

Faith Promise Models for a Variety of Churches

Churches of any size can—with planning—host a faith promise event. Whether your church is small, medium, or large and whether the event is a single-service occasion or consists of several services over the course of a weekend, churches around the world are finding that faith promise is a tremendous way to promote missions giving in the Church of the Nazarene.

The following are actual faith promise plans from churches of various sizes. Use the plans as they are or adapt them to fit your church's needs. (It might be helpful to read all of them, as some ideas might apply to your church, even though they were used for a church of a different size.)

For the Church of Fewer than 50

For the Gallup Church of the Nazarene, the annual faith promise event is the highlight of the church year. The congregation's attendance averages 35-50. In planning the convention we use the following process:

Step 1—Select speaker and date as far in advance as possible.

We have scheduled as much as four years in advance. The new home assignment (deputation) schedules make planning a challenge, and advance planning is a necessity. Believe it or not, we have found Labor Day weekend a good weekend (if we can secure a speaker), and we actually close with a picnic on Labor Day.



Step 2—Select a theme. There are theme suggestions at <www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>.

Step 3—Determine the schedule and format. We usually plan a three-day convention. For example:

- Friday Evening—A casual event or party atmosphere makes it easy to get acquainted with the speaker(s).
- Saturday—We plan one or two events. Some years the men and women meet separately for breakfast or brunch. An early evening event is sometimes appropriate, but a picnic in the afternoon has yielded the best attendance.
- Sunday Morning—The children may meet separately for Sunday School or in a group session with the adults. The worship celebration should allow ample time for the guest speaker, as well as time to fill out and collect the commitment cards.
- Sunday Noon—We plan a meal in the fellowship hall or go to a restaurant for Sunday dinner.
- Sunday Evening—When Sunday dinner is served in the fellowship hall, a Victory Service with a challenge from the speaker follows the dinner.

Step 4—Decide on hand-outs to coordinate with the theme.

We design a program with information for the adults. The computer makes it possible to produce a professional-looking book in color.

The children are provided with a folder containing a shiny new pencil, a small box of crayons, and activity sheets that appeal to various ages. We include pages to color as well as Bible mazes and word games. We try to use children's pages from *Mission Connection* and/or the Children's Mission Education packet.

Prayer reminders and theme reminders include magnetic prayer cards, candy, and other food items, plus items from a party supplier with clever phrases attached. We like to have at least one giveaway for each session.



Step 5—Special features are planned for interest and publicity.

Theme skits, songs, and music of various kinds are presented by all age groups. Decorations coordinating with the theme are used throughout the church.

*Pastor Tom and Fern Crider
Gallup, New Mexico*

For the Church of 50-99

The New Beginning Church of the Nazarene holds an annual faith promise convention. Our church's morning average attendance is in the low 80's. We have found that a Sunday convention suits our needs.

Planning

About one month before the convention, we begin decorating our fellowship hall. Taking the decoration theme from the speaker, we have attached paper globes to the walls, each bearing the name of a world area in which the Church of the Nazarene ministers. We have also attached paper flags from each nation.

Also a month before, bulletin inserts begin appearing. These inserts change weekly. One Sunday we define faith promise. Another Sunday we inform how faith promise funds are spent. Another Sunday will be the theme presentation.

For the faith promise convention, a booklet is prepared which functions as a comprehensive guide to Nazarene missions. In it is a description of ministries such as Alabaster, Missionary Health Care (formerly Medical Plan), Mission Corps (formerly Nazarenes in Volunteer Service), Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, etc. It also includes biographical information about our speaker.



Schedule

The first faith promise event happens during Sunday School. Typically we ask our speaker to teach a combined Sunday School class with the teens and adults in one room. The lesson has a missions emphasis.

The second event is the morning worship service. The hymns and Scripture readings are appropriate for a missions service. During the pastoral prayer, all active Nazarene missionaries are prayed for. Cards with missionaries' names and places of ministry (available from the World Mission Web site <www.nazareneworldmission.org>, Missionary Profiles) are distributed prior to the service so everyone present has several missionaries for whom to pray. After the speaker's sermon, commitment cards are distributed, and the congregation is given a week to return their commitment/amount to the church.

The third event is a luncheon. We have planned several different ways in which to have this luncheon. Sometimes we have asked that certain ethnic foods be brought, other times we've left food choice to the congregation.

*Pastor Wade Branard
North Canton, Ohio*

For the Church of 100-499)

Faith Promise Weekend 2006 was a first at Winnsboro First Church of the Nazarene (Sunday morning worship attendance—approximately 150). Our mission-motivated pastor, Ron Pelton, began his ministry with us in January, and in March he suggested that we initiate faith promise.

Research, Planning, and Prayer

I immediately began research and gathered a lot of information from *Mission Connection* magazine and the NMI Web site (<www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>), and I ordered the *Faith Promise Planner* (from Nazarene Publishing House; order number—S-3).

Our NMI council met with Pastor Ron, and he suggested a speaker who was willing to come, but who had limited open dates. We had a month to plan! The timeline in the *Faith Promise Planner* recommended a

year! This is when we began our plans with the first of the *Planner's* 12 sure-fire tips—we began to pray, pray, and PRAY.

Making the Theme Come to Life

I came across the “Hats Off to Faith Promise” theme idea on the NMI Web site (under Giving > World Evangelism Fund > WEF Promo Ideas). Our council met and accepted this. We formed committees, and everyone continued to pray, began brainstorming, and working.

We mailed invitations—decorated with hats—to each family on our church mailing list. A woman in the community with an extensive hat collection loaned her hats for decorations. They were placed on a variety of stands as centerpieces and displays throughout the family life center. A council member made a huge top hat along with a “billboard” for the entrance. We cut hats out of construction paper and wrote the names of active/retired missionaries and the world areas where they serve/served. (These are still displayed on the walls around the room.)

Our faith promise booklet was hat-shaped, and our theme, date, and speaker’s name were printed on each placemat with a colorful hat taped to the top corner! An important visual aid was our faith promise goal detailed and displayed on a large board—it stood in a prominent location in our sanctuary for several weeks.

The “Hats Off to Faith Promise” hat show idea was wonderful! We adjusted it to accommodate our church’s faith promise budget. A talented lady in our church decorated hats describing what faith promise giving provides. Most of the models were the council members. We encouraged attendance at our banquet by inviting our children’s bell choir and sanctuary choir to minister to us during the evening.



Victory Service

On Sunday morning we presented the speaker with a pewter hat-shaped pin as a remembrance of Winnsboro’s Faith Promise Weekend 2006—a wonderful time of working together, fellowship and motivation. The speaker’s messages blessed our hearts, and God’s enabling is evident as we continue to reach our goal and help fulfill the Great Commission.

*Norma Branham
Winnsboro, South Carolina*

For the Church of 500-999

Shawnee Church of the Nazarene averages around 500 on Sunday morning with two services. For faith promise Sunday morning, we have one combined service with a missionary speaker. The congregation, worship team, and choir sing missions-related music. We show a brief missions video (usually from the *World Mission DVD*). Prior to the missionary speaker, the senior pastor makes an announcement about the faith promise event on Sunday evening.

A Change of Venue

On Sunday evening, we have a big faith promise event at the Shawnee Civic Center (rented), which includes a large gymnasium with a commercial kitchen. The theme usually relates to the country where the missionary speaker ministers. Tables are set up with theme-related centerpieces. Commitment cards and pens are provided on the tables. The program/order of events for the evening doubles as a menu and also includes the biography of the missionary speaker, as well as interesting facts about Nazarene missions <www.nazarenemissions.org/facts>. A stage is set up with draping and a light rig and sound system, which are all acquired at a reduced rental cost because a church member works for the company.

For food, the NMI Council prepares a light meal to correlate with the theme (usually a traditional meal from the missionary speaker’s country), allowing participants to “sample” the culture. Food is enjoyed during the entertainment segment.



To involve children, we have a variety of kids' activities (maze, puppet show, etc.) at the back of the room. Also, we have our children's stomp band perform during the evening. To encourage teen participation, we ask them to be servers, delivering the food/drinks. Teens also serve as greeters and have helped with the children's activities.

For the evening's entertainment, we have a multimedia presentation with PowerPoint slides, video, and special music—provided by the worship team and praise band, or a Christian rock/blues band made up of church members, and the children's stomp band.

The missionary speaker is given time for a brief devotional. Then commitment cards are completed, turned in, and tallied. Children collect the commitment cards.

*Melinda Wolf Miller
Shawnee, Kansas*

For the Church of More than 1,000

At CrossRoads Church of the Nazarene, their faith promise event takes place during Sunday morning worship only. The church averages about 1,300 in their multiple morning worship services.

Order of Service

Missions Video Presentation—Keep it short and high-energy.

Scripture Reading During Intro of “We Speak to Nations”—Narrator should read with excitement.

PowerPoint presentation accompanies the music and reader. The PowerPoint presentation is available on the NMI Web site <www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>. Flags may be substituted to represent the world areas your speaker represents, where the church's Work & Witness teams may have visited, where members have lived/served, etc.

Choir—“We Speak to Nations” May be purchased <www.praisecharts.com>. Visitors to the site may listen to a sample of a recording of the song, download the song from iTunes, buy a version for lead/vocal sheet and piano part only, or buy a version with complete orchestration.

Orchestra continues playing while individuals speak/pray in different languages.

Worship Music—“Shout to the Lord” by Darlene Zschech; copyright: 1993 Hillsong Publishing/Integrity's Hosanna! Music

Welcome

PowerPoint Presentation on Faith Promise—Presented by the pastor. The presentation has scriptures about missions and giving, then shows the church's faith promise budget, briefly explaining how the various offerings help Nazarene missions. The PowerPoint presentation is available on the NMI Web site <www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>. Your church's budget will need to be added, as well as any explanations, as these vary from church to church.



Offertory with Worship Music

Worship Music

Message

Closing Song—“Our Heart” by George T. Searcy and John Chisum; copyright 1993 Integrity's Hosanna! Music/Integrity's Praise! Music

*CrossRoads Church of the Nazarene
Chandler, Arizona*

*Compiled by Gail L. Sawrie
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