



---

**HUSTLE**

---

Good morning from DeKalb, IL!

For most of us, the rime of ice settling on the lawns indicate a settling in for winter. But for a planter, it's the time of hustle; getting the fields harvested. Hustling is our rhythm these days in DeKalb. God has been at work in many ways here but I wanted to share one story in particular with you.



photo credit - pat conroy

We met Judy at DeKalb First Nazarene and quickly became good friends and partners in ministry. Right about the time God was broadening our understanding of both the purpose of the Church and what it means to be a disciple, God also began a new awakening in Judy. Her heart began to break for the sin that had trapped many people she knows, and her heart also began to break for the status quo and survivalist mindset (rather than healthy thriving) that threatens to anesthetize Christ's Church.

As we shared our hearts through the teaching series of "The Art of Neighboring" and the Scriptures that drive the LTG prayer, Judy's teachability and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit carried her into another heart change. She became baptized back into the world. She put these things into practice, meeting in an LTG with Sara, and practicing the Art of Neighboring. At that point she realized that her workplace—where she is HR manager—was more her neighborhood than the area around her house, given the amount of time she spends there (assisted by constant study of her oikos map).

She began by going to work even earlier to prayer walk the warehouse and each department everyday. At first her presence in these areas led to work related questions and discussions. Over several months, however, her natural Christian witness was getting noticed. She began to get questions about her spirituality and point of view. Individually, four different women were approaching her regularly for spiritual discussions. They began to interconnect and meet together in Judy's office regularly. The discussion is about the whole of life, though the aim in the questions are always spiritual. Judy employs the natural posture of a learner, teaching nothing, facilitating their learning through questions.

One day, she was approached by two women at work, one of whom has a father who just received a terminal diagnosis for his cancer. These two women asked Judy to join them in praying for her father, and for the entire company where they worked. Earlier this month at the morning company meeting, the woman with the ill father announced that her father was being released from the hospital after finding no signs of the cancer. She announced to everyone that this was all due to God who answered their prayers. Another of these women has also started a gathering in her own home to discuss the Bible. This facilitator's husband is an atheist but has begun to ask questions because he has noticed his wife's changing attitudes.

We have hoped and prayed and worked toward something like this: a spontaneous and rapid outbreak of the Spirit, over which we have no control and can claim no credit! We long for a movement of Jesus that spreads beyond our borders: church walls, city limits, denominational lines, even our sometimes self limiting brands (beyond Living Well—Organic).

This might seem an odd thing to celebrate but we believe that if it is of God it is already far beyond just us. How can we make sure they're teaching the right things? How do we keep track of them? These are real concerns but the right response to these and other questions is that we trust in the transformation of Jesus and in the Holy Spirit to call and equip. We are also working with Judy to help her facilitate spiritual growth in this brand new area. Please pray for Judy and her emerging group!

## DEVELOPMENTS

### Common Grounds

The cafe ministry led by Free Methodist Pastor, Jeff Foster, is opening up doors into serving our community as well as dozens of spiritual conversations each week with people who do not believe the way we do. Please pray for our efforts to start a mentoring program with jr. high and early high-school kids.

### Organic Network

We have also completed our two year coaching contract with a birthday celebration in October for the birth of the organic church network in northwest Illinois. We got together to share stories and plan the next two years of missions work together. The leadership team is at work now identifying the next round of potential planters for a formal coaching arrangement, So, please be in prayer for Jake and Rebecca, Laura, John and Becky, and Sara and myself as we ask big of a few people and pray also for these potential leaders. We know that when God calls, we become a target of the enemy.

### The Walk: Recovery for Everyone



One of the values of Living Well Church is recovery, and one of the best tools we've been given is the principles and practices of 12 Step programs like Alcoholic's Anonymous. In Dixon, this has taken shape with Celebrate Recovery. For us in DeKalb, God has been preparing a new ministry effort that will take recovery in a different direction. The Walk is a program we're developing that has a dual approach:

#### Existing 12 Step Programs

Some people with compulsive or addictive thoughts or behaviors crave a more intense environment for recovery. For them, existing programs like A.A., N.A., S.A., O.A., etc, are a better fit. We will encourage them to attend those meetings in addition to walking in their discipleship under Jesus with us. This isn't a chance to cross someone off our responsibility list, but it only shifts their spiritual development into a different realm. Knowing

our own story, Sara and I are well aware that we need spiritual discipleship in the language of recovery. So, we have been attending a 12 Step group for the past year and will continue to do so.

Placing Christians in existing 12 Step groups brings evangelistic and discipleship aspects into our recovery. Believing that our most effective new Christians will come from those who have the least to lose, we've positioned ourselves there among the socially marginalized, sharing our poverty with each other, pointing to the true reason for our continued recovery.

#### Recovery as Discipleship

Finally, we hope to bring the principles and practices of 12 Steps into our small groups. We know that most people are not ready to acknowledge that their destructive thoughts or behaviors are out of their control and their lives have become, to a certain degree, unmanageable. For them, we are compiling materials for 12 Step work without the addictive/compulsive language, and without the overtly Christian language of programs like Celebrate Recovery. Essentially, we want a 12 Step program for everyone, who don't see themselves as a Christian or an addict.

Until next update, please pray for us. May he hear our prayers for you, and arrive at your points of need.

Yours in the mission,



Living Well — Organic is a body of believers affiliated with Living Well Church in Dixon, IL, and a part of the Church of the Nazarene

