

MAC News

modeling + multiplying discipleship

SPRING/SUMMER 2012

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A Note from
Bridget's Heart **2**

Meet the Newest
MAC Ministries
Board Member **2**

Anyone Can be a
Missionary by Jean
Tafoya **3**

New MAC Ministries
Logo **3**

Chairman Update
from Scott McLain **4**

Tensions of the Cross

Are you the type of person who creates tension? Or are you more likely to avoid it? Do you wonder why there has to be so much tension in your day-to-day life? How do you react when faced with a tense moment?

As I press forward in my own life and with others, I see that tension is ever present in my relationship with the Lord. Usually, these tensions show themselves when I realize that I need to be spending more time in the Bible, or that I should be more willing to sacrifice some of my time or possessions for others.

It is a tension that will not go away, yet I work hard towards eliminating it from every area of my life.

As I come to know God better, I see how these tensions are used to draw me closer to Him. The struggles that I encounter within these tensions are opportunities to be molded and shaped.

My friend, Keith Jennings, has helped me to recognize this in my life. Keith is a Creative Writer who writes extensively about tension being a tool for our growth in ANY area of our lives.

In my Intentional Discipleship training course, we spend much time discussing and giving examples of the tensions that are common in discipleship.

These tensions are normally visible at both a personal level and at the church-wide level. Some of the tensions used for discipleship training deal with one's focus. For example, is one's focus on:

- knowing ABOUT God or KNOWING God.
- GATHERING individuals or GROWING them.
- FIXING people or WALKING with people.
- PROGRAMS or RELATIONSHIPS as one's catalyst for discipleship.

- being a CHRISTIAN or a DISCIPLE.

At first glance, these may appear to be a play on words, however my experience has taught me the importance of going deeper into these tensions. Hopefully, you will see that the statements are not about a right or wrong approach, but more about our DRIVER within the tension.

But many times when being intentional, sacrifice and ambiguity are parts of the process. Being intentional to embrace these tensions when serving the Lord, is a great step forward.

I invite you to ask yourself where you stand with these statements. Are you allowing the tensions that arise when serving the Lord keep you from moving forward? Or do you simply adjust your position to go around them? Seek out the ways that the Lord is trying to use these tensions as a tool for **growth** in your life.



CLC Men's Group at FPC Marietta

Intentional Discipleship at Eastminster Presbyterian Church

What does it mean to be intentional with discipleship? This was a common question that resonated with the eight men from Eastminster Presbyterian Church who joined me for the past 12 weeks going through MAC Ministries Intentional Discipleship training.

The format was simple in

that the men, all leaders within the congregation, would discuss topics each week that focused on the following questions.

1. Is the average person at EPC wanting to grow in their faith? And, is the average person wanting to be a disciple of Christ?
2. How do we give people

what they want in the context of what they need to grow as a disciple of Christ)?

3. What is my personal ministry statement with God?

Using personal stories and best practice methods, these eight men were challenged to gain a better understanding of how one can be intentional in

their life with discipleship.

As one mentioned in the last session. It's important for each of us on the discipleship continuum to NOT be "content" with just becoming a "disciple", but to be intentional with the goal of becoming "disciple-makers."

Exactly.

A Note From Bridget's Heart

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

On Friday, March 16, I attended the Funeral Mass for a child of a friend of mine. Funerals are sad. Funerals for children are especially sad. This child was only 27 hours old when he died. My friend and her husband knew that their little boy's life on this earth would be short. He actually lived longer than anyone expected. The funeral Mass celebrating this baby boy's life was sad. I am sad for my friend and her husband. I'm sad for the two little girls who were so excited to be big sisters to their baby brother. However, when I left the church on that sunny Spring day, I felt hope.

You see, the parents of this baby boy knew without a doubt that their precious child was a gift from God. Not only did God bless them with an unexpected pregnancy; He gave them the gift of affirmation of faith. My friends were able to witness to all in their lives the faith they hold in the promises of God.

I'm not saying that my friend did not know grief. For that is also part of our faith building journey. Some

"I'm not saying that my friend did not know grief. For that is also part of our faith building journey."

may ask why a God who is supposed to be good would do something so horrible just to test our faith. I don't pretend to know why, I just trust in God's ways. I believe that He uses everything to His good purpose. Even the short life of an innocent baby. A life filled with unconditional love.

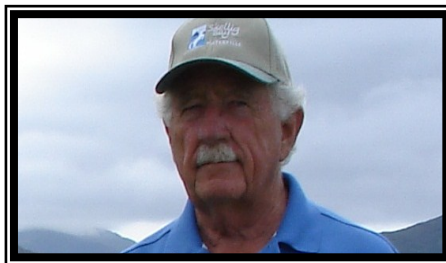
My life is filled with people who have experienced grief beyond what anyone can imagine. The longer I live, the more people I meet with life -stories that would make me want to curl up in a ball and tell the world to go away. Yet these people keep on living. They are a living witness to the power of the promise we have in Jesus Christ. The company we keep will either encourage us or bring us down. I choose to stand with those whose hope is in the Lord.

Meet the newest MAC Ministries Board Member ... Jack Stitzel

It is my great pleasure to join the Board of Men Abiding in Christ Ministries this month. When Pat asked me to consider becoming a part of this Board I was blessed and pleased to pray and seek the Lord's leading in this commitment.

Long before I met Pat, I began hearing testimonials of the Christian Leadership Concepts (CLC) groups as well as Pat's involvement with discipleship with men in our community from neighbors and friends over the past several years. These were tremendously encouraging to me and I actively began praying for their success and the strengthening of God's Kingdom in the hearts and lives of those involved. Over time I saw men whose lives were being changed as they began to become more like Christ every day. They testified it was due in large part to the intentional discipleship they were recipients of through MAC Ministries.

A few years ago, I began to notice a younger man at my favorite breakfast restaurant who seemed to have many morning meetings there. He would show up, Bible in hand, and join one or two men for prayer and breakfast. This



Jack Stitzel at Waterville

tweaked my interest since I also used this place for prayer and counsel with men from my church that I meet with.

One morning this man was joined by a friend of mine. I couldn't resist the opportunity, so I went to table to say hello to my friend. He introduced me to Pat and that began our friendship. It wasn't long before Pat and I began to meet once a month or so to match notes and praise the Lord. We found that we were like-minded and shared a passion for discipleship. We formed a bond and warm friendship early on and were led to begin meeting and praying together regularly. I have been personally blessed through this time and have been overjoyed by observing Pat pour him-

self into this ministry. While he gives of himself freely and unselfishly, he always makes time for his wife and children, a distinctive that is critical to their relationships and very lives. This is a man under authority!

The ministry of Men Abiding in Christ reaches a wide group of people, men and women, through several different churches. This is a "working out" of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19, 20 by providing discipleship investment and training to the willing. The investment is in their eternal security and the training enriches their daily lives and relationship with Jesus Christ. This is transformative and responds to the Apostle Paul's admonition in Romans 12:2 "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." This is what we all want: to not let the world influence our every thought, every decision, but to think and act like Jesus, focused on our eternal Father and pleasing and glorifying Him. We can only do that with a disciplined plan born out of "quality time" with like-minded Christians, devotion to prayer and Scripture and staying close to Jesus.

Anyone Can Be A Missionary

I titled this message, “Anyone Can Be A Missionary.” Then I thought... really? Come on, Jean, no one’s going to buy that. I mean, a missionary is a person who travels to distant foreign lands and stays for years, lives in a hut in a village, eats weird food – maybe even locusts – while crouching in the dust, and brings the Word of God to those who have perhaps never heard of such a thing before. Right? That’s what I grew up thinking a missionary is.

But the truth is, a missionary is someone who only has to travel outside of her comfort zone to bring the Word of God to those who need to hear it – maybe for the first time, maybe just for the right time. It can happen in your office or school, down the street, across the country or across the globe.

I have been on several mission trips now. In the past year, I’ve traveled to Renacimiento, Mexico three times on extended weekend trips. Did I live in a hut? No. We stayed at a very nice bed and breakfast. Did I eat local food? Yes, and it was delicious! No locusts, I promise you! Did we bring the Word of

God? I hope so; I hope that as we played with the children and spoke with their mothers, we helped shed a bit of the Light of the World into that corner of Renacimiento.

But what no one told me, what no one prepared me for, was the effect that these trips would have on ME. No one



Jean Tafoya with the children of Renacimiento

told me that I would learn to love those children – Vanessa, Yahira, Jorge, Felix, Blanca - who wrote their names in my Bible and on my heart. No one told me that Pastor Eva, who works tirelessly for the betterment of these same children, would become a role model for ME. No one told me that returning to Renacimiento would feel like coming home, and leaving would break my heart – every time. No one told me that bringing the Word of God to others would also mean learning it anew, myself.

And that, my friends, is what happens when you become a missionary. I know, because I am a mom, a daughter, sister, and friend; a Presbyterian, an instructional designer, a singer, and a missionary.

What about you?

By Jean Tafoya

New MAC Ministries Logo

What does a logo mean to you? Can a logo bring new life? New focus?

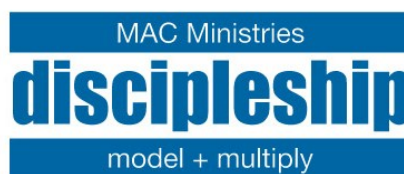
In celebrating MAC’s 5 Year Anniversary, we came up with a new logo for the invitations.

This logo resonated with me because it answered some basic questions about MAC Ministries:

- What’s my purpose?
- How do I carry out my focus?
- Why do I do this?

The simple diagram led me on a journey that revealed much insight about MAC’s calling and purpose.

So, why did I choose this logo? What questions did it answer? Why did it give me balance, rhythm, patience, and ultimately freedom in serving God?



“**discipleship**” is what I do. It’s my focus. Men, most of the time, are my platform, but discipleship is my driver. This knowledge and focus brings balance to my day-to-day.

“**model**” answers the “how” question. I don’t just teach folks how to be disciples. I don’t provide churches a winning formula on how to grow their congregants. I model it. It becomes my rhythm where I show others how I remain dependent and obedient (two important parts of a disciple) on/to the Lord and help others adjust their lives to

do the same. Modeling allows people to see and feel what discipleship is and how to apply it in their day-to-day walk.

“**multiply**” answers the “why” question. The goal of this ministry is multiplying disciples. But this is where I had to unlearn and relearn all that I had learned in my 15 year career and 2 master programs from my life before MAC. This is where John 3:30 comes into play....I become less and the Lord becomes more. To multiply, to reproduce, to transform, I must rely on the Lord and the relationships that he develops to bring about multiplication. I must be patient to persevere and trust that the Lord is bearing fruit. The more I do this the more I understand Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 6 that we can see and water but the Lord transforms/grows.

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We're on the web!
macministries.net



Ongoing Ministry Needs:

- 96,97 and 901 HP print cartridges and printing paper are needed for the MAC office!
- Postage Stamps
- Gas Cards (Sams Club or QuikTrip)

Ministry Highlights

- **January:** Fellowship of Presbyterians conference, Orlando, FL
- **January:** Eastminster PC Annual Men's Retreat
- **February – May:** weekly Intentional Discipleship training at Eastminster PC.
- **April:** launching of another CLC group at FPC Marietta.
- **May:** Gringo Mission Trip to Monterrey with 12 team members.

Ahead:

- **Ongoing:** 3 small groups and approx. 12 one-on-one meetings weekly
- **July:** Gringo Mission Trip to Monterrey
- **August:** Fellowship of Presbyterians conference, Atlanta, GA
- **September:** launching 1 BLC and 1 CLC group
- **October:** Christ Renews His Parrish retreat, St. Joseph's Catholic Church

Chairman Update by Scott McLain

It is an honor to have the opportunity to serve God by serving MAC Ministries and enable Pat to do the Lord's work. However, I think the most significant benefit is for me as I get to see up close the incredible work of the Ministry. The many personal testimonies of men Pat has engaged with are strong evidence of the positive effect the Ministry has on the local community. Pat's continual genera-

tion of new small groups verifies the calling of the Ministry. And over the last year plus MAC Ministries has added an international presence as Pat utilizes the model & multiply discipleship process with men in Monterrey, Mexico. Whether in a bagel shop in Marietta or in a house in Monterrey, the message is the same – our dependence should be on Christ rather than our

own understanding.

As I reflect on the connection points of the Ministry I am humbled to think of all of those that enable the Ministry. Whether through financial donations, prayers, or emotional support for Pat and Bridget, God has allowed hundreds of people to be a part of this Ministry. On behalf of men from Marietta to Monterrey, thank you for what you do for MAC Ministries..