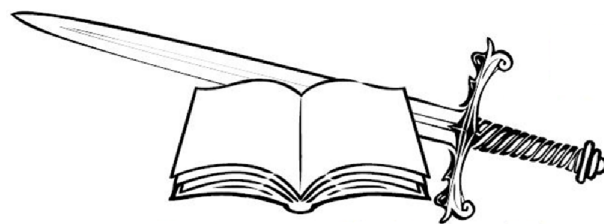




LAUREL RIDGE  
Community Church



# Men's Newsletter

Spring 2021

*For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. – Gal 5:13*



## Men's Community Groups

The groups below are open to all men looking for devotion, prayer, and fellowship. To register, visit [laurelridgechurch.org/community-groups](http://laurelridgechurch.org/community-groups), click the **Sign Up** button and fill in the form, or contact the group leaders directly.

### Tuesday Evenings

**Time:** 6:00 PM

**Place:** Room 301 at church or online via Zoom

**Host:** Jeff Alford  
(925) 550-4344  
jeffro7172@gmail.com



### Thursday Mornings

**Time:** 6:30 AM

**Place:** Online via Bible app

**Host:** Matt Onstott  
Contact Elisa Onstott at  
(925) 628-1841

## Should I Say Yes to a Ministry?

If you've been a Christian for a while, there's a good chance that at some point someone has invited, asked, or urged you to serving in a ministry. I would guess that maybe 10 percent of the time your answer was yes or no and 90 percent of the time your answer was, "I'll pray about it."



You may then have had a conversation with yourself that went something like this: "I don't want to do that. I don't have time for that. I'm not qualified for that." You may have felt irritated at being asked to serve and guilty for not wanting to serve, especially when you remember that Jesus said to the disciples, "Anyone who wants to be first (in the kingdom of God) must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mar 9:35).

Or maybe you said yes and then, dreading what was ahead, backed out. Or you joined the ministry and found it nothing but a joyless struggle. When someone asks us to serve, how can we know what our answer should be?

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# WHAT HAS GOD DONE IN YOUR LIFE?

**SHARE YOUR STORY WITH US!**

## Encourage others with your God story

*by Eric Schumacher, Pastor of Worship & Community Groups*

God wants to use you to impact others for His glory, and a great way to allow God to work through your life is to simply share a story of what God has done for you. Everyone has a story. Even if you don't think so, you do. Most people enjoy hearing stories about other people that are relatable, impactful, and real. God wants to use the events of your life to be a blessing, an encouragement, or an eye-opening experience for other people around you.

Your story doesn't need to be lengthy, and it doesn't need to cover the history of your entire life. Often the best stories are short, relatable examples of something specific God did or how He spoke to you in a life moment.

Think over this past year and the many circumstances in which you were involved. Did God teach you a lesson? Did He answer a significant prayer? Did He grant healing for you or a loved one physically, emotionally, relationally, financially? Did God meet a need in your life in a supernatural way? Or did God meet your everyday needs through His daily provision as a reminder of His constant faithfulness? Each of those events is a story that others will want to hear and that somebody may *need* to hear.

Won't you consider blessing others with a story of how God has worked in your life? If so, perhaps you can pull out your mobile phone right now and turn the camera to selfie mode and record a short (1-3 minute) video of a God story in your life. Then, you can easily send your story to the church by following this link <https://laurelridgechurch.org/yourstory>. We may even find a way to highlight your story in one of our worship services.

Another way you can share your God stories with others is by getting connected with a Community Group and engaging in the times of discussion by sharing your experiences. Other times, you may find yourself in a conversation with a friend, a family member, or a co-worker who needs to hear a story of how God can work in a person's life like He did in yours. There are all kinds of moments and situations where your story is exactly the thing that is needed. Will you be willing to share your story? ✝

## Website Roundup

Never in history has so much information about God, Jesus, and the Bible been available to so many people. With all this good stuff, we should all know the Bible like J. Vernon McGee. Here's just a few of the most popular Christian websites:

[Biblia.com](http://Biblia.com) Scrollable online study Bible. Includes versions in numerous languages, including Arabic, Greek, Russian, Chinese, Korean, Spanish and Latin, along with popular English-language versions like the NIV.



[BibleGateway.com](http://BibleGateway.com) Online study Bible.

[BlueLetterBible.org](http://BlueLetterBible.org) Online study Bible.

[Christian Broadcasting Network](http://ChristianBroadcastingNetwork.com) Online Christian magazine with sections on news, Christian living, spiritual life, devotions, ministries, healthy living, music, videos, and more.

[Got Questions?](http://GotQuestions.com) A "Q & A" website with answers to over 600,000 questions about God, Jesus, the Bible, and theology.

[InTouch.org](http://InTouch.org) The online site of InTouch Ministries, founded and headed by Dr. Charles Stanley. The site provides access to videos of Dr. Stanley's sermons, a daily devotional, inspirational messages, and more.

[RightNowMedia.org](http://RightNowMedia.org) Library of video resources for individuals and small groups.

[Thru the Bible](http://ThruTheBible.com) The devotions, global outreach, and five-year radio program Bible studies of J. Vernon McGee. ✝

## Serve at the River



Sunday, March 28, from 1:30 to 3:30 PM at the corner of A and 6th Streets in Antioch. Also on April 25, May 23, and June 27 (the fourth Sunday of each month).

Join with other believers in providing a meal and sharing God's love with the homeless and other people in need.

Donations of food, soft drinks and other items, and volunteers to help set up, serve and share are welcome. Contact Bob Andrade at [randradeteam@gmail.com](mailto:randradeteam@gmail.com) for more information or to sign up.

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# Should I Serve?

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The answer should be no if a job, school or other commitment prevents you from serving at the day and time each week that the ministry requires, or if an injury, disability or illness requires physical work you can't do. Or if you are already serving in a ministry and taking on another ministry would degrade your ability to perform your current ministry.

If none of the above situations apply, your answer should be yes. Even if you "don't feel like it." Even if you feel unqualified. Even if you have served before and it was a disaster. Not just because God will accomplish good things for others through you but because he will accomplish good things in you.

The experience of serving in a ministry can strengthen your relationship with God. Just thinking about it motivates you to question your attitude and feelings toward him. Are you grateful for all God has done for you? Is your heart for God and others as warm as it should be? If your initial reaction to the thought of serving is that you are too busy or unqualified, is it possible that you are just looking for an excuse?

When you answer the call to serve, you will find that it illuminates areas of your life you need to improve and motivates you to improve them. One of the most powerful lessons you may learn is to draw strength from God each day in prayer and in the Word instead of trying to power through your life or ministry under your own steam. Your love for God and others increases when you serve. You develop friendships and community with your ministry co-workers. And when you serve faithfully in one ministry, God opens doors to other opportunities that are even more rewarding.

The ministry effort you join might not go well at first. You might be faced with problems you didn't expect. A conflict with others may arise. You may feel unappreciated. Yet even then God will teach you important lessons about yourself that will help you grow in your walk with him. Your ministry will produce fruit when your efforts are guided by his wisdom, fueled by his power, and motivated by his love.

In the prophet Samuel's farewell address to the Israelites, he told them, "But be sure to fear the LORD and faithfully serve him. Think of all the wonderful things he has done for you" (1Sam 12:24). Discuss the decision with God—especially if you said you would pray about it. Then say "yes, Lord." ✝



In Numbers 21:4-9, the Israelites complained against God and Moses, so God sent poisonous snakes to kill them. The people asked God to take away the snakes, so God told Moses to make a bronze replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who were bitten were saved if they looked at it. What was the name of the bronze snake and what became of it? Answer below.

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The name of the snake was Nehushtan.  
King Hezekiah destroyed it because it had become an idol (2 Kings 18:4).