

Major initiatives fact sheet: the Nehemiah project

*“A green Shoot will sprout from Jesse’s stump,
from his roots a budding Branch.
The life-giving Spirit of God will hover over him,
the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit that gives direction and builds strength.” (The Message, Isaiah 11:1-2)*

Imagine a future where the legacy of every church is honored and the incredible faithfulness of those who have gone before us is invested in a future with hope. Echoing Isaiah’s prophecy, the best is clearly yet to come.

From the earliest days of our faith, God’s people have been people of resurrection and rebirth, rebuilding and reclaiming and identifying new places for God’s people and God’s purpose. Every church has a legacy and a life cycle, which requires faithful stewardship from us in every season. The Nehemiah Project is designing an intentional and transparent process to ensure our churches’ legacies inform each stage of their life cycles, from growing and thriving to repurposing.

In 2015 Bishop Carter, the Cabinet and the Nehemiah Project team will implement this process to assist and walk with churches needing legacy conversations and possible repurposing of their ministries. It will include appropriate time for prayer, legacy conversations and transition. The purpose is to help congregations assess their current reality with clarity and to see themselves in new ways. The team is committed to reinvest the spiritual and resource legacies of all churches into the growth, vitality and mission of the Florida Conference. And, particular care will be given to ensure the spiritual and resource legacies of our ethnic churches are reinvested into new ethnic ministries.

Beginning in the fall of 2015, each District Superintendent will meet with those churches in his or her district that have a compelling need for a legacy conversation. This will initiate the journey of rebirth and rebuilding. A clear process for the journey will be communicated to clergy, as well as local lay leadership, so that everyone involved can steward their church’s resources for maximum kingdom impact.

Current plans for the Nehemiah Project team include a summit in the fall of 2015 to provide further clarity about our crucial next steps and to define the resources and support for our churches in the process. For more information, contact Rev. Dr. E. Dale Locke dale.locke@flumc.org.

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted...” (KJV, Ecclesiastes 3:1-2)

Next Fact Sheet Topic: The Race Conversation

