local church buildings and in homes, easy access to Bibles, and people with phenomenal knowledge of scripture. This isn't the case in most other countries. We are partnering with global missions to help train Christian leaders worldwide.

"Ends of the Earth" for the Cornerstone church body:



**CENTRAL INDIA
CHRISTIAN MISSION**



What's the Next Step for Cornerstone?

BRING INVEST GIVE GO **DEPLOY** *A JOURNEY OF BEING CORNERSTONE*

One Fund for Two Years

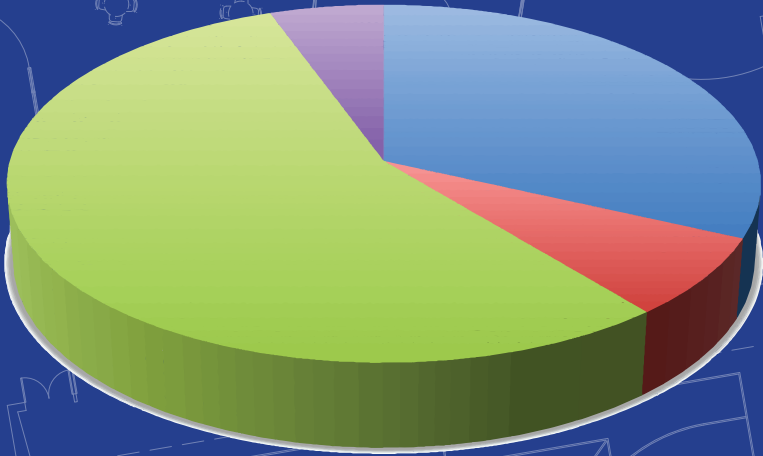
Just as we as a country deploy our military to accomplish a specific task, we as Cornerstone are deploying to use the resources God has given. Luke 12:48 "... everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required ...". God has truly blessed and given Cornerstone much over the past year. Deploy is a plan to use what God has provided to connect even more people to Jesus in future years.

During the next two years, we're focusing our generosity into one fund. This is a single fund that includes our operating expenses, mission partners, remodeling and expanding our current facility. Each aspect of this one-fund approach is focused on living out our mission of connecting people to Jesus for transformed lives.

As our country experiences a recession, God has blessed Cornerstone with generous gifts and has allowed growth in our finances. The Deploy challenge is for each one of us to sacrificially expand our generosity from the \$1.6 million committed for one year in 2012 to \$6.5 million over the next two years, 2013-2014. We invite you to ask God to show you what you can sacrifice and give as your two-year pledge of generosity.

Many of us have the ability to give from stored resources — those blessings God has provided for us in the past that could be used to give generously to his purposes and plans today. These could include a savings account, valuables, or stock. However you decide to participate, thank you for being part of the work God is doing at Cornerstone.

One Fund for Two Years



Mission: We Bring
New Construction

Mission: We Give
Operating Expenses
for 2 years

Mission: We Invest
Expanded/Remodeled
Connection Space

Mission: We Go
Missions

One single fund covers two years, 2013 and 2014. The \$6.5 million represents everything: operating expenses, mission partners, remodeling and expanding our current facility.

Mission: We Bring

We want to create an environment where non-Christians feel comfortable. Deploy helps us expand square footage by adding space for children, space for our student ministry (grades 6-12), and a parking expansion – areas that help us BRING people to Cornerstone.

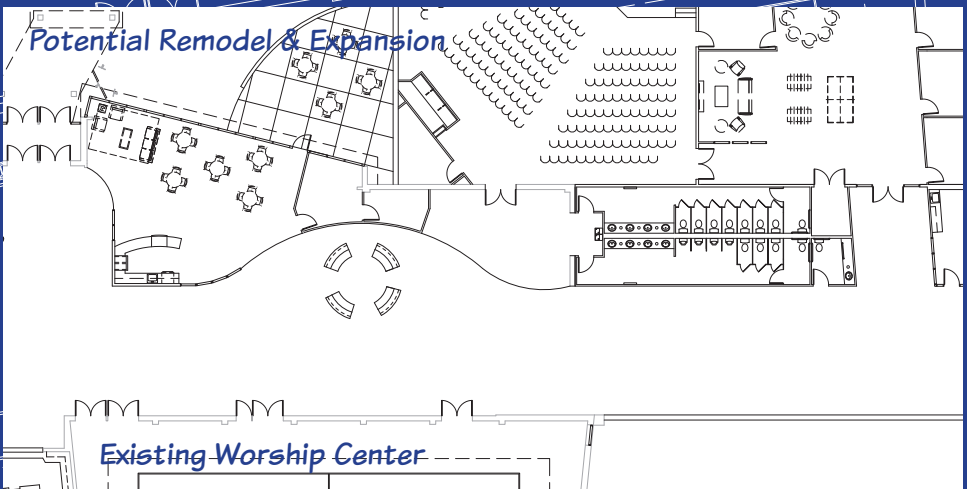


\$2.07 million

D BRING INVEST GIVE GO.
DEPLOY
A JOURNEY OF BEING CORNERSTONE

Mission: We Invest

We must invest in lives, helping them understand and accept the grace of God, so they experience His transformation. People are hurting and we need a place where we can invest our time and energy in them. An added café, enlarged foyer, tables, chairs, and meeting space are all potential ways to provide an atmosphere where relationships develop and conversations happen.



BRING INVEST GIVE GO.
DEPLOY
A JOURNEY OF BEING CORNERSTONE

\$470,000

Mission: We GO

Giving not only means having an expanded facility but having expanded ministries and programs that help connect people to Jesus for transformed lives. Cornerstone will expand the ongoing ministries available for infants, preschool, elementary, student, young adult, women, men, and life groups.



\$3.6 million

D BRING INVEST GIVE GO.
EPLOY
A JOURNEY OF BEING CORNERSTONE

Mission: We Go

We want to fulfill Acts 1:8, being "witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The vicinity of these Bible era locations reminds us that we cannot stand in one spot, but we're responsible locally and to the ends of the earth. Cornerstone supports established mission partners to accomplish this commandment. Currently 10% of operating expenses are given to these organizations. With an increased budget, our mission giving increases.

B

BEACON
Churches Serving Those In Need



BOND
CHRISTIAN
SERVICE CAMP



CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY CENTER



CENTRAL INDIA
CHRISTIAN MISSION

BRING INVEST GIVE GO.
DEPLOY
A JOURNEY OF BEING CORNERSTONE

\$360,000

Are you ready to:



Here's What We're Asking...

We're asking you to go on a journey with God and your entire Cornerstone family over the next several weeks. It is our hope that everyone would be part of this initiative as God continues to bless us individually and as a church.

ONE FUND

With Deploy we are all on ONE MISSION: The mission of Connecting People to Jesus for Transformed Lives. For the next two years, Deploy will increase our ONE FUND and make a huge investment that will create a total ministry impact.

COMMITMENT WEEKEND, NOVEMBER 17-18

We would like to ask every individual and family to join us on November 17 or 18 for worship service and make a radically generous commitment to Deploy. It is our prayer that you will accept the four missions: to Bring, to Invest, to Give, and to Go.

LIFE GROUP CHALLENGE

Please use this opportunity to take the Life Group six-week test run. Having a close group of Christian friends is essential and we believe it's something every Christian needs. Cornerstone Life Groups will study the book of Nehemiah in the Old Testament during the six weeks of Deploy. The Life Group lessons are at the end of this book. If you have a week when you can't make your meeting, the video is available to view at deploy.cornerstoneshiloh.org.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Please take the next six weeks and devote a few minutes each weekday to read the daily thoughts delivered to your email or on the website at deploy.cornerstoneshiloh.org. The most important part of your time each day will be to read the Bible verses. Each day, you will be challenged about a way to connect the Bible truth with a real-life reflection, question or action step as we all grow at Being Cornerstone.

TWO YEARS

The Deploy challenge is for each one of us to sacrificially expand our generosity from \$1.6 million in a single year to \$6.5 million in two years. Although we certainly believe two years is a realistic timeline to accomplish this goal, we also know that it will take a tremendous amount of sacrifice and commitment from everyone at Cornerstone. Below is a gift chart that details one way to reach the goal. Please be praying about your personal financial commitment and how you can expand your generosity to reach \$6.5 million in two years.

YOUR ROLE

To make Deploy a reality, everyone at Cornerstone will be challenged to participate and contribute in a huge way. While faithful tithes and offerings can provide for the church's operational needs, we all will need to give sacrificially to fund the effort to Deploy into the future of Cornerstone. We ask you to consider a few types of giving: Consider making sacrifices that would allow you to give over and above your normal giving. Then, make a comprehensive two-year pledge of your total generosity, which will include both your normal giving and your expanded generosity for Deploy.

Many of us may have the capacity to give from accumulated resources. These are blessings God provided for us in the past that could be used to give generously to His purposes and plans today. Stored resources could include a savings account, valuables, stocks

or property to sell. However you decide to participate, thank you for being part of the work God is doing at Cornerstone!

NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS	2-YEAR GIFT	MONTHLY GIFT	GIFT ACCUMULATION
1	\$300,000	\$12,500	\$300,000
1	\$200,000	\$8,333	\$500,000
2	\$100,000	\$4,167	\$700,000
5	\$75,000	\$3,125	\$1,075,000
10	\$50,000	\$2,083	\$1,575,000
20	\$40,000	\$1,667	\$2,375,000
20	\$30,000	\$1,250	\$2,975,000
30	\$25,000	\$1,042	\$3,725,000
40	\$15,000	\$625	\$4,325,000
60	\$10,000	\$417	\$4,925,000
80	\$4,800	\$200	\$5,309,000
150	\$3,600	\$150	\$5,849,000
200	\$2,400	\$100	\$6,329,000
Many	Less than \$2,400		\$6,500,000

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ARE WE CONSTRUCTING A BUILDING?

One of the components of Deploy focuses on construction, but that's only one of the four overall Deploy components. The overall goal of Deploy is to increase Biblical knowledge about generosity and how it relates to Cornerstone's vision of connecting people to Jesus for transformed lives.

DO WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT MONEY SO OFTEN?

Jesus didn't shy away from talking about money and possessions. He knew it would be difficult for us. In fact, just about one in ten verses in the four books of the Gospel deal with money and possessions, and Jesus spoke about money and possessions in 27 of His 43 different parables. Generosity is part of being a Christian.

WAS "WILL YOU GROW" SUCCESSFUL?

"Will You Grow?" (the last commitment program) was highly successful. With this program, we were introduced to the One Fund approach and it radically changed the generosity of Cornerstone. It is due to the groundwork that was laid that we can now embark upon this next endeavor.

WHERE DID THE MONEY GO FROM THE 2008-2011 "BECAUSE THEY COUNT" PROGRAM?

Be assured that money designated for "Because They Count" or "building" was used to pay the debt on the existing facility and expand ministry areas. When we were in the midst of "Because They Count", Cornerstone faced an unexpected banking issue that dealt with the conversion of our building loan. Since that time, we have employed an Executive Pastor and made our Financial Secretary full time. These positions provide clearer oversight of all financial affairs, including budgeting and banking.

DO WE STILL HAVE A LOAN ON THE EXISTING FACILITY?

The loan on our current facility has been reduced to \$2.7 million from the \$3.8 million balance in 2008.

HOW MUCH MONEY ARE WE TRYING TO RAISE?

Please look at *Deploy* more as a budgeting tool for Cornerstone than fund raising. We as Christians are told to give to the church generously. As Cornerstone leaders, we're asking you to estimate your financial giving over the next two years in order to plan a responsible budget. The \$6.5 million focus of *Deploy* as outlined in this book is based on a compilation of what we believe God will provide. Remember this estimate covers operating expenses for 2013-2014, mission partner giving, building remodeling, and some building construction.

WHAT WILL THE BUILDING LOOK LIKE?

The current plan is to enlarge and extend our connection area on the Green Mount Road side of the building. Constructing a "coffee house" atmosphere within the foyer will help as we invest in lives and help people understand Christianity. Our Children's Ministry will expand into the student auditorium, and a new, larger facility will be constructed for our older students. Parking will be expanded into the green space adjacent to Green Mount Road and additional children's classrooms and possibly onsite office space is planned for the west side of the existing building.

WHEN WILL CONSTRUCTION START AND HOW LONG WILL THIS PROJECT TAKE TO COMPLETE?

Remodeling and construction could start as soon as the summer of 2013, which would mean completion by the end of 2014. But our hope and goal is to have everything complete by Easter 2014. By the end of 2012, we will be able to provide a clearer plan and schedule.

HOW BIG WILL THE NEW BUILDING BE?

The expanded connection space will roughly double the size of our current area. The student ministry center will also roughly double in size. The added children's space will provide approximately 10-12 new classrooms.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

IS A "SATELLITE CHURCH" AN OPTION INSTEAD OF EXPANDING THE EXISTING BUILDING?

A satellite venue is very much part of the Deploy plan. As Cornerstone grows, it's essential to offer more seating during the "prime" Sunday morning church times, between 9:00 and 11:00 am. However, rather than an off-site satellite venue, we're exploring the idea of housing this venue onsite, which may be in the new Student Ministry center, seating approximately 200.

WHAT WILL THE WEEKEND SERVICES BE LIKE?

For the time being, the weekend services will remain mostly the same. This is something that could change in the future if we see a better, more efficient way to provide the best experience for everyone.

WILL ANY STAFF BE AT THE CHURCH BUILDING DURING THE WEEK?

Most of the time 25% of the Cornerstone staff is at the church building during office hours, while the remainder of the staff is at the office building on Country Road in Shiloh. Our hope is to include an office section with the building addition, but classroom space is the priority. You are always welcome to stop by the Office Building during weekday hours. Cornerstone staff is available to you by telephone and email, in a variety of ways and times.

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T RAISE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUILD WHAT WE NEED?

The current building has moved from being a ministry hindrance to being a ministry obstacle. All of the components of the plan presented fit intricately together to the point that it would be extremely difficult to remove one specific section. If Deploy commitments are less than \$6.5 million for two years, the overall plan most likely will be reevaluated by Cornerstone Leadership. However, we have already seen how faithful Cornerstone people are, listening to what God wants them to do. We have every confidence that God will direct how best to use the offerings.

WILL THERE BE MORE SPACE FOR ADULT CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE BUILDING ADDITION?

God has blessed Cornerstone with young families, which means lots of young children. We will need to continue offering identical children's classes during all adult worship services. We also believe that Life Groups are the main way for Christians to connect and build relationships of caring for one another.

WHAT IF I CAN'T GIVE A 1/10 TITHE? DO I TITHE FROM MY GROSS OR NET INCOME?

The amount a person gives is dependent upon many factors. What we pray for each person is that he or she will take time to seek what God would have them do. He knows what is in your bank account and knows what is in your heart. God often wants to stretch us out of our comfort zone. For some 10% may not be attainable at this point, but for some 10% may just be a starting point.

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL WAYS BESIDES CASH THAT I CAN GIVE MORE TOWARD THIS CAMPAIGN?

Be creative as you explore ways you and your family participate in Deploy. You might have stocks, property, or other items of that nature, and there's tremendous tax savings by contributing with these. God might be calling you to give out of stored resources He has blessed you with in the past. Maybe He's calling you to work individually or as a family on a special project specifically for Deploy.

WHEN DO COMMITMENTS START?

"First Gifts Weekend" is December 1-2, 2012.

What to Do with your Commitment Card

Commitment weekend is November 17-18. During these services we will have a unique time for each individual to leave their fingerprint as we Deploy into this new era of Being Cornerstone. Please prayerfully examine the commitment card before attending on this weekend. If it's more convenient for you, there is an online commitment card at deploy.cornerstoneshiloh.org.

Three Steps to Prepare

STEP 1: PRAY

This is the first and most important step in preparing your heart to respond to God's call to action. Ask Him what He would have you give to help others find the peace and promise you have found in Christ. Listen to what He says.

STEP 2: PREPARE TO DO MORE

Allow God to expand your vision. He often enables us to do more than we thought possible. God is the true source of the "think big" idea.

STEP 3: EXPECT GOD'S BLESSING

Leave room for faith in setting your goal. Prepare to experience great satisfaction and contentment knowing you have faithfully responded to God's urges.

What is a Stored Resources Gift

- **SALE OF ASSET:** Money resulting from the sale of a boat, car, ATV, collection, etc.
- **FREEDOM FROM DEBT:** After a loan is complete, the resources that were applied to that debt are now available for giving.
- **DELAYED EXPENSE:** Waiting to purchase a new home, car, etc.
- **SACRIFICE:** Changing your lifestyle and/or priorities.
- **ADDITIONAL INCOME:** Using your skills and talents, taking on additional work or delaying retirement.
- **GIFTS IN KIND:** Donating specific services and/or materials either personally or through a business.
- **INCOME PRODUCING ASSETS:** Income from rental property, or money from another income-producing asset.
- **APPRECIATED ASSET:** Transfer stocks, real estate, etc. If your asset has increased in value since the purchase, there are tax advantages of transferring ownership and using it as a charitable donation.

BRING INVEST GIVE GO Deploy

A JOURNEY OF BEING CORNERSTONE

"...EVERYONE TO WHOM MUCH WAS GIVEN, OF HIM MUCH WILL BE REQUIRED..."
LUKE 12:48

Commitment Card

Deploy in 2013 and 2014
s. The \$6.5 million
two years, not just one.

2.07 MILLION
where for new and non

children, students, and

70,000
relationships:
foyer, tables & chairs

to help transform lives:
our current ministries

wide mission

ing 10% of operating



MY TWO-YEAR COMMITMENT CARD

\$ _____ WHAT I NORMALLY GIVE IN A YEAR.
(GENERAL FUND, BENEVOLENCE, MISSIONS, ETC.)

+

\$ _____ MY EXPANDED ANNUAL GENEROSITY

=

\$ _____ x 2 = \$ _____

STORED RESOURCES GIFT + \$ _____
(STOCKS, REAL ESTATE, OTHER ASSETS)

MY TWO-YEAR GENEROSITY COMMITMENT \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Thank you so much for partnering with us on the DEPLOY initiative! Over the next six weeks, your group is going to spend a lot of time talking about the vision and future of Cornerstone Christian Church. We're excited about what these weeks are going to hold, not just for your Life Group, but for the church as a whole. We're expecting God to do great things, and we hope you are, too!

During the next six weeks, your group will be studying from the Old Testament book of Nehemiah. Though Nehemiah is often overlooked in the Biblical canon, it tells a very important story in the history of Israel. God gave Nehemiah the task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, restoring and protecting His people. The task Nehemiah had before him – much like the task we face today – was pretty daunting. Throughout the course of this endeavor, Nehemiah faced apathy, opposition and even rejection. In spite of these obstacles, Nehemiah completed the work God had for him.

With that in mind, we're going to spend the next six weeks looking at what made Nehemiah so successful. Our mission, like his, will require much out of us. Specifically, achieving the vision before us will require:

PREPARATION
BOLDNESS
VISION
COMMUNITY
PERSEVERANCE
CELEBRATION

life groups

where connections are made

Your group will spend the next six weeks looking at each of these requirements. As you do so, you'll see how each of them is an essential part of the mission God has for us both as a congregation and as individuals.

Once again, thank you so much for all you do! God has great things in store for Cornerstone Christian Church. I have no doubt He has great things in store for your Life Group, as well. May He bless you as you and your Life Group begin this important study together!

Brandon Braun

Brandon Braun, Minister of Discipleship





WEEK 1: PREPARATION

VIDEO:

This video will introduce the concept of preparation, setting the stage for the story from Nehemiah.

STORY:

Read the story of Nehemiah 1:1-11. Here is some background information to read before studying the text:

- The walls of Jerusalem had been torn down in 586 B.C. when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed the city and conquered Israel.
- Zerubbabel rebuilt the Temple in 538 B.C. Ezra finished the work on the Temple and began worshipping there in 458. Yet, no one had bothered to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The book of Nehemiah opens in 446 B.C., 140 years after the walls had been torn down.
- Nehemiah served as the cupbearer to the king of Persia (Artaxerxes). When Nehemiah heard that the wall had not been rebuilt, he wept over Jerusalem and her people. The walls of a city were a symbol of its power and protection. Jerusalem had no defense without its walls.
- Nehemiah knew something had to be done. Make special note of the two things Nehemiah did to prepare for his mission:
 - Confessed Sins (1:4-7)
 - Prayed for God's Help (1:8-11)

QUESTIONS:

1. How is our mission similar to Nehemiah's? How is it different?
2. Reread Nehemiah 1:4. Examine Nehemiah's heart before God. What motivated his mission? How does this apply to us?
3. What are some specific things we need to do in order to prepare for our mission?

Nehemiah prepared for his mission by praying. Prayer is one of the most important preparatory acts we can do. Spend some time as a group praying for our mission. You might also use this time to share any prayer requests and praises you might have as a group.



Notes





WEEK 2: BOLDNESS

VIDEO:

This video will introduce the concept of boldness, tying into our DEPLOY series as well as setting the stage for the story from Nehemiah.

STORY:

Read the story of Nehemiah 2:1-10. Here is some background information to read before studying the text:

- Nehemiah was cupbearer for the king. He protected and tested the king's food and drink to make sure it wasn't poisoned. Obviously, this earned him a bit of trust in the Persian court.
- This takes place four months after the events of Nehemiah 1. Nehemiah has spent these months preparing himself to approach the king and ask for the resources to rebuild Jerusalem's wall.
- Nehemiah breaks protocol by appearing sad in the king's court. As David Shepherd wrote: "Nehemiah violated the rules of courtly life in Susa by displaying an improper attitude in the king's presence. The look of sadness on his face put his life at risk, since it might be interpreted as displeasure with and thus rebellion against the king."
- Nehemiah expresses his loyalty to the king and then asks for what he needs to help Jerusalem get back on its feet. He asked for funds and resources on his journey – a request the king miraculously granted!

QUESTIONS:

1. Is boldness a word you would use to describe yourself? Why or why not? What are some things you have been bold about in the past?
2. How will our mission require boldness from us? What risks will we need to take?
3. Reread Nehemiah 2:4-5. What motivated Nehemiah's boldness? How will our mission force us to rely on God more?

Once again, close your time together in prayer. Share requests with one another. Also, pray that God would give you each boldness as we face the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.



Notes





WEEK 3: VISION

VIDEO:

This video will introduce the concept of vision, tying into our DEPLOY series as well as setting the stage for the story from Nehemiah.

STORY:

Read the story of Nehemiah 2:11-20. Here is some background information to read before studying the text:

- Nehemiah traveled 1,100 miles to return to the city of Jerusalem. Once he got there, Nehemiah didn't hop right into the work. Rather, he spent his first three days assessing the situation to see the condition of the wall firsthand.
- Nehemiah was only able to tour the southern parts of Jerusalem's wall. The northern walls had been completely obliterated by the Babylonians, to the point where there was nothing remaining.
- After his tour, Nehemiah called together some of the political and religious leaders of the city. After reminding them of the devastation, he challenged them to help him rebuild the wall. He told them that helping him in this endeavor would end the "disgrace" of their city.
- Most of the leaders were excited by Nehemiah's words. They pledged their help in rebuilding the wall. A few, however, opposed Nehemiah. As you can see, he has some rather strong words for them (2:20).

QUESTIONS:

1. In your opinion, why did the leaders seize Nehemiah's vision so quickly? What makes a good vision so inspiring?
2. Spend some time discussing Cornerstone's vision. What does it mean to Bring, Invest, Give and Go?
3. How does Cornerstone's vision impact you as an individual? How does it impact us as a Life Group?

Once again, close your time together in prayer. Share requests with one another. Spend some time praying that God would prepare you each to fulfill your role in Cornerstone's vision and future.



Notes





WEEK 4: COMMUNITY

VIDEO:

This video will introduce the concept of community, tying into our DEPLOY series as well as setting the stage for the story from Nehemiah.

STORY:

Read the story of Nehemiah 3:1-32. Here is some background information to read before studying the text:

- Nehemiah may have set the vision for rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, but there was no way he could have done the work alone. The wall circling Jerusalem was around three miles long in that time. In order to get the work done, Nehemiah would need help.
- Notice all the people who helped rebuild the walls! The high priests chipped in. A perfume maker, a goldsmith, and merchants are said to have participated, as well. Most everyone in Jerusalem – regardless of their walk of life – came together to help.
- It wasn't just Jerusalem who came together for this. The text mentions people from Gibeon, Mizpah and Zanoah as joining in the work. People from the surrounding area came to help Nehemiah in this endeavor.
- Notice in 3:28-32 how many people worked at rebuilding the wall around their personal residence. Nehemiah made them responsible for an area they had a vested interest in. By working to rebuild these sections of the wall, they would be working to protect their families.

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of events force a community to come together? What happens when people band together in this way?
2. How will our mission require community? Why can't we do it alone?
3. What can we as a Life Group do to contribute to the vision? What specific things can we do to Bring, Invest, Give and Go?

Spend some time developing an action plan as a group. What will you do to contribute to the vision of Cornerstone? How will your group contribute to the larger community? Close with prayer.



Notes





WEEK 5: PERSEVERANCE

VIDEO:

This video will introduce the concept of perseverance, tying into our DEPLOY series as well as setting the stage for the story from Nehemiah.

STORY:

Read the story of Nehemiah 4:1-25. Here is some background information to read before studying the text:

- When the building started going well, Nehemiah and his workers faced increased opposition. Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, publicly insulted the work, saying an animal as small as a fox could destroy the work the Jews had done.
- Instead of trading barbs with Sanballat, Nehemiah prayed about the situation. He asked that God would deal with them for their insults. The work continued, and the wall reached the halfway point.
- From there on, Sanballat's threats became more pronounced. They threatened violence against the people of Israel. As a result of these threats – and the tiring work – the people became discouraged.
- In response to this, Nehemiah outfitted his workforce with weapons to defend themselves. He put up guards to protect those who were working hard at the rebuilding. He kept the work going by ensuring the safety of those involved in it.

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of opposition did Nehemiah face on his mission? What kind of opposition might we face on ours? Why?
2. How did Nehemiah respond to his opposition? How did he persevere? What lessons does this hold for us?
3. Read Nehemiah 4:14. How did Nehemiah motivate the crowds to persevere? How can this same rallying cry guide us?

Close with prayer. Spend some time asking group members about some of their current struggles. Pray for perseverance and strength in the face of today's obstacles, as well as those yet to come in the future.



Notes





WEEK 6: CELEBRATION

VIDEO:

This video will introduce the concept of celebration, tying into our DEPLOY series as well as setting the stage for the story from Nehemiah.

STORY:

Read the story of Nehemiah 8:1-18. Here is some background information to read before studying the text:

- Nehemiah 6:15 says that the work on the wall was completed in fifty-two days. Following the work, the people of Israel gathered together to celebrate and to hear Ezra the priest read from God's Law.
- Ezra read from about 7:00 in the morning to noon. The most amazing thing is that the people stood the entire time to hear the words of Scripture. Upon hearing God's Word, however, the people began to weep because they had fallen short of God's commands.
- When he saw this, Nehemiah commanded the people to celebrate instead. The day was a holy one, and Nehemiah expected it to be joyous. The walls had been rebuilt! The Law was being preached again! The Israelites had much to celebrate.
- For seven joy-filled days the people worshiped God, celebrating His goodness to them. As Nehemiah commanded them: "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

QUESTIONS:

1. Is it important to celebrate our victories? Why or why not?
2. As we work towards our vision, what kind of milestones will we have to celebrate? How should we celebrate these achievements?
3. What are some things in your life worth celebrating now? How can you celebrate and thank God for those things as a group?

Close with a time of prayer. Ask for requests and spend time praising God for what He's already done. Pray that He would continue to bless us on our mission.

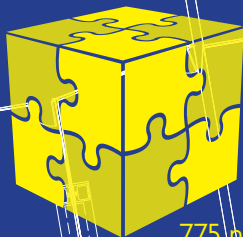


Notes





Mark your Calendar
Commitment
Weekend
November 17-18



cornerstone
christian church
connecting people to Jesus

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October 2012