

## Evangelists as Ministers of Revival

### Revive Hope<sup>1</sup>

There is no life without hope. New life (revival) can't occur in a climate of hopelessness.

- Hope is not denial or avoidance of reality. Denial is false hope.
- Hope is not optimism, which is based on self-confidence. Hope connects us to both God and others, in a collaborative community of patience, gratitude, faith, goals, strategies, and motivations.
- Hope is the middle ground between the stress response and giving up.

Hope is a practice that can be learned. Evangelists are ministers of hope, who can teach others how to engage in the practice of hope to combat fear, anxiety, boredom and complacency. Practice and teach these steps to revive hope in individuals:

1. Be conscious of your breath and quiet your mind for five minutes. If your mind wanders, start over. Be reminded by this exercise that in life, too, you can always begin again.
2. Each morning, take time to consider four things:
  - a. Where you are (the state of your life right now)
  - b. What you are becoming (the fully activated inner self you have the potential to become)
  - c. Your spiritual journey to this point in your life
  - d. Your place in God's heart as a precious child of God.
3. Establish your own spiritual practice and stay with it.
4. Do something good for someone else. Hope is a state of being, regardless of outcomes. Plant fruit trees for future generations to enjoy. Be caught doing random acts of kindness. Forgive someone you haven't yet forgiven.
5. Wherever you go, make eye contact with strangers and smile at them. Keep a record of the responses.
6. Make a list of all the members of your family, friends, and coworkers who support you, love you, and you can rely on. Commit to increasing the connection with them. Now list three people whose relationship with you needs to improve and identify one thing you can do to improve each relationship. Then do it.

Suggest that the pastor or leadership team use one or more of the following techniques to revive hope and life in a congregation:

1. Discuss the vision of the kingdom of God. As a congregation decide on one unified action that will help make the world a better place. Commit to doing it, and act on your commitment.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on information in "Growing Hope," "Test Your Hope Foundation," and "Use These 14 Practices to Raise Your Hopes" by Louise Danielle Palmer, *Spirituality and Health*, Jan/Feb 2007, (New York: New York, Reading Entertainment Group LLC), pp. 40-49.

2. Evaluate the gifts resident in the congregation, list them, and identify the special talent that tends to represent the whole congregation. Now figure out a way to share that talent with the community at large.
3. Review the history of the congregation and all the things that made it or continue to make it a wonderful place to worship and fellowship. Identify three things in the history that are still true today. Identify the steps that need to be taken to make sure those three things continue on into the future for other generations. Begin implementing the steps identified.
4. Connect with another congregation in a different part of the United States or in the world and support one another with prayer, communication, sharing of dreams and hopes, and exchanging worship ideas. (Be sure to inform your Mission Center President of your intention first.)
5. As a congregation, make a list of ten things that are expected to happen in the next three years. Circle the negative expectations in red, the positive ones in green. Put a check by those events the congregation can take an active part in, and an X for those things that the congregational members have no control over. Identify ways the congregation as a whole can influence or shape the positive expectations, and decrease the impact of the negative ones. Place the negative ones in God's hands. Commit to making the positive ones happen.
6. Identify what fears reside within the congregational memory. List them together. Read II Timothy 1:7, and beside each fear write one possibility for using spiritual power, God's love, or the intelligence and talents of the congregation to overcome that fear. Choose the most important three to implement, and begin doing something positive to change the congregational fears.
7. List all the ways congregational members have made a difference in the world through sharing their lives and gifts with others. Post the list and celebrate the fact that the congregational members have impacted the world for good. Identify how the congregation as a whole has been a source of influence and good in your community and commit to extending that influence in a practical manner.
8. Begin a scripture study based on scriptures of hope, joy, and commitment to Christ. Explore ways to make those scriptures live in individual and corporate life. Then choose three ways and implement them.