

Inviting the disaffected to rejoin our Church family:

Luke 15:3-7

New International Version

³ Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

The parable of the lost sheep can be applied to members/friends of the Highlands Congregation who ‘wander away’ from our fellowship. The leaving may result from having been offended by another’s’ actions/statement, a family/personal crisis, lack of opportunity to serve in a meaningful way, or a simple lack of attention by others in our fellowship.

How do we ‘joyfully carry’ our fellow member/friend back to the Highlands fold?

If I do not see or hear from someone with whom I have recently experienced a disagreement it is my responsibility to reach out to them, directly asking if I have offended them. If so, I need to ask forgiveness. I may need to enlist the guidance and support of other persons for their return.

I need to maintain a close enough relationship with others in our Church community to be aware of whenever someone is in personal crisis. Then respond through prayer and asking directly to assist. Following up regularly with compassion and offers of assistance.

I need to search for meaningful ways to serve and encourage others to do the same. Upon learning of any disappointment/frustration about lack of opportunity by a fellow member/friend, take concerns to congregation leaders. Follow up with leaders to confirm they have addressed the members' concerns/desire to serve.

Benign neglect is likely the most frequent reason for our members 'wandering away'. I here this most often that no one listened, reached out to me other than a casual greeting at in person Church or over Zoom. Resolve to follow up with any person seeming to be less engaged in Church activities by a one-on-one visit at in person Church or simple phone call outside Zoom activities.

As your new associate pastor, I commit to reach out, listen to and invite disaffected members/friends of our Church family to consider rejoining us. I commit to support them in their desire to give meaningful services in areas that match their abilities/interest.

Lehi german

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