



THE WAYS

JOIN HANDS. Work as a team. Collaborate with each other, our professional staff, our lay leaders, and our congregants to find the best solutions. Collaboration lightens the load, generates better ideas than individuals working alone, and unleashes the gifts God has given us all.

1. Who has been one partner or teammate who has been a positive influence on your life?

READ Ecc. 4:8-12

1. How is working alone meaningless?
2. Which specific benefits of working together are listed? Would you add more?
3. Look at verse 11. How is the teamwork of spouses beneficial to both?

Scenario: You have some friends in the area who you know need the church in their lives; but for one reason or another, they never come. You realize that we need to do something differently or new in order to reach them. You know them and you think you know what they need; and you think if you really took a run at it, you could make the change they need.

1. What is your first inclination for how to get things done?
2. What are the benefits to getting it done on your own? Of drawing others in to *Join Hands*?
3. What are the drawbacks or dangers to each?
4. How can you balance the benefits and dangers to work together?

The idea of *Joining Hands* is one we can all get behind; but when it comes down to it, many of us are more likely to go it alone. When you *Join Hands*, the plan will change; the solution will change; the goal might even change, but the Spirit has joined us together for a reason. It is together that we are gifted to be the hands and feet of Jesus and together that we are called to care for those around us. When Scripture addresses you, most of the time it should be translated “y’all.” Don’t assume God is just calling you when He really means “y’all.”

PRAY TOGETHER.

(Pray the Spirit would drive congregants together to learn how to live out faith in a changing world.)

DAILY Devotional

MONDAY: *READ:* Gen. 2:18-20. *THINK:* Right at the beginning of the Bible, we see that it is not good for man to go it alone. We are made in the Image of God, and God is a triune community. At the core of God is not singularity but three Persons. When you *Join Hands*, you reflect who God is and live as God intended. *PRAY:* the Spirit would draw “suitable helpers” into your life.

TUESDAY: *READ:* Prov. 27:7 *THINK:* We have all felt this happen. When we gather around faithful people, we become more faithful. When we are challenged by others ideas, we become wiser. When we work alongside missionally-minded Christians, we become better servants. *Join Hands* because when you do, you will find that you grow. *PRAY:* God would show you who you can sharpen and who can sharpen you.

WEDNESDAY: *READ:* Neh. 3 *THINK:* I doubt you read that whole thing, but you probably noticed how many people were working on rebuilding the wall together. The city was in danger, and the only way forward was together. One group after another worked together in doing what needed to be done. When you *Join Hands*, you will find impossibly large tasks become do-able. *PRAY:* the Spirit would create willingness in our congregation for His work ahead.

THURSDAY: *READ:* Matt. 5:14-16. *THINK:* This verse says “y’all.” You are *not* the light of the world. *We* are. It is not about the world seeing your good deeds and how great you are but our good deeds and glorifying God. Read it again and replace you with y’all. That “y’all” is the Church. When we *Join Hands*, we move the focus of the Gospel from you to y’all. *PRAY:* that our good works would shine on our community.

FRIDAY: *READ:* Heb 10:24. *THINK:* *Joining Hands* isn’t easy. There is a reason the NRSV uses the word provoke. It would always be easier to stay the same, gather the same people, and do the same thing; but easier isn’t better. When you *Join Hands*, sometimes you will feel provoked, attacked, or frustrated. *Join Hands* anyway. *PRAY:* the Spirit would help you order and control your emotions in provocation.

SATURDAY: *READ:* 1 Cor. 1:10. *THINK:* Here is the goal: being perfectly united that as one body, we can operate with one mind, the mind of Christ. When we *Join Hands*, we will see things differently and sometimes want different things. What unites us, though, is greater than what

divides us. Lean into the work of the Spirit in us, and *Join Hands* with faithful believers who are seeking to follow God. *PRAY*: that God would renew our minds to be more like Jesus.