

# COMMUNICATOR

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

## Relationship

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**Relationship with us is still what God desires.**

Occasionally, my dad and I sit down and talk about his days as a boy growing up on 100th Street and Wallace on the south end of Chicago. He talks about the days when he and his twin brother were in Boy Scouts, the days of their youth group activities, and best of all, memories of his father. My grandfather was a man of relationships. After his discharge from World War II, my grandfather returned home and began working as a milkman for a local dairy company. The other day I was thinking about how many people on the south side of Chicago must have known Harvey Zimmer. After all, his daily route took him to homes and families of all sorts to deliver fresh milk to their doors. How many relationships did he cultivate? How many contacts did he make? How many lives did he effect by the simple act of consistently delivering milk with a friendly smile and taking just a bit of time to really get to know his customers?

Relationship is the very core of the Word of God. God initiated relationship with us as He created. All through the Old Testament relationship between God and His people Israel is central to the teachings of the Law, the message of the prophets, and the poems of David. Moving right into the coming of Jesus, relationship with us is still what God desires. Yet, it's not random and superficial relationships that God wants. He wants deep communion with us each day.

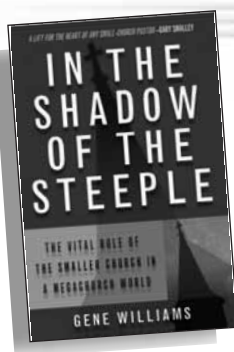
As pastors, I wonder just how much time we make for deep communion with God. Are we just spending time with the Father out of a sense of duty or so we can be prepared to preach or teach? Relationships take time and personal effort on our

part. I'm sure that my grandfather not only delivered milk, but he also took time to know his customers. Pastor, we should not get so caught up in the ebb and flow of ministry that we find ourselves just delivering spiritual goods. Rather, we should be about building relationships with the people we serve and building a relationship with the Savior in whose name we serve. I'm glad we have internet, cell phones, pagers, and other devices of modern communication, but often what is needed in our congregations is a milkman—a pastor who will take time to make personal contact with the people he serves. Bottom line—we are still in the business of personal relationships, just as Jesus modeled.

This is the aim of Nazarene Publishing House. Our ambition is not to be a distant and unconnected ministry acquaintance, but to come alongside pastors and congregations as ministry partners. We want to build close relationships with you as you build personal relationships for the salvation of lost souls and for the edification of the Church. At NPH we stand ready to build a meaningful relationship with you, Pastor, so together we can produce innovative ministry resources for the changing church. The changes you will see over the next few months in *Communicator* are changes that reflect our desire to come alongside you and provide additional and beneficial ministry tools. *Communicator* is designed not simply for the purpose of product sales but also to convey a relationship that we share as pastor and publisher. I hope you enjoy these improvements, and I'm praying for you as you live out God's relational plan in your area of influence.

—Rev. Matthew Zimmer,  
Church Resources Manager





*Smaller Church in a Megachurch World* by Gene Williams

In a world that emphasizes bigger is better, it can be difficult for pastors of small churches to keep from getting discouraged. *In the Shadow of the Steeple* offers pastors encouragement and hope, reminding them of their ultimate purpose – to share Christ’s love with the world. There are many advantages to a megachurch, but Gene Williams writes about the unique ability

of smaller churches to fulfill a great role in the Kingdom despite being in shadow of these megachurches.

Williams has been a pastor of small, mid-size, and large churches. From each one, he has received valuable insight on how they can reach a lost and broken world. Out of his experience as a smaller church pastor he speaks to the opportunities the smaller church can have to reach the lost. And he speaks to the heart of the smaller church pastor who might be questioning the purpose of God for him or her in their present location.

(Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2005, approx. 120pp., \$11.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1808)

BOOK BRIEFS

Resources for Pastoral Ministry

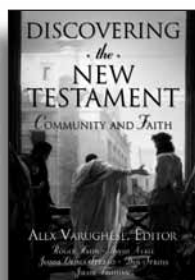
BIBLICAL RESOURCES

*Discovering the New Testament: Community and Faith.* Edited by Alex Varughese. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, 376 pp., \$49.99, cloth, COZZ083-412-0933).

*Discovering the New Testament* combines all the elements you’re looking for in a survey of the New Testament—thorough, sound biblical scholarship, combined with an eye-catching format and a writing style that is easy to understand.

In *Discovering the New Testament* you’ll find helping and teaching aides such as personal questions to help you relate the Bible to your life, side bars to explain theological points, and key words that are identified and defined. It also contains full color photo illustrations of New Testament holy sites, an easy textual format that gives reference to other resources for further study, and summary statements at the end of each chapter.

The scholarship is of highest quality and yet *Discovering the New Testament* is written in such a way that is not overwhelming to the reader. From Matthew to Revelation, this colorful book is a tremendous resource for pastors, Sunday School teachers, theologians, or anyone who wants to explore the deeper meaning of each New Testament book.



or her delivery from honest critique. This book outlines helpful ways to so.

Allen makes addressing sermon delivery so easy, and his techniques are useful for both seasoned and beginning preachers. *Sermon CPR* may very well resuscitate the way you convey God’s Word. If you struggle in sermon delivery or you simply need a fair and balanced self-assessment, this book is for you.

CURRENT ISSUES

*The Last Word and the Word After That: A Tale of Faith, Doubt, and a New Kind of Christianity.* By Brian D. McLaren. (Jossey-Bass, 2005, 224pp., \$21.95, cloth, COZZ078-797-5923). *The Last Word and the Word After That* is the final book in Brian McLaren’s *A New Kind of Christianity* trilogy. It continues the fictional conversation between Pastor Dan Poole and his friend, Neil E. Oliver (Neo), which began in the first two books, *A New Kind of Christian* and *The Story We Find Ourselves In*, which dealt with issues such as doubt, mission, faith, reason, leadership, meaning making, and evangelism.



In his latest book, McLaren (through the discussions of Poole and Oliver) grapples with several more issues including hell, judgment, and relationships. If read carefully, one will see that McLaren is actually addressing God’s righteousness, God’s justice, and God’s kingdom—not just the issues of eternal reward and punishment.

In the author’s own words: “. . . at heart this book is about the goodness of God and life with God.”

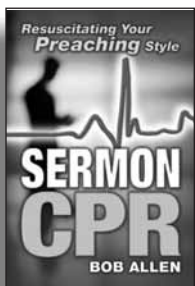
Keep in mind that McLaren is concerned with one’s view of God, how that informs one’s doctrine of hell, and how that view is used to further the creation of the Kingdom of God in the here and now. He writes, “This book, in a sense, attempts to deconstruct our conventional concepts of hell in the sincere hope that a better vision of the gospel of Jesus Christ will appear.”

This book is not for the faint-of-heart. McLaren uses Poole and Oliver to challenge some of the popular views of hell, eternal life, and ecclesiology held by many Protestant churches in the United States of America. It is an excellent fictional narrative that challenges readers to examine their views of hell, eternal life, judgment, and the role of the church in today’s culture. Reading it will encourage you to take up the conversation with a friend. (reviewed by Sean Heston)

PASTORAL RESOURCES

*Sermon CPR: Resuscitating Your Preaching Style.* By Bob Allen. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, 152pp., \$17.99, paper, COZZ083-412-2111). Evaluating your sermons does not necessarily mean you will need to change the way you preach. But evaluation is systematically needed in the life of a preacher. Bob Allen knows that one of the most difficult things preachers face is an honest self-critique and an honest third-party critique of his or her preaching delivery. *Sermon CPR* can help any pastor face the changes he or she needs to make to effectively deliver God’s Word.

In our media-saturated world, Bob Allen knows the delivery of the Sunday sermon must be a priority to the preacher or else the preacher will lose the ear of his or her congregation. Preachers can often spend so much time researching their content for the sermon that they overlook their delivery techniques. Allen admits that some congregations simply learn to overlook boring sermon delivery, but they shouldn’t have to. The preacher should be willing to adjust his



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Some of the books featured in *Communicator* have not been reviewed for theological content and are not endorsed by Nazarene Publishing House or the Church of the Nazarene. They may have significant value, but readers should exercise theological discretion.



# FOR THE WORSHIPPING CHOIR AT CHRISTMAS

THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS

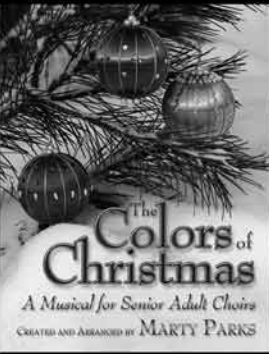
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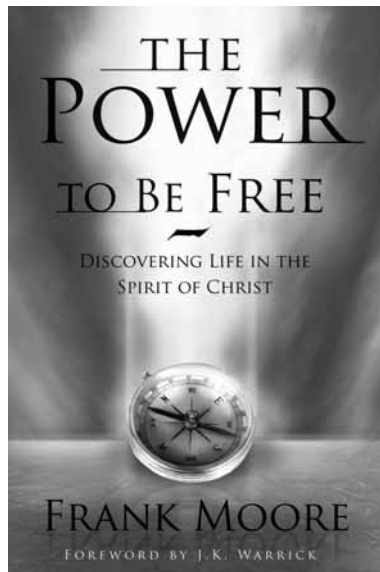
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**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

How can we improve the *Communicator* to better meet your pastoral needs? Please email your comments, ideas, and suggestions to [bhinqury@nph.com](mailto:bhinqury@nph.com).

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